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# FRENCH COLONIALIST JOURNALS AND MOROCCO: A DECADE OF DEBATE BEFORE THE PROTECTORATE

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FRENCH COLONIALIST JOURNALS AND MOROCCO:  
A DECADE OF DEBATE BEFORE  
THE PROTECTORATE

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate School of  
Clemson University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
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Accepted by:  
Dr. Alan Grubb, Committee Chair  
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Dr. James Burns

## **ABSTRACT**

After French colonization of Algeria in 1830, the expansion of France into additional colonies was a slow process. By 1900, few new colonies had been added to the French Empire and significant interest in colonization was limited to 10,000 men, the colonialists, who dedicated themselves to the expansion of the French Empire. These men came from the upper reaches of society had had a variety of reasons for desiring French colonialism. Whether for economic or nationalistic reasons, the colonialists formed formal groups, working both inside and outside of government to increase the size of the colonial empire. The journals of the leading colonialist groups, published regularly for decades, gives historians a detailed look at the reasons in favor of colonization. Beginning in 1900, the nation of Morocco in North Africa drew the attention of the colonialists. Over the next twelve years the journals and groups focused their attention in increasing measure on Morocco and the potential of a French colony there. By looking at how the coverage of Morocco in the journals changed over time, I examine how a nation that was relatively unknown and unimportant in 1900, became the most important colony for the French colonialists. By examining the journals by themselves, outside the context of other colonialist work, I show a clear pattern of increasing focus and concern on Morocco, as well as a move away from economic reasoning toward an argument of national honor.

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## PREFACE<sup>1</sup>

After Haiti received its independence in 1804, successive French governments were slow to return to a colonial mindset. Although the conquest of Algeria in 1830 returned France to the status of colonial master, she did not actively seek to continue to expand until the Second Empire (1851-1870). Napoleon III restarted large-scale colonial expansion, but France did not reach her full stride until the Third Republic beginning in 1871. Despite several decades of expansion prior to World War I, at no point did a single cohesive political party promote colonization in Africa and Indochina. The few members of the Chamber of Deputies and private citizens who did believe in colonization faced an uphill battle against a largely indifferent populace and outright hostile political parties. However, colonial supporters from across the political spectrum worked together in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies to develop colonial strategies in the early years of expansion. The number of colonial supporters in government fluctuated throughout the Third Republic, but few deputies or ministers supported colonization at any time. While the formation of the Colonial Ministry in 1894 brought new cohesion to colonial policy, this came four years after independent colonial supporters formed political action groups themselves.

Established in 1890, the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* was dedicated to the advancement of French colonial possessions. Although only 30 members strong in 1891,

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this study the following conventions in referring to the colonialists will be observed. Colonialist will refer to an individual; parti colonial will refer to those working within the Chamber of Deputies; Colonial Lobby refers to private groups outside of government; Colonial movement and colonialists will refer to the colonial supporters as a whole, both inside and outside of government.

it became the most influential and long lasting of the colonial organizations in the Third Republic.<sup>2</sup> The *Comité* promoted and favored colonial expansion on nationalistic grounds. A second group, the *Union Coloniale Française*, formed in 1893, attracted businesses and businessmen looking to profit in the colonies.<sup>3</sup> Both groups exerted their influence within the government to enact colonial policies to benefit the French state in addition to their own interests. The leadership of both organizations maintained close contacts with certain ministers and deputies and some of its members, like Eugene Etienne, who was the leader of the *Groupe Coloniale* in the Chamber of Deputies, and worked for the Foreign Ministry before moving to the Colonial Ministry.<sup>4</sup>

The early years of the *Comité* and the Union, before the formation of the Colonial Ministry in 1894, are particularly important in colonial affairs owing to the role the Foreign Ministry played in creating colonial policy. In the early 1890s, the Foreign Ministry focused on European affairs far more than on the colonies, which allowed colonial groups considerable influence in colonial matters by dint of their perceived experience and expertise on the matters at hand. They had more knowledge of conditions on the ground in North Africa, particularly through their ties with and funding of numerous expeditions and explorations. Moreover, because colonial ventures lacked

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<sup>2</sup> C.M. Andrew and A.S Kanya-Forstner, “The French ‘Colonial Party’: Its Composition, Aims, and Influence, 1885-1914,” *The Historical Journal* 14 (March 1971): 103.

<sup>3</sup> Henri Brunschwig, *French Colonialism 1871-1914, Myths and Realities* with an introduction by Ronald E. Robinson. Translated by William Glanville Brown. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1964), 120.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen H. Roberts, *The History of French Colonial Policy 1870-1925*. (London: P.S. King & Co., 1929. Reprint, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1963), 126.

widespread popularity until World War I, the influence of colonial groups over policy was therefore particularly significant during the period.

With the formation of the Colonial Ministry, the colonial groups were able to tailor their arguments and lobbying efforts more closely to the administrative plans originating from the Colonial Ministry. The formation of the Colonial Ministry itself, and the removal of the administration of the colonies from the control of the Foreign Ministry, was an important step, and an indication of the growing significance of the colonies at the end of the century, despite the lack of popular support. Although colonization as a national policy did not experience the same rise in importance, the colonies and colonial groups acquired a stronger position in the government. This position in the government was a new way for the colonial groups to interact with and influence formal imperial policy and thereby forward their ideas on general colonial policy. Colonial policy throughout the 1890s and through the creation of the Colonial Ministry had been created a very tiny number of men, who worked together to shape French policy. By the turn of the century though, these men were mostly out of government and direct colonialist influence in colonial policy was drastically reduced.

Throughout the period before World War I, the *Comité* and the Union published journals and bulletins for their members and the general public. These publications reported on French colonial interests throughout the world, giving their readers up-to-date information concerning colonial matters, new explorations, commercial interests, and potential new colonies. The *Bulletin* of the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*, which was published monthly, and the *Quinzaine Coloniale*, which was published semimonthly by



the *Union Coloniale Française*, provided transcripts of speeches, travelogues of explorers, and articles written by members of the organization, along with news from the colonies. The articles and information were meant to be informative, and were written quickly, for a business audience, as evidenced by the lack of eloquent journalistic styling. Although at times, especially as the protectorate was imminent, the *Quinzaine Coloniale* did present descriptive imagery, this was the exception not the norm. Over the course of the decade the journals did embrace modern approaches to journalism and they became more visually appealing by the 1910s. The journals evolved from solid blocks of text with little variation, to including maps and images of the colonies.<sup>5</sup> The readership of these journals was never enough to influence large-scale public opinion as only 4000 copies were published each month, with half of the issues being delivered to paying subscribers.<sup>6</sup> The very low number of issues published indicated that the journals were not intended for the general public.

The *Comité* focused its attention on the colonies as outlets for French nationalism. They concerned themselves with the aspects of colonialism that served national honor and pride. The Union on the other hand, approached the question of colonialism from an economic viewpoint. They catered to the businessmen and investors who saw colonies as another business opportunity. However, these strict delineations between the groups and their concerns did not stay firm for long. By the middle of the decade the lines had blurred and both groups covered the colonies from many directions. The Union in

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<sup>5</sup> For examples of individual pages from the journals, please see the Appendices.

<sup>6</sup> Brunschwig, 115.

particular, changed their rhetoric through the years, making ever-stronger nationalistic arguments in support of French colonialism.

Previous work done on French colonial organizations took place in the 1970s, but little research has occurred since. The early historiography of these colonial organizations largely focused on how the groups and their leadership influenced colonial policy, both before and after the creation of the Colonial Ministry. These studies tended to focus on the colonial movement in the political realm immediately before and after World War I. The *Bulletin* and the *Quinzaine Coloniale* were used as primary documents to support and demonstrate the policy changes brought about through personal lobbying. Scholarship that does focus on the groups themselves approach the journals as nothing more than a source, something to be used in addition to letters and reports, in the discussion of the political activities of the colonialists. These works see the journals as unimportant in the understanding of how the groups functioned and how they helped create colonial policy.

It is on the two journals themselves that I plan to focus. Unlike for earlier scholars and studies, the journals are now readily available and will, I believe, shed new light on colonial matters, and in particular, on the interest in the development of Morocco after 1900, helping to show the evolution of official colonialist thought on colonization. By approaching the journals as independent of the men who wrote them, I will analyze the change in the official line of the colonialist groups. To get the view of the majority of Frenchmen, the *Petit Parisien*, the largest daily newspaper in France at the time, will also be examined to see how the general public saw the developing French presence in

Morocco. Although the journals themselves did not have a direct impact on large numbers of people, or public opinion generally, the events covered and the way in which they were covered, allowed the colonialists to take Morocco from a little known prospective colony in 1900, to the position of the most highly sought-after piece of land in Africa by 1912. The importance of Morocco in the pages of the journals, as compared to its presence in other sources, hopefully will provide new insights into how these journals worked up events and incidents in preparation for the takeover of a new colony.

## CHAPTER 1: HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE FRENCH COLONIALISTS

Scholars and researchers have looked to the colonial groups and the *parti colonial* to understand the politics of French colonization. They have long used these groups and their members as a way to address the politics behind colonial acquisition and the political aspirations of the colonial movement. The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* and the *Union Coloniale Française* were the most powerful of the many colonial groups that existed in France in the early twentieth century. They used their position as the leading colonialist groups to push their agendas on the entire colonial apparatus in France, but they have been largely ignored in French colonial studies and their journals and published documents rarely make an appearance in anything more than a footnote of a larger work. Yet they deserve a place of importance in the study of French colonial history and need to be looked at in more detail for an understanding of the driving forces behind those in the Colonial Ministry who made policies concerning the colonies, particularly the expansion into new colonial areas.

The first historical acknowledgement of the pro-colonial groups in an academic setting was in the late 1920s, because after World War I the colonies became significantly more important to the French public. The need for colonies had been debated before the war, but in the aftermath it was clear that the colonies helped speed the rebuilding of France. In the years between the Great War and World War II, the French greatly expanded their colonial ventures, as the French public became proponents of colonization. The works were decidedly pro-colonial and lauded the colonial groups for the work they had done less than thirty years before. A great revival of interest in the

topic, although more often critical of the empire, came in the late 1960s and lasted through the mid-1980s, an interest which corresponded with the last stages of decolonization for France and other colonial powers. France lost her last major colony in 1962 as the power of the European nations faltered in the post-World War II era. Decolonization brought about new interest in the earliest days of colonization and starting with the publication of a series of articles in 1968, knowledge of, and interest in, the work of the *Comité* and Union experienced a revival in historical circles both in Europe and the United States.

After this upswing in recognition through the 1970s, the groups again fell by the wayside. The evolution of various theories that could be applied to colonization and analyses of the effects of colonization pushed the colonial movement to the footnotes in those works that appeared throughout the 1990s. Only in the last few years have French pro-colonial groups again begun to find their place in the history of French colonization. At the same time however, the work of the *Comité* and Union came to be read through the lens of post-colonial theory, which made studying them almost impossible.

This outline of interest in groups like the *Comité* and Union holds true both in French language and English works. Although in each instance historical events explain why interest waxed and waned, the lack of recent scholarship on the subject and the dearth of histories using more modern theories to examine the intentions of the colonial groups have left work to be done in this aspect of French history. In the last few years the colonial movement has found a new place in specialized histories of the colonies that are written in the light of post-colonial theory, and with the evolution of French colonial

studies into an historical subspecialty, the colonialists and colonial groups are once again receiving attention as an important part of the French colonial past.

Because of a relative scarcity of work done on the colonial groups specifically, I will address the entire historiography of the colonialists, not just work that directly relates to the Union and the *Comité*. Research into the colonial lobby in France is a surprisingly narrow field without a large body of work and analysis. Although French history is a very popular field, colonial groups have not benefitted from that popularity. The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* and the *Union Coloniale Française* do not have the cachet of the multitude of governments and revolutions that appear throughout French history, despite the fact that the colonialist groups were the leading edge of foreign and colonial policy for close to seventy years. The published work that does exist on the colonial movement, however, does provide a picture of their importance during the Third Republic as well as an indication of the overriding historical ideologies present when these books were written.

### **Early Twentieth Century Works**

In the immediate aftermath of WWI, the French people saw the colonies and those involved in the administration or acquisition of colonies in an entirely new light. The new, widespread interest in the colonies was due to the advantages the colonies brought to France in the war, and this interest brought to light the work of the colonial lobby at the turn of the century. The historians and authors, who discussed the work of the *Union Coloniale Française* and the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*, wrote with the postwar presuppositions of the Third Republic in mind. For the French at this time, the colonies

were seen as an economic anchor, as giving business a place to buy and sell products to help restart the economy and rebuild the nation. This had always been true of the arguments in favor of colonies, but for the first time the general population of France became aware of it. The French also believed that colonization lifted colonial peoples out of misery and brought to them all the advantages of French culture. This mindset of French colonialism was implicit in any understanding of Greater France. In the public mind, the colonies, having saved the French in the Great War, now needed to return the favor.

The ideologies that permeate these early works are not in the same vein as theories used by modern historians. They reflect instead the widespread assumption at the time that colonization was good for the Republic. Colonization was seen as advantageous in the aftermath of the war<sup>7</sup> and public opinion for the first time supported the colonial experience in Africa and the Far East. At this time France continued to expand her overseas empire, in the form of mandates from regions previously controlled by the Ottoman Empire, while simultaneously attempting to assimilate the people into Greater France. It is in this atmosphere that Stephen Roberts published his comprehensive work on French colonization in the Third Republic. Roberts' *The History of French Colonial Policy 1870-1925*, published in 1929, remains a dated but still well regarded book.<sup>8</sup> The combination of factual information on individual colonies, followed

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<sup>7</sup> C.M, Andrew and A.S Kanya-Forstner, "The Groupe Colonial in the French Chamber of Deputies, 1892-1932." *The Historical Journal* 17 (Dec. 1974): 842

<sup>8</sup> Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion* (London: Macmillian Press Ltd, 1996), 344.

by analysis of their importance and their place within the French Empire allowed some recognition of the colonial movement.

Published twenty years after Roberts' work, *The Ideology of French Imperialism* by Agnes Murphy subsequently became a standard in understanding the reasoning behind the expansion of the French Empire during the Third Republic. Although her work was published in the early years of the Fourth Republic, it was conceived in the last years of the Third Republic and thus still contains early twentieth century ideas about colonialism, unaltered by decolonization. Murphy examines a portion of French academic life to explain the formation of an ideology of imperialism in the Third Republic. Specifically, she looks at the interest in geography and explorations by the academic world as the locus of French expansion, in that these scholars and academics helped create the world in which ideas about colonialism were formed. Murphy's study looks at pre-twentieth century groups and also the people behind them. As she explained in her preface, "What this study does [is examine] whether or not there was a genuine colonial ideology in favor of expansion for France, an ideology that cannot be explained solely in terms of economic causes."<sup>9</sup> Although she did not look directly at either the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* or the *Union Coloniale Française*, her work discussed the ideological origins of both. The imperial mindset of the colonialists and how it developed was, she asserts, more than economics, it was nationalistic, and the colonialists, she argues, contributed to the creation of the nationalist spirit and its focus.

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<sup>9</sup> Agnes Murphy, *The Ideology of French Imperialism 1871-1881* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1968), vi.



With the publication of Agnes Murphy's work in 1948, interest in the ideas and driving forces behind colonialism were subsumed by the study of the physical expansion of the Empire. The rebuilding of France following World War II ensured that academics focused on the reconstruction of France, and the colonies would play a major role in that rebuilding just as they had after WWI. France found herself thus fully embracing Empire after the war,<sup>10</sup> at the very time most nations were divesting themselves of their colonies. Once rebuilding was underway, French academics focused on the colonies' importance to French power. This mindset within France led to renewed interest in how the Empire came about, but not why, and led to a twenty year gap in academic interest in the French colonial groups.

### **Resurgence**

With the coming end of colonization and formal Empire, most notably the loss of France's most valuable colony, Algeria, it is not surprising that academics in the late 1960s returned to the early years of expansion of the French Empire. France's African Empire along with her empire in the East, and the bloody end to colonization in both Indochina and later Algeria, prompted historians to look back to the beginning of the empire so as to understand how this came about. These historians looked at the colonialist movement more narrowly than their predecessors, examining it as a factor in the expansion of the French colonial empire. Where the earliest historians of the colonial movement saw the groups as one minor piece of a much larger colonial establishment, the researchers in the 1970s saw the groups as subjects to be studied by themselves.

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<sup>10</sup> Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, "The French 'Colonial Party': Its Composition, Aims, and Influence, 1885-1914," 126.

Research now focused narrowly on the lobbying efforts and the publications of the *Union Coloniale Française* and the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*. The *Comité* received the lion share of focus due to its reach and influence in the government and colonial policies at the time, and because of their expansive archives.

In 1966, Henri Brunschwig published *French Colonialism, 1871-1914: Myths and Realities* in which he dedicated an entire chapter to the beginnings and importance of the *parti colonial*. Although the book as a whole is an analysis of the entire imperial mindset and structure in the years before the Great War, the presence of a whole chapter dedicated to a relatively small group of men and their importance in the colonial venture rekindled interest in these groups. The chapter “The French Colonial Party” does not attempt to analyze or question the motivations of the individual groups. Brunschwig made no judgments on the importance of the colonial movement; instead, he attempted to summarize the many aspects of an admittedly complex group by linking them all back to a “humanitarian argument which gave a moral character to what was being done.”<sup>11</sup> He provided details of the movement and the reasons behind the founding of these groups as well as a specific description of the movement as a whole. The definition of party that Brunschwig used<sup>12</sup> and later attempts by other authors to avoid the term “party”<sup>13</sup> showed

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<sup>11</sup> Henri Brunschwig, *French Colonialism 1871-1914, Myths and Realities* with an introduction by Ronald E. Robinson. Translated by William Glanville Brown (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1964), 134.

<sup>12</sup> “Using the word ‘party’ in its modern sense, there never was a ‘French Colonial Party.’ The movement had no executive committee, no organized sections, no clearly defined program, no electoral platform and no discipline. It simply represented a section of public opinion which embraced people of different political tendencies and irrespective of whether they were concerned with the economic value of the colonies.” Henri Brunschwig 106.

<sup>13</sup> Lobby and Pressure group are the most common terms used.

the complicated nature of the movement. His explanation of the colonial party as unlike any political party that would be familiar today is implicit in all later works.

Brunschwig's work on the colonial groups and his focus on their makeup and political activities set the stage for the approach others took to these groups in the future. None of the publications of any of the colonial groups are covered however, in any detail. Instead the author approached the topic by looking at the members themselves and their activities while ignoring their publications as a source. His focus on the very public actions of the groups, specifically the *Comité* and the Union, nonetheless provided a basic understanding of how the groups used power, their contacts, and position to influence official colonial policy. Still, by not looking at their journals as well, he ignores a vital source of information on the ideas and activities and the public face of the colonial groups.

By the early 1970s, the French colonial movement picked up steam and attracted many historians to the virtually untapped academic field. The most productive authors were Christopher M. Andrew and A.S Kanya-Forstner. Together they published articles and books detailing the colonial movement, with specific focus on the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* and its influence within the government. The articles they published divide the colonial lobby into parts and discuss specific aspects of the lobby or the time period in which the colonialists were active. Their first article, published in 1971, gave an overview of the *parti colonial* and its aims and goals at the turn of the century. Each additional published article narrowed the topic further and further, providing more and more information to historians, but they always remained focused on the colonialists'

more political activities. The colonial journals are referenced in footnotes when they explicitly address the aims of a particular group, but they do not make use of the journals specifically to see how the motivations of the groups were actually addressed therein.

The article “The French Colonial Party,” the first detailed study on the colonial groups published, provided an overview of the group: a reintroduction to the movement since the publication of *French Colonialism*. In the article the authors gave a detailed description of the groups but focused particularly on the importance of Eugene Etienne. Etienne’s position as Undersecretary of State for the Colonies and as secretary of the *groupe colonial* in the Chamber of Deputies gave him great power in the colonial movement from the beginning. What they conclude is that the *parti colonial* had “diminutive size and ... enormous influence.”<sup>14</sup> They also emphasize that the *Comité* was a nationalist group, not an economic one.<sup>15</sup> By placing the *Comité* as nationalistic, the authors demonstrate the difference between the *Comité* and the Union, which was much more closely linked with financial interests.<sup>16</sup> This kind of clear discussion of the aims and motivations of the colonial groups remained a distinguishing factor in all their articles.

Andrew and Kanya-Forstner’s next article examined an aspect of the *parti colonial* that was not the focus of the previous work. Entitled “The *Groupe Colonial* in the French Chamber of Deputies, 1892-1932,” this article discussed the influence and impact of members of the colonial groups in government, and how, if at all, they made or

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<sup>14</sup> Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, “The French ‘Colonial Party’: Its Composition, Aims, and Influence, 1885-1914,” 126.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

changed their arguments. Making use of letters and reports from the Chamber they are able to identify how many supporters the *colonial parti* had at any given time and they concern what the individuals were saying to each other and discussing on the floor of the chamber, not just what the journals of the colonial groups said. Their conclusion is that the *parti* in the Chamber of Deputies modified its approach in the forty years of its existence, which creates a more nuanced understanding of the group's methods. Their methods were strikingly different before and after World War I, for, as they note, "Before 1914, the *groupe colonial* had achieved its most striking successes by working behind the scenes. After the war, it worked predominantly in the open."<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, they conclude that notwithstanding the *parti colonial's* efforts in the chamber both, before and after the war, they never fully succeeded in advancing their goals, despite the significant support they received in the aftermath. They draw no conclusions, however, concerning the specifics of the arguments made and any evolution in them.

Building on the work of Kanya-Forstner and Andrew, L. Abrams and D.J. Miller also examined the colonial movement. To find a better understanding of the colonialists themselves in the context of the groups they founded, in their article, "Who Were the French Colonialists? A Reassessment of the Parti Colonial, 1890-1914," they examined the individuals who became officers or sat on the Board of Directors. This look at the individuals who ran the movement allowed the authors to examine where their supporters came from and their probable motivations for joining. From this information they concluded that economic interests, tied to individual members, exerted significant power

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<sup>17</sup> Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, "The Groupe Colonial in the French Chamber of Deputies, 1892-1932, 846.

within the groups. The membership of the *Comité* and the Union and their reach into the highest levels of government thus gave the movement, they argue, the leverage to change and influence policy.<sup>18</sup> In this conclusion they disagreed with Andrew and Kanya-Forstner about the importance of economics in the groups' creation and their decisions. "Businessmen, or individuals deeply involved in economic interests, dominated the *directions* and the membership of the *Comité*."<sup>19</sup> Unlike Andrew and Kanya-Forstner they saw economic interests as the driving force for expansion and the influence of big business as the reason the movement succeeded.

Andrew and Kanya-Forstner responded to Abrams and Miller with another detailed examination of French colonialists and the place of business in the movement. They argued that by placing the focus on economics, Abrams and Miller had missed the main point of the movement.<sup>20</sup> Although some support for the colonialists from business and industry certainly existed, they wrote, "Business in general opposed any form of colonial development which would allow the colonies to compete with the metropolis."<sup>21</sup> In this way they argued that placing too much focus on economics and the support of big business missed the main point of the movement as a whole. Nationalism, they believed, was the driving interest behind the colonialists, economics just a secondary benefit.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 718.

<sup>19</sup> L. Abrams and D.J. Miller, "Who Were the French Colonialists? A Reassessment of the Parti Colonial, 1890-1914." *The Historical Journal* 19 (Sep. 1976): 719.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew, C.M, and A.S Kanya-Forstner, "French Business and the French Colonialists." *The Historical Journal* 19 (Dec. 1976): 981.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 984.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 985.

Drawing on Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, other academics began their own studies and swelled the number of articles on the colonial groups. In 1974, the focus on the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* was replaced by the consideration of the other major colonial group of the time. Stuart Persell examined the origins and doctrine of the *Union Coloniale Française* and especially the group's leadership. His article, "Joseph Chailley-Bert and the Importance of the Union Coloniale Française," published in *The Historical Journal*, briefly analyzes the place of the Union in French colonial politics and discusses the main driving forces behind it. In his article he examines the specific policies of the secretary-general of the Union, Joseph Chailley-Bert, and his influence for twenty years in the colonial movement. The Union focused exclusively on economic issues and its members were groups and individuals in metropolitan France who saw the colonies as a way to expand economically.<sup>23</sup> Its aims were the same as the *Comité* in the long run, continued colonial expansion, but they focused on the economic benefits that the colonies could contribute to France. While Stuart Persell supports the article from Abrams and Miller, he concerns himself with only a small piece of the colonial movement. However, building on earlier publications and looking at other examples, he shows that the colonial movement was concerned with a far more complex sets of beliefs and interests than simply nationalistic ideas and reminds us that although both the Union and the *Comité* were working toward the same goal, their motivations and methods were very different.

Throughout the 1970s and into the next two decades, specialized books and dissertations on the subject became common. The topic of the *parti colonial* and colonial

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<sup>23</sup> Stuart M. Persell, "Joseph Challey-Bert and the Importance of the Union Coloniale Française." *The Historical Journal* 17 (March 1974): 184.

groups were a major part of French colonial studies for close to a decade. These works focused on the groups by themselves, giving them credence as a major factor in the entire colonial experience. Especially noteworthy was James Cooke's *New French Imperialism 1880-1919: The Third Republic and Colonial Expansion* which, published in 1973, was an early work that focused specifically on the development and influence of the colonial groups throughout the new empire. James Cooke is careful to cover not just the immediate effects of the *parti colonial*, but also their efforts concerning African colonial issues through WWI.

The focus of the work was the political dealings and concerns surrounding the entire colonial apparatus prior to the Great War. Cooke concentrated on three men who shaped and controlled colonial policy: Gabriel Hanotaux, Foreign Minister, Théophile Delcassé, Colonial Minister, and Eugene Etienne who were successively, the controllers of French colonialism in the two decades prior to the war. Between them they controlled the Foreign Ministry, Colonial Ministry, the *groupe colonial* in the Chamber of Deputies, and the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*. Cooke saw Etienne as the head of the new imperial movement in France, but Hanotaux, he says, was the colonialist with the most formal influence, due to his powerful position in republican politics and the years he was in office.<sup>24</sup> The stability of his position as foreign minister (he served in numerous cabinets) gave colonial policy a strong continuous voice, beyond the rapidly changing governments. By distinguishing between the "formal," government-led and approved colonialism, and "informal," colonialist-led colonialism, he is able to clarify the roles that

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<sup>24</sup> James J. Cooke, *New French Imperialism 1880-1910: The Third Republic and Colonial Expansion*, (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1973): 11; 171.



Hanotaux and Etienne each had in colonial matters. His analysis describes a colonial movement whose influence was filtered through Hanotaux. By splitting the focus on formal and informal methods of support for colonialism, Cooke ensured a clear explanation of where the overlap between republican officials and colonial groups in the colonial movement occurred.

Perhaps the most comprehensive work to examine the formation and early days of the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* is the doctoral dissertation written by John Wayne Walker, “The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* (1890-1895): A French Colonial Pressure Group”, (Berkeley 1977). In this study Walker details the early years of the *Comité* from its founding through the formation of the Colonial Ministry in 1895. His detailed analysis provides a clear picture of the successes of the *Comité* in turn, paying particular attention to the political maneuverings of the *Comité's* leadership within the government. Walker's study demonstrates the close relationship that was established between the leadership of the *Comité* and the Foreign Ministry before 1894 and later with the Colonial Ministry. By focusing only on the formative years of the *Comité*, Walker is able to explore the founders' motivations, free from their own later writings and the distortions of their writings by later historians.

Focusing only on the first five years of the *Comité's* forty-year existence, Walker presents a detailed, year-by-year examination of the group's actions. By examining the personal papers of several of the *Comité's* top leaders, he concludes that they were more interested in the economic benefits of colonization than Andrew and Kanya-Forstner allow. He writes,

From this perspective, they were certainly nationalists. The defense of national interests, however, did not conflict with their legitimate economic interests in Africa. The judgment, therefore, of Henry Brunschwig, C.M. Andrew and A.S. Kanya-Forstner that the motives of the Committee's members had little to do with economic interests is not accurate.<sup>25</sup>

This more complex understanding of the *Comité's* motivations, however, may be more reflective of the early years of the group than the later years. Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, on the other hand, in examining the history of the *Comité* as a whole, and over a longer period, suggest that the overriding theme is nationalism. These separate studies and their very different conclusions suggest that the *Comité's* motivations and actions were complex and that we should not assume that the *Comité* was a monolithic entity throughout its history and that its interests and motivations did not change.

The last large-scale work on the colonialists was published in 1983 and looked at the entire history of the French colonialist movement. *The French Colonial Lobby 1889-1938* is part of the Hoover Colonial Studies series and the last book published in the series. Stuart Persell's work attempted to reconcile the interactions of the Foreign Ministry and Colonial Ministry with colonialists striving for personal interests in the colonies. Persell argued that the active relationship between the Colonial Ministry and the *Comité* and the Union shaped colonial policies until the First World War when the entire system of colonization changed and could no longer be controlled by colonialists working in close alliance with the government.<sup>26</sup> Although Persell's work seems to be a straightforward argument, this was the first time that all the interactions between the government and the colonialists were carefully laid out to show their systematic nature.

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<sup>25</sup> John Wayne Walker, "The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* (1890-1895): A French Colonial Pressure Group" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1977), 174.

<sup>26</sup> Stuart M. Persell, *The French Colonial Lobby, 1889-1938*, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1983), 5-6.

Despite laying out these interactions, Persell's work remains focused on the people and politics that prompted this interaction. The journals themselves received significantly more attention than in previous works, but though Persell uses them to show how serious the colonialists were about certain issues, he does not look at them as a separate way of approaching and understanding the ideas and activities of the groups.

Many other scholars have referred to the colonial movement in their studies but have not focused extensively on the colonial groups themselves. These books have tended to center on Africa and the French experience there. The focus of Alf Andrew Heggoy's *The African Policies of Gabriel Hanotaux 1894-1895*, for example, is on the policies that Hanotaux enacted during his first term as Foreign Minister. His careful examination of Hanotaux's actions as Foreign Minister suggests the considerable influence the colonial lobby had on the Foreign Ministry itself. From this, Hanotaux's closeness to colonial groups becomes clear. However, despite Hanotaux's close relationship with the *parti colonial* and his own desires to complete the colonial project begun decades before, Heggoy does not suggest that the colonial lobby had a motivating factor in Hanotaux's actions.

Heggoy matches James Cooke's in his suggestion that the government had a more active role in the formation of African policies than earlier authors allowed. In some ways, this argument gives the French government credit for actions that might rightly have been given to private organizations. This is not to say that Hanotaux as Foreign Minister did not have significant control over the policies, but indicates that the communication between Hanotaux, Etienne and the *Comité* resulted in policies that were

heavily influenced by private interests and organizations. By concluding that the government, and not the colonial groups, drove colonialism, Heggoy removes much of the influence and importance assigned to the groups by earlier historians.

Although a handful more studies were published after Stuart Persell's *The French Colonial Lobby*, interest in the topic waned. As more time passed and the wounds of Algeria, Vietnam and the loss of France's colonial Empire healed, French historians moved away from questions of colonization and research, and interest in the colonial groups, and the French Empire as a subject, all but disappeared in the 1990s.

### **New Theories**

It is no coincidence that the study of colonial groups in France disappeared from academic life in the late 1970s and early 1980s at the moment of the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), which changed the way academics approached the whole question of colonization. Said brought new concepts to the forefront of history and shifted the focus of study from the colonizers to the colonized. His main argument was that the Orient was nothing more than "a created body of theory and practice"<sup>27</sup> and the European study of it a "cultural hegemony at work."<sup>28</sup> This turned the study of colonialism on its head for it was no longer enough to discuss European imperialism and the colonies from the French or European perspective. The politics of European colonization became secondary to questions about the experience of the colonized peoples themselves.

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<sup>27</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 6.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

The nature of orientalism made it irrelevant to focus on European sources or to see the colonial phenomenon from the European – the colonizers – perspective. On the heels of orientalism, post-colonial theory changed the notion of relevant documentation. This exclusion of turn of the century sources as acceptable primary documents meant that the records of the Colonial Ministry and the journals and publications of the colonial groups seemed less relevant to scholars. However, in point of fact, it would seem that the study of groups like the *Comité* is not incompatible with post-colonial theory, with its emphasis on “native” experience of colonialism. Because the *Comité* had boots on the ground in North Africa, their publication and the records of their activities constitute a unique, detailed record of life in those colonies, as it were, even if they are colored by what Said termed “orientalism.” The large number of documents that the Colonial Lobby archived may be tainted by “orientalist” assumptions, but to discount them entirely from the body of sources on the French Empire and the colonial experience is to walk away from a valuable resource.

The theoretical debates of the 1990s over the place and use of post-colonialism precluded the use of these theories in practical applications in history. However, in the last few years, scholarly work concerning colonial groups has reappeared. In 2002, Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur edited a collection of articles that discussed the colonial groups. Their book, *Promoting the Colonial Idea*, looked at issues that had not been considered during the heyday of colonialist research, including the publications of colonialists, now seen as propaganda for the expansion and defense of the Empire, again

became a focus of historical research.<sup>29</sup> The publications of the *Union Coloniale Française* and the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* in particular, were seen not just as journals for those interested in colonization, but as agents to bring about emigration to the colonies.<sup>30</sup> However, it seems that although the journals published first-person accounts from the colonies, and clearly believed in a Greater France, any emigration that resulted would have been negligible. Even with lavish first-person accounts, it hardly seems likely that a journal with a subscription base of less than two thousand could dramatically affect potential emigrants. Rather it seems that those who would subscribe to the journals were either already inclined to emigrate, or interested in the colonies as business ventures and were unlikely to leave their wealth and connections in France. Thus the propaganda aspects of the journal, despite their arguments, seem limited.

In the mid 1990s, a two-part study was published in France that covered the entire history of the French Empire. Denise Bouche's *Histoire de la Colonisation Française* brought the colonial groups back into mainstream academic work of French colonialism. The second volume, in particular, covers the later years of colonization up to decolonization and gave space to the colonial groups. This was the first significant inclusion of the *parti colonial* as a piece of French colonialism in works on the subject since the 1980s. Although Bouche's work is a comprehensive look at French Empire, in which she examines all aspects of the French colonial experience, those sections that deal with the *Comité* or the Union, or even the colonial movement as a whole, examine their

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<sup>29</sup> Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur, eds, *Promoting the Colonial Idea*, (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Publishers Ltd., 2002), 40.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

involvement in specific situations, such as the funding of missions in Chad in the early 1890s.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, she does not discuss their overall importance or the role they played in the earliest years of the Third Republic. Bouche, however, does not focus on the journals' later writings, which indicate that the "post-colonial" outlook still dominates explorations of colonial expansion.

Even though almost a decade has passed since the last major work discussing the colonial movement in France, opportunities remain to use post-colonialism and post-modernism theory to analyze the effects and writings of the colonialists. A combination of the old colonialist writings and the new historical theories may lead to new insights that neither approach can create on their own. Indeed, as post-colonial theory is more fully integrated into the practical writing of history, examining the legacy of the colonialists would be a useful, even essential, contribution to our understanding of the history of French colonialism.

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<sup>31</sup> Denise Bouche, *Histoire de la Colonisation Française: Vol 2 Flux et reflux (1815-1962)*, (Paris: Fayard, 1991), 77-78.

## Chapter 2: Early Colonialist Interest in Morocco

In the first years of the twentieth century, the French colonialists had seen expansion on the domestic and colonial fronts and were anxious to continue to expand their influence. France's presence in Algeria led the colonialists to look to other parts of North Africa as opportunities for French expansion. Whether for profit or as a sense of nationalistic pride, the colonialists, though small in number, looked around for a new colony in Africa. From 1901-1904, the colonialists who actively followed the Bulletin of the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* and the *Quinzaine Coloniale* were made well aware of the political and economic situation in Morocco and could easily see the possibilities of expansion there.

Morocco was the last semi-independent nation in North Africa when the European powers began to circle, waiting for an opportunity to pounce. The first of those opportunities came with only indirect assistance from the Europeans. The Sultan of Morocco, head of the Cherifien Empire, in the face of serious economic problems, began a series of European-style reforms meant to increase revenue through new taxes and to modernize his nation. The Sultan was also interested in other European improvements for his empire. Although the Europeans were happy to help him move toward a Westernized system, the Sultan ran up against traditionalists within his government and in the mosques, who were strongly against European-style change. His drastic changes to traditional government and taxes in Morocco spawned movements within the tribal nation to fight the changes, thus weakening the internal structure and stability of the state. From 1901-1904 a series of uprisings among the tribes, most of whom lived traditional



lives away from the cities, culminated in the large-scale revolt by a pretender to the Moroccan throne, Bou Hamara<sup>32</sup>, and threatened the political and economic stability of the state.

It was into this situation that the European powers thrust themselves. Many foreign merchants and traders lived in Morocco and their governments became concerned about the dangers their subjects faced. The French, British, Germans, and Spanish all put pressure on the Sultan to protect the European enclaves.<sup>33</sup> As the situation with Bou Hamara grew more serious and the Cherifien forces continued to lose battles to the Pretender's forces, the Sultan's relationship with Europe began to falter. Moreover, the spending needed to fight the tribes, combined with the lack of tax collection in the outlying regions due to the fighting, led to a serious monetary shortfall in Morocco. The European powers thus saw an opportunity to not only increase their influence with the Sultan but to make a profit as well. The French in particular negotiated a loan to the Sultan and expanded their importance with the Cherifien government.

The reported descent into anarchy plaguing Morocco and the constant fighting between the tribes and the Sultan were extensively covered and achieved two results for the colonialists: first to report the news, and second to demonstrate to readers that something needed to be done in Morocco. Furthermore, with the creation of the Anglo-French Accord, known later as the Entente Cordiale in April 1904, the French received both explicit and implicit permission to intervene in Morocco more thoroughly than they

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<sup>32</sup> Porch, Douglas, *The Conquest of Morocco*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983, 95-96.

<sup>33</sup> CAF July 1904. Since late 1903, the Bulletin and the European governments had been pressing for the creation of a police force in Tangier where most of the Europeans in Morocco lived.

had in the previous years. The British agreed to allow large-scale French involvement in Morocco, and in exchange, the French were to give up all territorial rights in Egypt. It was at this point that Morocco was truly caught in the grips of European politics, unable to escape. But in 1904 the colonialists debated what options were available in Morocco to bring civilization to the Cherifien Empire, and with it peace and prosperity.

France's Entente with the British, and specifically the clauses concerning Morocco and Egypt, though approved of by the colonialists, did not mean that they trusted British intentions. The *Bulletin*, for instance, expressed concern late in 1904 that the English were breaking the terms of the treaty by offering support to the former Moroccan Minister of War.<sup>34</sup> As the *Bulletin* tried to stir up trouble over perceived violations of the Entente, the *Quinzaine Coloniale*, the journal published by the *Union Coloniale Française*, began, for the first time, to focus on Morocco in detail. The editorials dramatically addressed the specific concerns of their readers, which differed greatly from those expressed by the *Bulletin*. All of this created an atmosphere of concern within the colonial movement about Morocco and what the French stood to gain there.

## 1901-1902

In the earliest years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the *Bulletin*, the organ of the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*, closely tracked the political developments in Morocco. Not only were the French colonialists genuinely interested in Morocco as a potential colony and as

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<sup>34</sup> CAF September 1904.

added security for their colony in Algeria,<sup>35</sup> they were interested as well in the European aspects of the Morocco situation, specifically the potential conflicts of the multiple European nations, whose interests and ambitions were playing out in the Cherifien Empire. The Germans, French and British were all interested in expansion in Morocco and the status of Tangier as a free city meant that all three nations had an active interest in the Empire. For the Bulletin, the shifting power statuses of the European nations represented an important detail to be covered as they discussed the political and economic issues facing the Sultan. In this way, the Bulletin in the earliest years of the twentieth century provided its readers with a rather complete picture of both the internal and external stresses facing Morocco and the problems of any European nation seeking to control the Cherifien Empire.

The French and the other European powers had maintained an important presence in Morocco and at the court of the Sultan since 1895 when they forced on the Sultan a European presence in Fez and in regions that were formerly off limits to foreigners.<sup>36</sup> By 1901 and 1902 the power and the influence of the European delegations had made a significant impact on the Sultan Moulay Abd-el-Aziz. The Sultan himself undertook to modernize some aspects of the nation, beginning with the old tax code. In place of the Koranic taxes he implemented a new, European style tax system that was more advantageous to the Europeans than the old tax code had been.<sup>37</sup> However, in his rush to modernize he faced off against the traditionalists who did not want any major changes to

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<sup>35</sup> CAF November 1901.

<sup>36</sup> Heggoy, Alf Andrew, *The African Policies of Gabriel Hanotaux 1894-1895*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1972, 26.

<sup>37</sup> Porch 58.

Morocco. His most powerful adversaries at first were the Ulemas, the Islamic legal scholars, and the Imams at the mosques in Fez and other cities, who were powerful voices in arguing for the traditional ways.

The Bulletin, while supporting the reforms in Morocco because of the advantages they would bring to the French there, maintained a wait-and-see attitude with respect to the reforms. In 1902 as potential reforms were addressed, the Bulletin stated, “It is indisputable however, that the party of the Caid El Menehbi can be described as reformist, as that word applies to reality in Morocco, but it would be very premature to pronounce the final results of trends occurring in the Sultan’s entourage.”<sup>38</sup> In fact, only one month after refusing to state how the reforms were progressing, the *Comité* backed off from its previous support of the reforms. They stated that the Sultan had been too hasty in implementing some reforms and that the subsequent uprisings were a result of his not thinking his actions completely through: “We saw that the Sultan was too zealous and a little hasty for reform, in particular in the matter of taxes.”<sup>39</sup> The Bulletin’s attitude and approach to the situation was both self-serving and weak. While they clearly wanted the reforms to go through because of the advantages they would bring to Europeans, they seemed more concerned about the region’s stability than with the reforms. The Bulletin’s approach was to support reforms, but not if they brought any danger to Europeans there. Even then for a group that claimed to want large-scale expansion and control in Morocco, they remained cautious, fearing that a strong stance on these issues would destabilize the Sultan’s rule.

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<sup>38</sup> CAF January 1902.

<sup>39</sup> CAF February 1902.

As the Sultan moved ahead with the tax reform and became interested in other Western ideas, a series of uprisings against his authority broke out across the empire. These uprisings culminated in the uprising of Bou Hamara, who was called by the French press “the Pretender.” The pretender provided another option for both the tribes and the traditionalists against the Sultan and he presented himself as the real heir to the throne, long thought dead.<sup>40</sup> The two sides fielded armies and sought the allegiance of the tribes. Unfortunately for the Sultan, the Pretender received significantly more support and won more than he lost in these first years. These reverses, combined with rumors of desertions in the Sultan’s armies, explains the picture the *Comité* painted in their reporting: that the Sultan’s position was in danger. In December 1902 it wrote, “The departure of the Sultan from Fez was delayed by a serious enough alert.... [The Pretender] has managed to gather around him a considerable number of supporters.”<sup>41</sup> The Bulletin followed all the facets of the developing Civil War in great detail and strove to give specific details about troop movements and the safety of the Europeans in their reports. These reports revealed the dangerous reality of life for Europeans in Morocco.

In 1901-1902 the French found themselves behind the British and the Spanish in terms of influence with the Moroccan government. The Sultan was strongly influenced by his British advisors in the capital, while Spanish trade and gold increased Spain’s influence in economic matters. The French colonialists expressed concern that the French were losing out to the other powers in Morocco. “We speak of King Leopold, who has expressed for some time that he wanted to renew in Morocco his policy of

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<sup>40</sup> Porch, 96.

<sup>41</sup> CAF December 1902.

...expansion to obtain railroad concessions from the Sultan. At the same time, the English offered to facilitate a loan.”<sup>42</sup> Notwithstanding what should have been a great support for France given its position next door in Algeria, the French did not have the Sultan’s ear in the way the British did. Consequently to the Bulletin, the two British members of the Sultan’s entourage were far more dangerous to French interests and the status quo than the unrest in the countryside.

But for all the powers involved in Morocco at this time, maintaining the status quo between the various European groups was the most important aspect of any policy in Morocco. The Bulletin published in their entirety articles from foreign sources that might interest readers, in addition to articles and first-person reports from members of the *Comité* and correspondents in North Africa. Most of these articles in 1901-1902 concerned the European powers and the status quo. Although Germany, Britain and France all had competing interests in Morocco, none of them wished to upset the status quo.<sup>43</sup> Thus when intervention was considered by any of the European powers, maintaining the status quo was always taken into account before a policy was enacted. It is the question of the status quo that is the main theme of the *Comité’s* first two years of reporting. Although the *Comité* tended not to comment on the articles they published from foreign newspapers discussing the maintenance of the status quo, they printed them,

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<sup>42</sup> CAF December 1902. In December 1901 and January 1902, the Bulletin made clear their concerns about losing power in Morocco, even expressing concern over the Belgians in Morocco.

<sup>43</sup> Every reported incident and event in Morocco that lead to possible outside intervention, was tempered by the Bulletin’s and the European’s insistence that nothing upset the status quo in Morocco. When the Spanish threatened an invasion of Morocco to rescue two kidnapped Spaniards, the Bulletin was insistent in October 1901 that the status quo not be changed.

but were sure to insist that the French position in Morocco remain unchanged, no matter what the other powers were doing.

The Bulletin of the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* was careful to cover any and all events that concerned Europeans in Morocco, both before and after the uprisings, changed the conditions in which Europeans lived in the Cherifien Empire. All the European governments were concerned with protection of their citizens; hence the Bulletin used their reporting of the kidnapping of two young Spanish siblings to indicate the lack of order in Morocco and the powerlessness of the Sultan.<sup>44</sup> In the Spanish kidnapping incident, the Spanish government refused the demands of the kidnapers and leaned ever more heavily on the Sultan to assure the freedom of the Spaniards, the Sultan was forced to make heavy concessions to the kidnapers (and the tribes from which they came) in order to save the Spanish. And although it had been apparent from the beginning that Spain would have to intervene in Morocco, when intervention came, the *Comité* questioned the form it could conceivably take: “We believe, however, that we should remain fairly skeptical about the possibility of the occupation of some part of Morocco by Spain.”<sup>45</sup> To the colonialists, the Spanish would intervene in some manner, but the large-scale intervention being discussed in Madrid, seemed unlikely. Although the Sultan had done all that the European powers had wanted to secure the release of the siblings, the Bulletin was sharply critical of him for his apparent caving to the tribes, as it showed, they said, that he lacked control over his own people. This seemingly two-faced

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<sup>44</sup> CAF September 1901, October 1901, January 1902.

<sup>45</sup> CAF October 1901.

position, which the *Comité* like other Europeans took, was typical of the way Europeans dealt with non-European governments.

The Bulletin focused its reporting on the deteriorating political situation and dangers in Morocco, as a way to show its readers the devolving situation there but without specifically arguing for an increase in French intervention. They left it to the readers to see for themselves the situation, trusting they would draw the appropriate conclusions. Here too the Bulletin is two-faced. For while it discussed at length the serious and grave nature of the situation with the Pretender and the rebellious tribes, in December 1902, it reassured readers that “the troubles in Morocco are strictly local, that they rarely endanger the towns and the European colonies....”<sup>46</sup> This was not entirely misleading. While it is true that most of the violent uprisings took place in the countryside, away from the large cities and the European populations, the constant coverage of the violence painted a very different picture. On the one hand the Bulletin’s coverage every month depicted a nation coming apart due to internal rifts, on the other hand it continued to indicate in its editorials that in actuality things were much calmer than they appeared in news articles.

Because the Spanish already had a significant claim to part of Morocco, the colonialists were more concerned with the actions of the Germans in and around Morocco. Germany saw Morocco as an entrance into potential colonization of North Africa to supplement Germany colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. As the colonialists saw it, “Finally, those lands [on the Atlantic coast] situated on the route leading to the

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<sup>46</sup> CAF December 1902.



German colonies in Africa, would be excellent positions for the Imperial Navy”.<sup>47</sup> In December 1901, the Bulletin reported on the advantages Germany sought in Morocco. The Germans, they noted, already had a larger economic stake in Morocco than in several smaller European powers and were looking to expand that economic stake into territorial gains on the west coast of Morocco.<sup>48</sup> The *Comité*’s concern over these ambitions was significantly more than their concern six months later when the Germans opened a consulate in Fez, joining the French and the British as the only European powers with consulates in the formerly forbidden city. German influence in Morocco was clearly growing and the *Comité* tracked it with great concern, a concern that remained for the next ten years.

In these first two years of intensive coverage of Morocco by the Bulletin, the journal of the *Union Coloniale Française* was, by contrast, almost totally silent on Morocco. They published only one article about Morocco in 1901, and none in 1902. Their silence on Morocco can be linked to their mission statement, that being: to concern themselves with commercial interests in the colonies, to support organizations with the same common interests, and to present economic matters in their colonies to the public.<sup>49</sup> For most French merchants in the first years of the century, Morocco remained a backwater, a place of very little interest for those looking to make a profit. Although the

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<sup>47</sup> CAF December 1901.

<sup>48</sup> CAF December 1901.

<sup>49</sup> Persell, 177. As quoted from the *Quinzaine Coloniale*, 10 Jan 1897 and translated by Stuart Persell.

“1. To find all means necessary to assure development, prosperity, and the defense of the diverse branches of agriculture, commerce, and industry in our colonies.  
2. To unite all organizations and societies with these interests in common.  
3. To examine and present all economic or legislative measures deemed necessary to the public powers and to disseminate them by publicity in newspapers, etc.”

Bulletin was obviously looking to increase their coverage of Morocco, the *Quinzaine Coloniale* would not focus attention on it until it appeared that the French had the ability to make a profit or engage in significant trading there. The most intriguing article it published was early in 1901, in which it an article by Robert de Caix was discussed and the *Quinzaine* agreed with its premise that there was “a possible solution to the Morocco question in a compromise, in which the terms will be in part, the neutralization of the northernmost point of [Morocco] and the renunciation of our claim in the Nile Valley [to England]; and the other part, the recognition of our domination of all Moroccan territory.”<sup>50</sup> In this article, it anticipated, in gross outline at least, the diplomatic agreement reached by the two powers in 1904. Although the *Quinzaine* was not yet fully behind expansion in Morocco, it was interested in encouraging peace and negotiations so that France could benefit from commerce there.

### **1903-1904**

For the French the years 1903-1904 were much more productive in Morocco than the two previous years. The Bulletin reported extensively on the continuing fighting in the interior and lack of security in Morocco, discussing in depth the fact that there were now serious discussions among the major powers about what to do about Morocco. Not only was the Sultan unable to make any real gains against the Pretender, he was losing the support of his government as well, and as more and more tribes declared for the Pretender, only to be brought back to the government fold, the Bulletin’s coverage began to focus on the anarchy they depicted Morocco descending into. Each new failure by the

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<sup>50</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale* 10 July 1901.

Sultan's armies and each success of the Pretender's seemed but another indication of disaster in Morocco. Nonetheless, although they were concerned for the Europeans in Morocco, the Bulletin also saw opportunity for France and French interests in the ever-advancing power vacuum.

Above all, the French colonialist groups remained concerned about the presence and objectives of Germans in Morocco. This remained a major piece of their coverage from the Cherifien Empire. Throughout 1903-1904, the Bulletin increased its coverage of the German colonial movement and its interest in Morocco, and by the time of the announcement of the Anglo-French Accord in April 1904, the Bulletin followed especially carefully the activities of the German colonials. The Germans' renewed interest in Morocco threatened France's newfound power there. Indeed in December, according to the journal the German colonial groups discussed the potential for a formal German colony on the west coast of Morocco.<sup>51</sup> Although the Bulletin noted in their coverage of these activities they had no support from the German government and only minimal support from the majority of German colonial groups, the amount of coverage devoted to the topic implied that the issue was a pressing one for French interests in Morocco. The fact that the Bulletin devoted space to discussing the hopes of marginalized German groups is an indication that they took every whisper of German activity in Morocco very seriously. Thus in this way, the Bulletin printed the truth about foreign colonial policies — that there was not much interest from German groups on Morocco — but left open the possibility of a German threat and thereby subtly telling

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<sup>51</sup> CAF December 1904.

their members that intervention in Morocco was important in order to stop German expansionism.

The volatile political and military situation in Morocco only heated up more in the months surrounding the signing of the Accord. As the fighting grew worse and the Sultan's government began to falter, the *Comité* grew concerned about the strength of the Cherifien government and their inability to provide security in Morocco.<sup>52</sup> Regarding support of the Sultan, the Bulletin was indecisive. At times, they believed that full support would help French interests, but at other times, they expressed reservations about the unquestioned support that the French seemed to give the Sultan and his government. Although the situation in Morocco, both politically and internationally, was relatively fluid at this time, it was quite good as compared to later years. The Bulletin's rapid retraction of enthusiastic support suggested that it was not as confident of France's position in Morocco as it implied. Even though every European nation claimed rights in Morocco and jockeyed for position there, it was the Sultan who made the *Comité* think twice, not the international situation.

In addition to concerns about the stability of Morocco as presented in articles published in the Bulletin, the *Comité* also remained upset with the perceived biased press coverage Morocco was receiving in the international press. The Bulletin had in previous years published intact entire articles from a British correspondent for the *Times*.<sup>53</sup> In late 1903 and into 1904, however, the editors of the Bulletin began to question his reporting

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<sup>52</sup> CAF May 1903.

<sup>53</sup> These types of reprints are common throughout the Bulletin. In December 1901, The Bulletin published a direct translation of a published interview with the Sultan given to the Times.

and expressed discontent with the way he portrayed the situation in Morocco. Their change in opinion of M. Harris was directly related to the changing internal situation in Morocco; for as it became more apparent after the negotiation of the Entente that the French would have significant control in Morocco, the Bulletin became concerned about how the situation in Morocco reflected the French ability to ensure security. They continued to publish details well after the signing of the Entente that painted a bleak picture of the security situation in Morocco and the power of the Sultan, yet they grew impatient when the international press printed disparaging items about Morocco and declared that they would work to “unmask this campaign” to sully the French and that they would only publish the truth.<sup>54</sup> The Bulletin at this time portrayed itself as the only trustworthy source of information about Morocco and thereby gave itself an increasingly important position in the Moroccan situation, even if that position was self-appointed.

The *Quinzaine's* detailed analytical and editorial pieces asking what should happen in Morocco explicitly showed the opinions and the ideas behind the *Union Coloniale Française*. Because the *Quinzaine's* main focus was on potential commerce in French colonies, their coverage in 1903 revolved around the need for an agreement with Britain and a cautious approach to any further expansion and involvement in Morocco. The Union argued that although France had an overwhelming voice in Moroccan affairs in Europe, it would be dangerous to continue to expand without an international agreement: “we must still reach an agreement with the powers and know under what conditions they will permit us to establish affairs according to the needs of Western

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<sup>54</sup> CAF December 1904.

civilization.”<sup>55</sup> However this cautious approach did not mean they had doubts about who should take the reins there and why. They argued that not only would intervention be good for France, but “that the European nations... have everything to gain and nothing to lose by the establishment of this guardianship.”<sup>56</sup> In attempting to garner international support for French power in Morocco, the colonialists were counting on the fact that the situation in Morocco was so bad that no one else wanted to deal with it, and that by volunteering to stabilize the situation the other foreign powers would support them.

The signing of the Entente Cordiale between the French and the British was an important step in this direction. Hailed as the most important treaty between the two nations in 150 years<sup>57</sup> for colonialists the treaty’s most significant sections were those that related to Morocco and Egypt. The *Quinzaine Coloniale* had, in fact, published the basic outline of the final treaty in April 1903, a full year before the treaty was made public. Both the Bulletin and the *Quinzaine Coloniale* agreed on the treaty’s importance in this respect, even the *Petit Parisien*, the popular and influential republican daily, reported extensively on the aspects of the treaty that covered the colonies, with little time spent on other issues the treaty addressed.<sup>58</sup> The articles of the treaty that dealt with Morocco and Egypt and the respective rights and responsibilities of France and Britain in these areas were carefully analyzed and in the end deemed an acceptable trade off in order to solidify their relations, but also to gain support in North Africa as a whole. In

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<sup>55</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale* 10 June 1903.

<sup>56</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale* 25 June 1903.

<sup>57</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale* 25 April 1904.

<sup>58</sup> *Petit Parisien* 8 April to 10 April 1904. The articles on April 8 and April 10 both discuss all the aspects of the treaty, but the long article on April 9, focuses on Morocco and Egypt.

the end, the *Comité*, the Union, and even the *grande presse*<sup>59</sup> believed that the Entente was an important step forward for France in Morocco and for France in regards to its colonial interests in Africa.

With the signing of the Entente, the French almost immediately took on new responsibilities in Morocco, which led to a new realm of debate. By 1904, the Bulletin was fully behind French intervention in Morocco and stressed Morocco's place in the larger French worldview. The *Quinzaine*, on the other hand, was not as supportive of France in Morocco at the beginning. However in less than a year, its editorials went from expressing the view that French interests in Morocco might be blinding the colonialists to opportunities elsewhere,<sup>60</sup> to referring to Morocco as "our dear Morocco."<sup>61</sup> The praise the *Quinzaine* had for the Anglo-French Accord went beyond just excitement for the agreement, it became lavish adoration. "It is, in the nature of foreign policy, as we conceive it today, the most significant event that has occurred since the treaty of Paris in 1763."<sup>62</sup> The *Quinzaine*, moreover, praised the way in which French policies in Morocco were being pursued and expressed confidence in French opportunities there in the future. Although both the *Quinzaine* and the Bulletin encouraged peaceful intervention in Morocco over military intervention, the *Quinzaine's* lavish praise for the government's policy seemed designed to bring into the fold those members of the Union still skeptical about Morocco.

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<sup>59</sup> *Grande presse* refers to the largest of the Parisian and national daily papers, *Le Petit Parisien* being the epitome of this group in terms of influence.

<sup>60</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale* 10 June 1903.

<sup>61</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale* 25 April 1904.

<sup>62</sup> CAF January 1904.

The journals published articles on, and participated actively in, the debate concerning the best way to proceed in Morocco. While most colonialists advocated a “sweet” policy in which the French would bring “civilizing” aspects to Morocco like schools and roads, some members of the Chambers of Deputies argued that a more military approach to Morocco would be better for advancing French policy.<sup>63</sup> The Bulletin and the *Quinzaine* both thought that a “sweet” approach was the best policy to pursue in Morocco and the “sweet” approach was advocated from the earliest articles as the only way to ensure French success in Morocco. Both journals remained firm in their belief that military action in Morocco would only destabilize the situation there and possibly upset the diplomatic situation in Europe as well. For them, “sweet” intervention carried the fewest risks to French foreign policy and also to Frenchmen living and working in North Africa. And eventually, they argued, this approach would acquire for France a major piece of North Africa without antagonizing Spain and Germany.

In November 1904, the French and the Spanish in fact signed an agreement that helped to define each nation’s position in Morocco. Definitive zones of occupation were set down and the Spanish were now fully behind the Anglo-French Accord of April.<sup>64</sup> Spain’s position in Morocco, and its rights and responsibilities there, were spelled out in the Franco-Spanish agreement, making Spain the second power in authority in the region. The colonialists in the *Comité* were thrilled: “We look forward to the endorsement of the settlement of past difficulties between two nations whose colonial ambitions had

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<sup>63</sup> *Quinzaine Coloniale* 10 July 1904.

<sup>64</sup> CAF November 1904.



necessarily put them in opposition.”<sup>65</sup> Because the British had given up their claim to Morocco, and Spain was more or less appeased by the agreement in November, the only remaining source of concern for France by the end of 1904 was Germany. France was now dominant in Morocco and had the support of the British and the Spanish in the Cherifien Empire. This dominance, by the end of 1904, did not outwardly change France’s position in Morocco, but created the potential for significant gains in political and economic power both in Morocco and, as a result of their agreement with Spain and Britain, in the overall politics of Europe. The stage was set for French acquisition of Morocco for its colonial empire.

**Conclusion:**

The coverage of Morocco in the Bulletin concerned itself with news stories more than opinions and editorial pieces. Although some of those are present in these years, for the most part the articles themselves, with a little help from some well-placed questions, suggested the opinions of the members of the *Comité de l’Afrique Française*. The articles over four years systematically show a descent into anarchy and a lack of security for Europeans in the country. The Bulletin looked to drum up support for intervention and a more active role in Morocco by showing the problems that plagued the empire and extolling the rewards the French could bring and receive with a more active role in Morocco. Even the more skeptical *Quinzaine Coloniale* encouraged intervention and pressed for French involvement to prevent other European powers from taking control.

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<sup>65</sup> CAF November 1904.

Neither group truly argued against French intervention in Morocco at any point. Rather they engaged in a discussion of the options available when intervention occurred. The most important thing however, was that the French be the ones to intervene, not one of the other European powers. Over four years, aspects of the message the *Bulletin* and the *Quinzaine* were trying to deliver evolved from one issue to another. In some ways the argument the journals made in late 1904 after the signing of the Accord with England was more sophisticated than the one made in 1901, despite a more straightforward delivery. The journals presented overwhelming information from a variety of sources and their readers understood that as the situation grew more complicated, so too must the French's reaction to the problems they faced. The *Bulletin's* coverage of Morocco grew significantly and because they sought to explain as best as possible the political and economic situation in Morocco, their readership was able to understand a more sophisticated argument about potential French intervention.

The journals in these four years had clear agendas. Their main goal was to reinforce in the minds of their readership the idea that the French acquisition of Morocco was positive, both for the colonial groups, and for the nation as a whole. The constant reinforcement of Spanish and German aspirations in Morocco gave the French colonialists an enemy to defeat through diplomatic means, but also an argument that Morocco had great potential for French business interests. For the members of the *Union Coloniale Française* this was especially important. In the early years of the century Morocco had little to offer the colonialists in way of commerce and profit. But by implying that the defeat of German expansion into Morocco would give the French

access to the commerce the Germans had, they encouraged the interest of their commerce-minded members and aroused support of French Morocco. Although French aspirations as a way to deny power to the Germans was an argument just developing in these years, it would become a major part of how the colonial groups approached the situation in Morocco in the years to come.

### **CHAPTER 3: THE EUROPEAN BALANCE OF POWER IN MOROCCO AFTER THE ENTENTE CORDIALE**

French colonialists' interest in Morocco increased after the signing of the Entente with Great Britain in 1904. Where before Morocco had been a place the French wanted to control, it was now a place where they had gained enough influence to strongly exert themselves. The French found themselves with significance influence in a region where Spain was the only other nation with a sufficient foothold to compete with France. But their position as the most important power in Morocco did not last long. The Germans almost immediately placed themselves between the French and total domination in Morocco, seeking to increase their own colonial empire. The intervention of the Germans, beginning with the Kaiser's visit to Tangier in 1905, set off a series of incidents and conferences designed to bring about a conclusion to the Moroccan question for the European powers.

Despite the amount of diplomatic maneuvering and negotiating that the European powers undertook concerning Morocco following the Anglo-French Accord, no real definitive agreement was reached during or after the Conference at Algeciras in early 1906. The governments, especially the French and the German, continued to attempt to outmaneuver each other in their quest for power and control in Morocco. The French colonialists worked even harder to stay abreast of the situation in Morocco and to control, to the best of their ability, the overall picture coming out of North Africa. Both the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*, which was devoted to the French Moroccan cause, and the *Union Coloniale Française*, which took a less dramatic wait-and-see approach to the

situation, increased their coverage of Morocco and German intentions following the agreements at Algeciras.

Their undiluted promotion of the French cause was slowed however by events outside of the control of the Europeans. For all the pretenses that Morocco remained a free and independent nation, neither the Germans nor the French truly saw the Moroccan government as able to run their own affairs. Despite their lack of trust, European governments could not assure that they had the ability to further their goals in Morocco, as the Sultan's trust shifted from nation to nation. When the Sultan's half-brother rose up against his government and declared himself Sultan, eventually usurping his brother's authority in Morocco, the European nations were left floundering, unsure of whom to support and how to ensure that their own power and influence remained intact. For all that the Europeans' position was better for European interests after Algeciras, they still could not control the internal politics of Morocco, and found themselves confronted with the fact that none of the major powers truly ran Morocco. In some aspects, mostly internal, Morocco remained free to act and react without European intervention.

### **Germany and the Coup de Tangier**

The European diplomats who had flocked to Morocco over the years seeking to enhance their nation's position there had become a powerful force by the time of the Anglo-French Accord. The international diplomatic corps was stationed in Tangier and counted among its members not only the major powers of Europe but the minor ones as well, including Italy and Portugal, as well as the diplomats from the United States. Tangier was the main trading post with Europe, due to its proximity to Europe and

because it contained the largest concentration of Europeans. Therefore Tangier, though not the capital, and rarely visited by the Sultan, became the barometer by which the situation in Morocco was measured for and by the Europeans. When the situation around Tangier became dangerous or worried Europeans, demands for action came more swiftly than when there were uprisings and dangers in other regions of the nation.<sup>66</sup>

Until 1905, the Germans had expressed little interest in Morocco for any reason. Although there were some Germans in Morocco, the German government as a whole stayed out of international affairs concerning Morocco. When the Kaiser embarked upon a trip to North Africa, including a stop in Tangier, the French were naturally concerned.<sup>67</sup> But Tangier was, by treaty, a free city, and everyone had the right to land there, no matter how much the other powers disliked the idea. In Tangier, the Kaiser's actions were remarkable only because he was the first major foreign leader to make a trip to Morocco. Despite French and Spanish interest over the previous decade, only appointed delegations and ambassadors had spent time in the nation. The grand trip raised William II's profile on the world stage, and in particular, increased Germany's position in the eyes of North African governments.

For the colonialists, the Kaiser's visit and meetings with Moroccan officials were seen as deliberately provocative. "This deception of the Emperor is a fact which we cannot be too careful of," the *Comité* noted and it added that the time after his arrival was

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<sup>66</sup> The sheer number of Europeans in Tangier is what gave the situations developing there great weight back in Europe. Those out in the countryside or at other ports knew they were in more danger than if they were in Tangier. But the diplomats looked at Tangier as a European city and expected the same level of comfort and security they could expect at home.

<sup>67</sup> CAF March 1905.

marked by “a period of disorder.”<sup>68</sup> The trip also focused German attention on Morocco in a way that had not existed before, thus creating for the French colonialists a new obstacle in their drive for domination of the Sultan. The Kaiser’s trip made it clear that he at least was interested in Morocco and drew in more interest from other Germans. The increased German interest in Morocco was a threat to France but until the Germans were explicit about their interest, all the colonialists could do was try to downplay the fears that a German presence in Morocco would destroy everything that France had accomplished there. “Germany’s colonial future is, if it absolutely is a foothold in the Mediterranean, not on the side opposite France, Spain and Italy, but toward the gulf, in the part leading to the plains of Asia, in the historic valleys which abut the Persian Gulf.”<sup>69</sup> By suggesting that the Germans were interested in regions where the French were not, the colonial journals attempted to calm their readership on the issue of Germany.

Both journals were clearly upset with the Kaiser’s visit and they subtly expressed their displeasure at the visit. They dismissed the visit by barely discussing it and refusing to address it in depth. “We heard enough in our expose of the German-Moroccan incident on the visit of William II to Tangier to not have to return to it at length in this column.”<sup>70</sup> But the real concern arrived as the French and Germans tried to come to an agreement on major issues in the late summer. Neither side was actually interested in entering into strict agreements at that time, but both wanted to meet in order to clear the

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<sup>68</sup> UCF 25 March 1907.

<sup>69</sup> CAF March 1905.

<sup>70</sup> CAF April 1905.

air on specific issues. “This détente,” the *Comité* observed, “could also signify that we want to prepare the ground for an accord on the Moroccan question....”<sup>71</sup> The decision to meet to negotiate took time to reach, but the colonialists supported negotiations from the beginning. The preliminary negotiations in which the two nations participated resulted in a formal agreement signed on 28 September. These Franco-German Accords agreed in principle to the two biggest issues facing European intervention in Morocco: the financial issues and the question of a European police force to provide security.<sup>72</sup> But the agreements did not attempt to solve the problems; rather, the nations agreed that the issues facing Morocco needed to be worked on.

The final German act in Tangier before the Conference at Algeiras was to bring in engineers to build new docks. To the French colonialists, this was more evidence that without an agreement delineating respective boundaries, the Germans would continue to increase their presence until they posed a serious threat. According previous agreements, companies from both nations had the right to bid on projects, but new competition for contracts would hurt French companies in Morocco.<sup>73</sup> Germany, no matter what she said, would always continue to increase her presence in Morocco, thereby constantly pushing up against France in all issues. Without a formal agreement, relations between France and Germany would therefore continue to worsen, until the only option for solving the problem would be the military option.

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<sup>71</sup> CAF May 1905.

<sup>72</sup> CAF August 1905.

<sup>73</sup> CAF November 1905.



## **The Act of Algeciras**

By July 1905 it was apparent to all involved that the current international arrangement in Morocco was failing. The Kaiser's visit had shattered much of the working agreement between France and Germany and there was increasing friction between the two powers on every Moroccan issue. As the situation grew more intense, the Sultan proposed a major international conference to discuss all the issues between the European powers concerning Morocco and settle once and for all where the nations stood and what limitations should be imposed. The colonialists latched onto the idea of a conference, "endorsing the inspired idea," seeing in it a good way forward for all involved.<sup>74</sup> For all the colonialists were interested in getting Morocco for France, they wanted to acquire it without bloodshed. This the Union made clear when it observed, "We are resolute partisans of peaceful penetration".<sup>75</sup>

The proposed Conference to discuss the Morocco Question became the focal point of all colonialist activity for more than six months. The Bulletin devoted a series of editorials about the French goals at the conference, where it also discussed what the Germans might achieve at agreements. They were obviously concerned with German attitudes and goals and their effect on the French. "Germany followed the Moroccan question in bad spirits [because of] M. Delcassé's policy, skillfully maintained by the British press."<sup>76</sup> There was also plenty of concern that the Germans were manipulating the entire situation or would back out of the Conference before it began, thus hurting the

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<sup>74</sup> CAF June 1905.

<sup>75</sup> UCF 10 April 1911.

<sup>76</sup> CAF January 1906.

international situation again.<sup>77</sup> Despite the fact that the French and the Germans had agreed in principle to the topics that were to be discussed at Algeciras with the 28 September Accords, the colonialists still felt the German government might back out of the agreements and arrive at Algeciras unwilling to negotiate.

The first sessions at Algeciras were set to begin on 15 December 1905, and in preparation for the sessions, the Bulletin devoted its December issue entirely to Morocco. That the entire issue was devoted to Morocco is indicative of how important the question of control of Morocco had become to the colonialists. The *Comité* strove to provide as complete as possible a history of the situation facing the nations at Algeciras along with all the background a reader might need to understand the negotiations and the problems facing the delegates.<sup>78</sup> No other nation received such treatment by the *Comité de l'Afrique Française*, and no other event created such a stir among the colonialists as a group. This was because it was the first time all of the interested powers would be coming together to set the limits on what could and could not be done in Morocco. Naturally, both the French and the Germans looked to increase their own power, while the French colonialists wanted to ensure that the French retained their influence and that the Germans were as hamstrung as possible.

The French arrived with three major concerns to address during the conference: arms control, a police force, and the equal distribution of power among the European powers.<sup>79</sup> The issue of arms control was the easiest issue to address because it was

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<sup>77</sup> CAF June 1905.

<sup>78</sup> CAF December 1905.

<sup>79</sup> CAF February 1906.

important to all the European nations. It was also the goal that received the least attention from the colonial journals, mostly due to the fact that it was a popular measure among all the delegations. The Europeans and the Sultan's government were concerned over the number of weapons in Morocco, especially in the hands of the tribes. Should a tribe acquire too many contraband weapons, they could pose a serious threat to everyone. The colonialists wholeheartedly supported the weapons ban as did the delegates at the conference and the Sultan himself, and thus the colonialists devoted little space to the question of weapons. "Weapons smuggling utilizes weaknesses and the Sultan is interested in its repression."<sup>80</sup>

The question of the police force was also one of interest to all the nations at the conference, and surprisingly an agreement that a police force should exist came quickly. The nations all agreed that the establishment of a police would help protect the Europeans and create more civilized cities to live in. The journals strongly supported the creation of a police and worried over the fact that the issue had become such a sticking point in negotiations: "the delicate points on which our future in North Africa must be resolutely defended because they can be seriously compromised; the bank and especially the police."<sup>81</sup> But, despite the general agreement, the details on how the police should be established and who should have authority over it took significant negotiations to work out. The sticking point was that while everyone agreed that police were a necessity, this did not mean they wanted to give any other nation more power in Morocco than was necessary.

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<sup>80</sup> CAF February 1906.

<sup>81</sup> CAF February 1906.

The question of controlling the amount of power and influence any one nation had in Morocco so as to maintain the balance of power was the question on which the colonialist journals focused the most attention. Even though the French colonialists had begun to look upon Morocco as their own, they knew that negotiations to establish the limits of European influence were important.<sup>82</sup> Thus despite wanting to conquer Morocco and hurt German colonial interests there, the French colonialists wanted to ensure that all colonial activities in Morocco were peaceful whenever possible. They therefore favored building roads and schools over using the French military to repress the Moroccan population because they believed in the power of the French civilizing mission to bring a nation under French control.

The reporting in the *Petit Parisien* on the Conference of Algeciras was concerned with the final decisions, and its reporting focused intensely on the Germans. The paper carried daily updates from Berlin on how the agreements were being received in Germany and in the government. Even though the paper saw in the agreements a German attempt to isolate France from her allies in Morocco, it focused on German government opinion and barely discussed French opinion.<sup>83</sup> But in this intense coverage of the Germans, it was clear that the paper was concerned not only about the reactions in the press and government, but that even the smallest obstacle could result in the Germans rejecting the agreements. And when the lead German negotiator at Algeciras fell ill before the agreements were ratified in Berlin, this posed a serious threat to the French, for if the biggest advocate for Algeciras was not able to promote it, the opponents in

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<sup>82</sup> CAF December 1905.

<sup>83</sup> *Petit Parisien* 3 April 1906.

Germany could potentially defeat the act, thereby returning the international situation in Morocco back to square one.

### **Post-Algeciras Posturing**

After close to two years of work, the arrangement worked out between the major powers was signed by the last of the important players and could now be implemented. But the implementation of the arrangements made at Algeciras became yet another battlefield between France and Germany. This was because Algeciras was not a treaty, but rather a series of broad ideas each nation agreed to work toward implementing. This meant that once the main negotiations were complete, each nation had to ratify the agreements and only then could the real work begin. For each major point, a series of sub-committees were formed to negotiate exactly how the implementation of the agreements would take place.

Even with the agreement in place, the French and the colonialists remained very concerned about the creation of a police force. Although it would appear that setting up a joint police force between the French and the Spanish would be relatively easy, in reality its implementation led to months of back and forth negotiating.<sup>84</sup> The eight port cities that were to receive a force each had their force set up separately, meaning the negotiations for each city happened separately. Although the French and the Spanish would run the police jointly, the body of the force would be Moroccans led by European officers. The main disagreement concerned the division of responsibilities between Spain

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<sup>84</sup> CAF March 1907.

and France.<sup>85</sup> Although the forces were to protect the ports, the question of who would protect the actual port and who would protect the town was unclear and one that concerned the colonialists.

But the issues surrounding the creation of the police were minor compared how to deal with Germany. The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* especially interpreted every move and action by the Germans in Morocco as potentially in violation of the Act of Algeciras.<sup>86</sup> Because the wording of the agreements was purposefully vague, almost anything could be considered a violation of the act and the French colonialists were not hesitant to accuse the Germans of violating the agreements at every turn. But there was also an out in the agreements tied to the Sultan.<sup>87</sup> This involved the fact that the Europeans were expected to abide by the agreements reached at Algeciras unless the Sultan made a specific request. In other words, if the Sultan made a request for action from a European nation that violated Algeciras, the Sultan's request voided Algeciras.

In 1907 the French found themselves facing cascading situations in Morocco. The colonialists reeled from crisis to crisis, simply trying to keep up. Just as one crisis was concluded another would pop up. But the colonialists in both journals also worked events up to further French goals in Morocco. Any danger to a European was considered a major threat that had to be dealt with to ensure the safety of everyone living and

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<sup>85</sup> CAF August 1907; CAF September 1907.

<sup>86</sup> For example, in 1907, the presence of two German officers in Morocco received the full attention of the Bulletin. Their every action was scrutinized to ensure that they did not violate Algeciras. But even when the officers were named by the Sultan to train about 100 troops, the *Comité* was forced to admit that the actions were not in violation of the agreements, but in preparation of violating them. CAF January 1907.

<sup>87</sup> CAF February 1906.

working in Morocco. The murder of a Frenchman in Morocco, such as Dr. Mauchamp, would develop into a serious affair and was covered for months until the Sultan met all the French demands. In June the *Quinzaine Coloniale* reported on the demands made by the French government in the Mauchamp Affair, and they approved of them; these included demands for the “dismissal and imprisonment at Tangier of the pasha of Marrakesh, guilty of provoking the crowd against Dr. Mauchamp” and “payment of an indemnity that will be fixed by a future French government, for the murder of Dr. Mauchamp.”<sup>88</sup> And both the colonial journals and the newspapers treated the death of any European as more than just a murder. The death of a Frenchman required significant deterrents to prevent something like it from happening again.

Every time a European was attacked or killed in Morocco, major indemnities were demanded of the Sultan. But while large monetary settlements were always required, the French tried to demand not just money but achieve other goals through their demands as well. Thus in the demands listed after the death of Dr. Mauchamp, the French asked for “Application of the Franco-Moroccan accords of 1901 and 1902 in the frontier region, particularly as regards the creation of a police force in this zone” and “recall and repudiate the official Moulai Idriss sent by the Moroccan government to Mauritania and who lead the revolt of the tribes of Adrar against French authority.”<sup>89</sup> The French used their demands to remove Moroccan officials who were unfavorable to France to acquire new rights and powers in the financial sector, and to assert their power in any way possible. These indemnities had multiple motivations. They allowed the

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<sup>88</sup> UCF 10 June 1907.

<sup>89</sup> UCF 10 June 1907.

French to not only punish the Moroccan government and increase their own influence, but to demonstrate the extent of French power in Morocco as an example to other European powers. The journals both expressed the opinion that taking a hard line against the Moroccans in retribution for the deaths of Frenchmen was important for French policy in Morocco. “Chastisements and reparations,” the *Comité* wrote, “[are] necessary not only [because of] the death of Dr. Mauchamp, but to halt other attacks against the French.”<sup>90</sup>

The largest crisis after Algeciras was the incident at Casablanca. On 30 July 1907, ten European workers in the port were attacked and killed by members of a tribe from the region. The deaths of Frenchmen, Spaniards and Italians in a massacre provoked an immediate reaction from the French government.<sup>91</sup> On top of the usual payments requested and demands of changes made, the French landed an expeditionary force in August of 3000 men to attack and punish those responsible for the massacre. The troops occupied the city on 8 August and then began the work of calming the countryside. The colonialists fully supported the use of French force at Casablanca and saw in it the potential to pacify the lands around the city, thus creating for the French a safe port further south.<sup>92</sup>

Even though the reaction to the deaths at Casablanca was dramatic, it was also a response to a situation that could have quickly spiraled out of French control. The fact that those killed were of several nationalities meant that the initial massacre became an

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<sup>90</sup> CAF May 1907.

<sup>91</sup> Petit Parisien 1 August 1907.

<sup>92</sup> UCF 10 September 1907.



international event. All the nations whose citizens had been killed wanted retribution. “We know that the Chamber of Communes has demanded that the British government not send a cruiser to protect their nationals at Casablanca. A similar initiative was to be feared on Italy’s part because three Italians were among the victims of the massacre.”<sup>93</sup> For if the French did not act first and dramatically, the Europeans might intervene and increase their own influence in and around Casablanca. The death of the Europeans was also the largest attack against a European contingent yet, and therefore to both the French government and the French colonialists a large-scale response was the only option. While, as noted, the colonialists usually worked toward peaceful, non-military intervention in Morocco, when European lives were threatened they were willing to support a more violent option. “For us peaceful penetration consists mainly of getting the Moroccans interest using the softest way possible, except in cases of absolute impossibility, to put pressure on them. We believe in this practical policy, much more now that we have, with the assent of Europe, made a demonstration of force and that there are in Morocco, powers who, to maintain their position, have a ... need of our goodwill and support.”<sup>94</sup>

The *Petit Parisien* covered the expeditionary force sent in August to Casablanca almost obsessively. They concerned themselves with every aspect of the invasion, from the naval vessels and the troop deployments from Algeria, to the daily reactions of the other European nations to their intervention. German and Russian opinion regarding the expeditionary force was followed in depth. Although the French had the support of the

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<sup>93</sup> UCF 10 August 1907.

<sup>94</sup> CAF September 1907.

major powers for the invasion at Casablanca, opinions could shift quickly, and despite approval and working within Algeciras, the paper was uncertain how the French action in Casablanca might affect German opinion. Twelve days after Casablanca was taken, the paper published an editorial extolling the virtues of “The Pioneers of Civilization.” Although the piece did not focus solely on the French in Morocco, it was clear that the paper was endeavoring to bolster support for the troops in Morocco.<sup>95</sup>

Beyond German intentions in Morocco, the colonialists also saw another, possibly even more insidious threat to French dominance in Morocco. Although the question of Morocco was not often debated on the floor of the Chamber of Deputies, when it was raised, the colonialists were especially concerned about the opinions of the Socialist party leader Jean Jaurès. Jaurès was against most of the colonial expansion advocated by the French colonialists and he used his position in the Chamber of Deputies to express his views on colonialism. The journals did not appreciate Jaurès or his opinions and they spent considerable time attacking him and his arguments. “M. Jaurès brings in our foreign affairs an attitude that seems more and more peculiar as it grows.... His black imagination is inexhaustible in its sinister predictions. He breathes despondency tirelessly.”<sup>96</sup> After one session in the Chamber in which Jaurès attacked French policies in Morocco, based on German spread rumors of the Sultan’s treachery, the colonialists replied, “What is sad is that in France some politicians support such maneuvers. If it depended on M. Jaurès, we would all be persuaded of Abd-el-Aziz’s betrayal.”<sup>97</sup> This

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<sup>95</sup> Petit Parisien 20 August 1907.

<sup>96</sup> UCF 10 February 1908.

<sup>97</sup> UCF 25 February 1908.

was a clever argument for the colonialists because it allowed them to attack both the Germans and those in the French government that they believed were hurting Moroccan policy.

In their attempts to contain German actions in Morocco, the French colonialists kept a close eye on the other signatory powers. Although no other nations outside of France, Germany and Spain had shown any real interest in anything more than trade in Morocco, the French remained wary about the motivations of the nations that had participated in the Conference at Algeiras, but gained little. So as those nations approved the Act of Algeiras, thus strengthening the Act with each additional nation, the *Comité* covered the fact that new signatories had come on board, strengthening the French position overall.<sup>98</sup> For the colonialists, their obsession with ensuring that all the participating powers signed the Act was to make sure that they had support should Germany or Spain violate the agreement in any way.

### **New Sultan**

While the European powers argued amongst themselves over their respective powers in Morocco, events in the country were rapidly changing. The specter of pretenders to the throne was not new in Morocco. Pretenders popped up on a regular basis, and though some managed to survive longer than others, none were seen to truly have a claim to the throne. However, growing out of the situation at Casablanca a new rival for the throne gained significant power. The Sultan's half brother, and son of the previous Sultan, Mouley Hafid, suddenly declared he was the rightful ruler of Morocco

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<sup>98</sup> CAF January 1907.

and began to gather support throughout Morocco and especially in the South. The threat from Hafid was especially dire because unlike previous pretenders, the Sultan's brother had a legitimate claim to the throne.

The greatest issue plaguing the French colonialists on the question of the two Sultans was whom the French should support. The situation between Abd-el-Aziz and Mouley Hafid was never cut and dry. The colonialists faced the very real possibility of having all the hard work go out the window should Mouley Hafid become Sultan.<sup>99</sup>

Theoretically, as the new Sultan, Hafid could undo the agreements made under Abd-el-Aziz. For the French colonialists this was potential disaster. Even though Abd-el-Aziz was not always supportive of French ambitions in Morocco, at least the colonialists knew him and his goals. In some ways Mouley Hafid was an unknown figure. He was barely mentioned in the journals<sup>100</sup> before his sudden declaration as Sultan and his relative lack of involvement with the Europeans meant that any story or rumor was published in the journals.

Hafid found support among a number of movements in Morocco that were rabidly xenophobic and advocated the removal of all things European from Morocco and a return to the traditional ways.<sup>101</sup> Hafid himself was too much a consummate politician to either fully support or completely back away from those groups. In fact, he did his best to work with the Europeans and convince them that he was not a danger to their long-term goals

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<sup>99</sup> UCF 10 September 1907.

<sup>100</sup> The only mention of Mouley Hafid in Moroccan affairs before his sudden declaration was in the Bulletin in January 1906. "The region of Marrakesh has been particularly troubled. The Khalifa of the Sultan, Moulay[sic] Hafid was ill-advised by a German national, posing as a German doctor, M. Holtzmann, and his acts has raised great discontent among the population."

<sup>101</sup> UCF 25 January 1908.

in Morocco.<sup>102</sup> He wanted to set himself apart from his half-brother by not only appealing to the Europeans' government by explaining how liberal he was, but also by assuring them that he was decisive, a trait the Europeans felt Abd-el-Aziz lacked. "Moulay Hafid has sent to Paris official agents who [are speaking to] newspaper editors to assure [Europeans] that their master is of a liberal spirit...."<sup>103</sup>

Hafid quickly gathered support from the major towns and tribes in the first months of his uprising. Because he was perceived as being anti-European many of the powerful Ulemas and tribes threw their support behind him and declared that Hafid, and not Abd-el-Aziz, was the true Sultan of Morocco. The *Quinzaine Coloniale* was especially concerned about the development of two Sultans and encouraged the French "that for the moment the best thing is to hold back our expectations".<sup>104</sup> Hafid moved quickly while his brother was in Rabat and was named the true Sultan by the powerful Ulemas in Fez. But his rapid success did not last long, and soon the two Sultans were bogged down in a fight. The slow nature of the fighting gave the colonialists some time to look at the situation and learn more about both men. Serious debate about their actions and relationship with the Europeans was undertaken by the journals. "We have no reason to profess large sympathies for Abd-el-Aziz. He has always had an evident distrust of France. ... But what policy will he [Mouley Hafid] adopt? He himself does not say. He does not know what the events will force him to do."<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> UCF 25 January 1908; UCF 25 February 1908.

<sup>103</sup> CAF April 1907; CAF May 1907.

<sup>104</sup> UCF 10 September 1907.

<sup>105</sup> UCF 10 September 1907.

A year after the initial uprising and calls of support, Hafid successfully pushed his half-brother from the Cherifien throne. Even though the two Sultans had essentially been at a stalemate for almost a year, the final fight between the forces of Abd-el-Aziz and Mouley Hafid were decisive. The defeat of Aziz's forces brought his swift downfall and significant concern from the colonialists. In September and October 1907, the colonialists wanted to remain neutral in the situation. But they quickly moved away from neutrality and stressed that Abd-el-Aziz was the best option for France. "He is the Sultan recognized by Europe, it is he who signed the Act of Algeciras, it is with him that we have begun to complete its execution."<sup>106</sup> Once Abd-el-Aziz was pushed from power, the colonialists were forced to suddenly support a man they had opposed for almost a year.

Although the Europeans were at first concerned about the actions the new Sultan might take in regards to Europe, the colonialist fears proved unfounded. In December 1908, Hafid "declared himself disposed to execute the Act of Algeciras and to accept the obligations contracted by his predecessor in regards to foreign powers."<sup>107</sup> The new Sultan did in fact continue to uphold the old agreements signed by the previous Sultan and in many ways the nation of Morocco under Mouley Hafid did not look any different than it had under Abd-el-Aziz. For the colonialists in fact nothing had changed. Their articles and stories from Morocco continued to cover the German involvement in Moroccan affairs and concerns over what the Spanish wanted there.

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<sup>106</sup> UCF 25 January 1908.

<sup>107</sup> UCF 25 December 1908.

All the same problems that had plagued the French colonialists in the years immediately before and after the signing of Algeciras remained at the end of the decade. The only major change was that the pretender to the throne, Bou Hamara, who had so plagued Abd-el-Aziz, was captured by Mouley Hafid, thus ending the most enduring uprising in Morocco. The dramatic changes that occurred between 1906 and 1909, a new Sultan, new international agreements, and the occupation of multiple cities by French forces, did little to change the biggest problems facing the French in 1909. Anarchy and uprisings continued unabated and the Germans continued to be a thorn in the side of all French ventures. For all that 1906 to 1908 had changed things, everything remained the same in 1909 and the articles published in both journals could be mistaken for those published in earlier years, but for some small changes. There was a new Sultan and more direct involvement from the interested parties in Morocco, but the big issues remained the same.

**Conclusion:**

The middle years of the first decade of the twentieth century set the stage for the final push in the French conquest of Morocco. As the French government moved toward a more active role in all things in Morocco, the colonialists and their journals greatly expanded how they approached the nation. For both journals Morocco occupied a place of pride and importance to them. The Bulletin and the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* took the importance of Morocco to heart and expanded their coverage and commentary on it, while simultaneously creating a new organization, the *Comité du Maroc*, which grew so large that it surpassed its original creator. The power of the *Comité du Maroc*

helped the drive to the elaborate coverage of Morocco late in the decade. By 1908, the amount of Moroccan coverage in the Bulletin, in news stories, analysis, editorials, and reports and studies made it clear that Morocco had become the most important potential colony in the eyes of the colonialists.

The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* became more narrowly focused in the years from the Entente through the implementation of the Act of Algeciras. The journal as a whole became ever more alert to the events in Morocco. They followed the action of the *Comité du Maroc* in extensive detail, publishing meeting minutes and lists of members as well as covering extensively events within Morocco and between the major powers there. The Bulletin also went into far more detail than newspapers or other journals did concerning the internal politics of Morocco. The Bulletin ensured that its readers knew about the different factions fighting in Morocco, where they were at any one time, and what could be expected from every tribe involved. This depth of coverage on issues and persons that only barely affected the Europeans showed the importance the *Comité* placed on Morocco.

The Bulletin, in both the editorials and the articles, spent the second half of 1907 and into 1908 concerned with Casablanca and the aftermath of the intervention. Although the uprising of Mouley Hafid was addressed, it was clearly of secondary importance to the *Comité*. Their interest in the eventual conquest of Morocco led them to focus on the involvement of the French government in Morocco and questions of security over issues of the Moroccan leadership. The *Comité* wanted to ensure that their readership understood the complexity of the situation the French were stepping into, and



there was good understanding of what the colonialists hoped to own one day. To that end, the focus of 1907 and 1908 was on the tribes and the French and German involvement in Morocco and not on who was the leader, because the *Comité* believed the government was unlikely to last much longer as the French inched closer to complete occupation.

The *Quinzaine Coloniale*, on the other hand, increased their coverage more slowly. As the importance of Morocco in French and European policy grew, so did the coverage of Morocco in the journal. The articles and editorials also moved beyond the commercial interests that had made up the majority of articles in the beginning of the decade. The *Union Coloniale Française* reported in depth on political issues in Europe concerning Morocco and the powers there. Although not all of the reporting had moved completely away from the commerce side, the new inclusion of other nationalistic and national pride arguments in the editorials show not only the increasing complexity of the colonialists' concerns but the fact that commercial interests were no longer enough for the readers of the *Quinzaine* on the issue of Morocco. The journal and its editors responded to growing French involvement in Morocco as well as the stability of the European structure in Morocco by addressing non-commercial explanations for continued French expansion there. The appearance of nationalistic rhetoric in the commerce-oriented journal began to blur the lines between the two journals and created a broad base of reasons to discuss colonialism in Morocco.

Although the level of coverage in the *Quinzaine Coloniale* never reached the level of the *Bulletin's*, the increase does show that even colonialists who claimed to be

somewhat skeptical on Moroccan issues changed their tune. The number of editorials increased and the amount of coverage and the topics discussed also showed a more involved membership in Moroccan events. By the time the Conference at Algeciras convened, the *Quinzaine Coloniale* had moved away from their commerce-centric viewpoint and looked at Morocco and French involvement there as more than a business opportunity. In the aftermath of Algeciras and the constant crises that marked 1907, the *Union Coloniale Française* reported heavily on the situation with the two Sultans but covered in much less detail the French intervention at Casablanca. The identity of the Sultan was likely to have a far greater impact on the potential business opportunities in Morocco than the intervention in Morocco, thus the Union's focus on it. There was no doubt from the beginning that the French would be successful at Casablanca, so the Union focused on what it saw as the most pressing issue for economic concerns.

For all French colonialists the international situation of Morocco changed rapidly from the middle of the decade on. But despite a great many changes in how the powers worked in Morocco, in how many reforms were passed and even in who was running the nation of Morocco, in the end the French found themselves with only moderately more power than they had in 1904 after the signing of the Entente with Great Britain. The Act of Algeciras had allowed the French some more responsibility in Morocco but had also granted Germany and Spain considerable influence in Morocco. Algeciras was the beginning of major European agreements on Morocco and became the basis for all European actions afterward. The slow implementation of the accords through 1906 and 1907 did not hurt the international standing of Morocco in the last years of her

independent existence. In fact the slow implementation on the accords instead gave the European powers more time to put pressure on the Morocco government and to have a firm grasp on the nation as France became much more serious about taking Morocco for herself in the first years of the next decade.

## CHAPTER 4: THE LAST STEPS TOWARD FRENCH MOROCCO

The final years before the signing of the protectorate in March 1912 marched inexorably toward the end of Moroccan independence. The international disagreements between France and Germany heated up in 1911, but the two nations came to an agreement that cemented the protectorate. The Franco-German Accord of 1911 marked the end of the last major international obstacle blocking the French. Although the agreement cost the French more than they wanted, Morocco was considered worth the price. For a region that ten years before the French had little cared for or worried about, the lengths that the French government and the *Union Coloniale Française* went to ensure that France reigned supreme are remarkable. The *Petit Parisien's* coverage of the treaty viewed the agreement as advantageous not only for the French, but for Europe as a whole. For with the German agreement in place, and only Spain remaining to negotiate with, the French formally began the process of creating a protectorate in Morocco.

The year 1912 began with the French receiving the implicit approval of the European powers to create the protectorate. Less than five months elapsed from the signing of the Franco-German treaty to the signing of the protectorate. The final agreement with the Sultan was more or less a done deal when the French arrived with their list of demands to negotiate. In the space of only three meetings the French accomplished what the colonialists had spent the better part of two decades trying to achieve: the absorption of Morocco into greater France as part of her Empire. In fact, the last two and a half years of relative independence for Morocco was not marked by major changes but by a gradual move toward French protectorate status.

## 1910-1911

For the colonialists concerned with Morocco, 1910 was a year of increased optimism. The lack of large-scale problems in Morocco, unlike in previous years, gave the *Union Coloniale Française* time to reflect on French influence on the Sultan and in Morocco as a whole. Although French influence with the Sultan was expanding, Mouley Hafid continued to strive to maintain some level of independence from the European powers. For the colonialists, this was a good thing when directed at Spanish or German interests but a bad thing when the Sultan stood up to French proposals. Therefore the *Quinzaine Coloniale* alternately praised and disparaged the Sultan for his actions. In June, the journal regarded him as being never “more capricious and consequently, more rebellious to our sincere cooperation.”<sup>108</sup> However, once the Sultan began to listen to an advisor whom the French liked, their view of the political situation in Morocco improved.<sup>109</sup> For the French, the Sultan was granted freedom as an independent leader only when he agreed with French policy. They wanted Mouley Hafid to behave like a good puppet ruler, always obeying the French, even though Morocco was still sovereign. From the Union’s reaction to any display of independent thought on the Sultan’s part, it seems apparent that they were now anxious to form a protectorate in Morocco to protect their own interests there and ensure the best possible outcome for the French.

The relative internal calm in Morocco led the *Quinzaine Coloniale* to discuss what the French had already done for Morocco and the opportunities still available for

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<sup>108</sup> UCF 10 June 1910.

<sup>109</sup> UCF 25 September 1910.

expanded French colonial involvement. The region of Oujda, which the French had been involved in formally since 1907, the *Quinzaine* especially praised.

When we occupied it in 1907, Oudjda was both a sewer and a charnel house. M. Andre Colliez found there today a pretty town of 10,000 souls, clean, with a police force, possessing two hotels, stagecoach services, a dispensary, and a school where electric lights are currently being installed.<sup>110</sup>

The report continued on to describe the advancement of French business throughout Morocco and how best to continue the surge of French economic development there. The praise for peaceful intervention in Morocco and the civilization it brought to the Moroccan people reinforced the importance of French intervention and encouraged ever more involvement. But the French intervention in Moroccan politics and life in 1911 took a different path.

Internal tribal fighting that lessened in 1910 returned even greater than before the following year. Despite a number of major agreements from the European powers and despite continued attempts from all of them to calm the infighting in Morocco between the tribes and the Sultan, fighting nonetheless continued unabated. Even though the rogue Bou Hamara was dead, the fighting and uprisings in his mold continued. For the Europeans, this situation was both good and bad. On the one hand, if the fighting continued, European citizens, businesses, and profits were at risk, but on the other, especially for the French and the Spanish, continued anarchy increased the likelihood that European intervention would become a necessity. Although it was relatively clear that France was not likely to wait much longer before annexing Morocco, for the French, the concern was to ensure they were the ones in charge, not the Germans or the Spanish.

During the height of internal discord in 1911, the *Quinzaine Coloniale* reasserted that the

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<sup>110</sup> UCF 10 August 1910.

French government needed to formalize France's position in Morocco much more forcefully than in previous years. Before, the push for a formal protectorate in Morocco had been rarely discussed; now, specifics were up for debate. For the colonialists there were three options available: negotiate with Spain, negotiate with Germany, or negotiate with both.<sup>111</sup> The internal fighting in Morocco was also seen as an indication of barbarism that European civilization could reduce as the region was absorbed into the greater French colonial empire.

The internal discords between the Sultan and the tribes rapidly devolved from a serious but remote state of affairs to one of immediate consequence following a new uprising in the regions surrounding Fez. This was the first time the tribes so close to the Sultan's center of power had rebelled and their rebellion played directly into the colonialists' summation of the dangers of the entire situation in Morocco: "insecurity and anarchy".<sup>112</sup> For the tribes were so successful that they trapped the Sultan and many Europeans behind the walls in Fez. The Europeans, and the French in particular, saw as a necessity the need to save the Europeans and the Sultan. For the *Union Coloniale Française*, the Sultan deserved to be saved by the French because of his previously supportive actions<sup>113</sup>. The French government authorized the movement of a large military column to Fez to lift the siege and save the city. Even though the Sultan was a major reason for French military intervention, the risk to the Europeans in the city was the main driving force behind their intervention. This intervention, in the view of the

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<sup>111</sup> UCF 25 June 1911.

<sup>112</sup> CAF May 1905.

<sup>113</sup> UCF 10 April 1911.

*Union Coloniale Française* however, was seen as moving too slowly to save those under siege at Fez.<sup>114</sup> The hesitation in the French government over what to do in Morocco had serious consequences in the international arena as well. When the French government issued orders to move a relief column to Fez, the German Foreign Minister notified his counterpart at the Quay d'Orsay that the gunship *Panther* had been stationed at Agadir in the south to help control the internal situation among the tribes and give extra protection for the Europeans in the region.

For the French colonialists in the *Union Coloniale Française*, the German actions in Morocco threatened the entire European balance of power for the Mediterranean basin. The position of the German cruiser was of concern to all the European powers active in Morocco, but especially the French. Therefore the Germans could use their position at Agadir to wring concessions from France and was seen as a major provocation of the French. The Germans placed the gunner *Panther* at Agadir at the height of French and Spanish concern over the situation of the Sultan in Fez. To the French it appeared that the Germans were taking advantage of a weakened Moroccan government to exert rights and power in Southern Morocco that were not allowed by the Sultan. The power grab was especially galling because before this the Germans had not expressed real military interest in Morocco outside of trading interests in Tangier in 1905. Despite the German claim that the gunship was in Agadir to help support French attempts to calm the nation, the French saw the move as the first step in a new German imperial game, not least because the Panther's deployment was in many ways a repeat of the coup de Tangier in

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<sup>114</sup> UCF 10 May 1912.



1905.<sup>115</sup> If the Germans could gain and hold Agadir, their position in North Africa would be advantageous in any attempt to connect colonial lands in North Africa with their colonies in Central Africa.<sup>116</sup> Germany therefore pressed her advantage and no one in Europe was willing to risk a war to defend a colony that technically remained independent.

The Germans were therefore the main source of concern for French aspirations in Morocco. Normally focused as they were on the economic situation in colonies they usually avoided name-calling; now the *Union Coloniale Française* was clearly on the edge of panic at German intentions and they remained so throughout the summer until a treaty was signed in November. The incident at Agadir, they wrote, occurred with “a brutality à la Bismarck.”<sup>117</sup> The German menace had returned in North Africa, especially for a French people who already considered Morocco as French. French reaction was immediate and harsh. The *Union Coloniale Française’s* assessment of the importance of the situation with Germany was reflected in a series of front-page editorials. The editorials debated how to beat the Germans in North Africa, though they always supported a negotiated, diplomatic settlement over a military one. While it was apparent that negotiations would have to take place, the possible outcomes were hotly debated.

The format of the *Quinzaine Coloniale* and the placement of the main editorials on the front page indicates what the editors considered most important in a crisis. The journal left no doubt as to what it considered the most pressing issue and how it must be

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<sup>115</sup> UCF 10 July 1911.

<sup>116</sup> UCF 25 September 1911.

<sup>117</sup> UCF 25 July 1911.

resolved. In this way, even those of its readers who were not concerned with Morocco were exposed to the details of the situation there. The editorials worked to provide a complete picture of the international and internal issues facing Morocco as well as what the leadership of the *Union Coloniale Française* believed were the best options. The topics of the editorials on Morocco revolved around the danger of any delay in action concerning Morocco and what the French must give up in order to secure a treaty with Germany. In the editorials, it is clear that the *Quinzaine Coloniale* was a strong supporter of rapid, direct, and intense involvement in Morocco as well as an ardent supporter of establishing a protectorate.

Our policy in North Africa must provide a dual purpose: implement as strong a French colony as possible to provide a steadfast foundation of our domination, and work in moral rehabilitation ... of the natives, so that they associate more and more to our national life, and so that their populace becomes extra power for us, instead of remaining an embarrassment.<sup>118</sup>

This position was a long way from the position the *Union Coloniale Française* had taken a decade before when it warned against getting too involved in Morocco.

Negotiations between France and Germany began in earnest in September 1911 and continued for more than two months. In the summer months, a number of German demands were leaked to the public, leaving the colonialists plenty of time to discuss them at length. Germany was willing to concede French dominance in Morocco, but only if they were sufficiently compensated. The initial territorial demand was for the entire French colony of Gabon, something that was deemed impossible to the *Quinzaine Coloniale*. “We said [previously]: we have been defeated and reduced to thanks that we have not been asked for more. Also the opinion in France, far from being deterred by the

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<sup>118</sup> UCF 10 November 1911.

unheard of act of aggression, was unanimous in indignation against these outrageous proposals.”<sup>119</sup> However, once the negotiations began, both the French government and the colonialists gave in to the idea of some territorial concessions in exchange for Morocco. The Germans demanded and eventually received French territories in the Congo in exchange for a German promise not to interfere in Morocco.<sup>120</sup> This new German territorial demand was also leaked to the press but despite some concern on its part, the *Quinzaine Coloniale* deemed the trade a necessity.

However, they did not hesitate to stress how much the French were giving up to complete their North African Empire. The loss of the Congo territories gave the Germans an advantage in Central Africa. This was a point it stressed every time the treaty was mentioned,<sup>121</sup> as if the colonialists wanted to point out to its subscribers just how important Morocco was and what its North African colonial empire had cost. In this instance the colonialists’ willingness to concede land to the Germans, despite months of arguing against any policy of concessions, showed that Morocco was indeed a special case. All African colonies were important to the colonialists and the loss of one, in order to increase the importance of another, was a drastic step, especially in that the loss of land benefitted the Germans. Nonetheless the journal emphasized Morocco was worth it for the French. Without a protectorate the hope of a French North African could not proceed, and once this dream had taken root in the minds of the colonialists, they strove

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<sup>119</sup> UCF 10 August 1911.

<sup>120</sup> Petit Parisien 7 November 1911.

<sup>121</sup> A typical comment is, “We are paying for the advantages obtained in Morocco with territorial concessions in the Congo. The territories we abandoned are situated ... south of German Cameroon, and a much larger portion of land [is located] to the east of this colony.” UCF 10 November 1911.

to see it through to completion. Still, the loss of such large amounts of land was a heavy price to pay and it was a loss that would not be forgotten in future dealings with Germany. “At the same time that we indicated what France thought she could cede in Congo, we should have, with a precision leaving no misunderstanding in the future, [indicated] the form of freedom which Germany intended to leave us in Morocco.”<sup>122</sup>

Where the *Union Coloniale Française* stressed the unfortunate loss of lands in Central Africa but the importance of the treaty for France in Morocco, the *Petit Parisien* focused on the specifics of the treaty as it dealt with Morocco and took pains to report all the details of the agreement. Before the publication of the full text of the treaty, the paper had discussed the German concessions concerning Morocco, but without mentioning the territory changes in Central Africa. Only when the totality of the Accord was made public the next day, did the less advantageous aspects of the treaty receive coverage. In this way the newspaper downplayed the concessions until after the treaty was about to be signed. While there was some regret about the concessions made by the French, the papers emphasized that these were necessary.<sup>123</sup> Even then, there were still the Spanish to deal with, and the paper commented that given the friction that existed between the two nations concerning Morocco this could lead to significant problems later.<sup>124</sup>

Once the agreement with Germany was complete, only Spain posed a threat to French interests in Morocco. Thus with the ink on the Franco-German treaty hardly dry, the *Quinzaine Coloniale* began to press for a similar agreement with the Spanish. Spain’s

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<sup>122</sup> UCF 25 September 1911.

<sup>123</sup> *Petit Parisien* 9 November 1911.

<sup>124</sup> *Petit Parisien* 9 November 1911.

presence in Morocco was unique among the powers in that Spain exercised more power in some regions of Morocco than the French. The *Union Coloniale Française's* concern with the Spanish in Morocco, which had been ignored during the negotiations with the Germans, now took center stage. The journal declared, "Now that we have settled our difficulties with Germany, it is necessary, to have a clear situation in Morocco, that we make a similar arrangement with Spain."<sup>125</sup> The Spanish, however, were not seen as likely to agree to a new French colony in North Africa, especially in that much of Morocco was disputed between the two nations.

Spain and France had signed a secret treaty shortly after the signing of the Anglo-French Entente; but that treaty was no longer trusted by either side. The Act of Algeciras in 1906, by altering the way the Europeans interacted in Morocco, did not help the situation, and in fact threw some uncertainty on the secret treaty of 1904. Although the treaty and its arrangements were still in force, the Spanish believed that the French were no longer adhering to it. And when the internal situation in Morocco worsened first with the siege on Fez and then the involvement of the French and German military, the Spanish found themselves left out due to sporadic enforcement of the treaties. Given that situation, Spain moved troops into the disputed areas and formally invaded two regions, Larache and El-Kcar.<sup>126</sup> Once Spain was actively involved in the attempted pacification of Moroccan tribes, France found herself fighting two European powers in Morocco. Because the colonialists remained devoted to peaceful action in Morocco, a treaty with Spain became a priority in the eyes of the journals. "Now that we have settled our

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<sup>125</sup> UCF 25 November 1911.

<sup>126</sup> UCF 25 July 1911.

difficulties with Germany, it is necessary to have a clear situation in Morocco, that we make with Spain a similar accord.”<sup>127</sup> The French were attempting to stop Spain diplomatically, as they were with Germany. Earlier in 1911, France signed a new agreement with Morocco that was the final straw for the Spanish. In the agreement France had been granted by the Sultan the right to build a new railroad through both French and Spanish held territory. The Spanish interpreted the agreement as a violation of the Act of Algeciras<sup>128</sup>. The French and the Moroccans justified it, however, by stating that the Sultan had requested the railroad and that therefore, as it came at the Sultan’s request, the agreement did not violate the Algeciras agreement. For the Spanish, this argument was weak, and when the internal situation in Morocco worsened a few months later, they took advantage of the situation. They launched an invasion of the areas around Larache and El-Kcar during the height of the uprisings near Fez aimed, so they said, at “pacification” of the region, and this gave the Spanish not only the opportunity to increase their power in Morocco but to undermine the position of the dominant French as well.

Since the Spanish have occupied Larache and El-Kcar, under the pretext of reestablishing order, though there was no threat, they behave like a conquering nation. They are disarming the natives; this is understandable to some extent because they may fear an uprising. But they intend to disarm the Europeans themselves in a nation where as a result of insufficient police, each person is obliged to ensure his own proper security.<sup>129</sup> The *Quinzaine Coloniale* saw this action as a direct attack on the French. Despite growing security in Morocco, the Europeans were still expected to defend themselves from tribal uprisings when necessary. By disarming everyone who was not Spanish in

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<sup>127</sup> UCF 25 November 1911.

<sup>128</sup> UCF 10 April 1911.

<sup>129</sup> UCF 25 July 1911.

these areas, they put the French citizens in a position where they could not defend themselves should they be attacked, thus driving the French out and toward the security of the French zones.

The threat of Spain and the absolute necessity of an agreement to replace the secret agreement signed in 1904 were stressed by the *Petit Parisien* in an editorial only days after the Franco-German accord was signed. “[The negotiations] must be considered calmly and the accord between Paris and Madrid is indispensable. The ends justify the means.”<sup>130</sup> The lack of any solid agreement since Algeciras in 1906, which had in some ways taken precedence over the secret treaty of 1904, put France and Spain in a position where neither was exactly sure what the other could and could not do in Morocco. A treaty to settle these disagreements between France and Spain was therefore of primary importance, they argued, even though the negotiations would not be entered into in earnest until 1912.

### **1912: Protectorate**

The French believed that once they reached an agreement with Germany the other powers, with which treaties already existed, would support the establishment of a French protectorate. As all the agreements they had negotiated guaranteed free trade within Morocco, the benefits of a French run Morocco and the security that came with it seemed to the French advantageous to the European powers especially since it came at no cost to themselves. In other words, the Europeans would allow the French to run it, and in return they would reap the rewards of free and safe trade and benefit from a government that

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<sup>130</sup> *Petit Parisien* 11 November 1911.

was more stable and willing to work with the Europeans. The barrier was Spain, though as it turned out it was but a minor one. Once the negotiations began, the Spanish appeared reasonable; however, they stalled the negotiations for as long as possible, but eventually agreed. “Spain has admitted that she indeed owes us compensation. But when we arrive to clarify what such compensation should be ... the Spanish government is evasive.”<sup>131</sup> In the end though, and even as negotiations continued with Spain over Morocco, the French announced the formation of the protectorate. Despite no new formal agreement with Spain<sup>132</sup>, France took the final step to controlling all of North Africa.

Once the agreement of all the interested powers had been received on the Franco-German Accord, the French set out to finalize their control over Morocco and North Africa. The final negotiations between the French envoy and the Sultan took only three meetings and ended with all the French demands being met. However, the ease with which the negotiations occurred was not, in fact, clear at the outset. The *Union Coloniale Française* expressed concern that the Sultan might not be willing to negotiate and reported every rumor out of Fez concerning the Sultan’s mental health. At one point it noted the rumor that the Sultan was considering abdicating the throne but quickly reassured their readers that Mouley Hafid had been convinced to remain. There was indeed a very real fear that despite all the hard work the French had invested in Morocco, the Sultan would in the end, refuse to negotiate with the French. The colonialists

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<sup>131</sup> UCF 25 March 1912.

<sup>132</sup> Just five days before the protectorate was signed in Fez, negotiations with Spain remained stalled on the major points of contention. UCF 25 March 1912.



expressed great surprise at this possibility, stressing that the Sultan would not abdicate if he were in the right mind, but that since he “was strongly depressed by neurasthenia,” he should be handled with care.<sup>133</sup> Even though the French were negotiating the end of Moroccan independence, they did not want their relationship with the Sultan to worsen or, fearing complications, for the negotiations to stretch out.

In March and April when the Protectorate became a fact the French colonialists celebrated; they celebrated not only their new control in North Africa, but the way in which they had achieved it. While the actual stipulations of the Protectorate were seen as civilized and the best option for both nations, the actual running of Morocco day-to-day was left to the Sultan and his government but this involved only internal matters. In all international agreements and negotiations, France was to represent Morocco. The French also instituted the office of Governor-General in Morocco to represent French interests and to control the nation from behind-the-scenes.<sup>134</sup> The colonialists pointed out that the actual terms of the protectorate were based on what they had learned in Algeria and Tunisia and they expressed a desire to not only make the transition as smooth as possible for the Moroccan people, but to keep them as content with the government as possible.

What advantage does maintaining a Muslim ruler have? The advantage results from two undeniable facts. The first is that foreign domination is less painful to Muslims if it is exercised on them by an intermediate Muslim ruler, than if it is exercised directly. The second is the material strength that we have, plus the moral strength of the sultan over his subjects. What is the real value of this moral strength? Many people in seeing how precarious Mouley Hafid's power over the Moroccans is, conclude that the value would be negligible in Morocco. We think that, despite everything, it is instead very large. Simply compare, and realize, the relative ease with which our expeditionary column went to Fez and the difficulty the Spanish met in the Rif.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> UCF 25 March 1912.

<sup>134</sup> UCF 25 March 1912.

<sup>135</sup> UCF 10 April 1912.

In many ways the articles concerning the governmental structure of the new protectorate did little more than formalize the situation that already existed: for the French were already pushing their demands on the Sultan and threatening him with military intervention if he did not concur. Moreover, when the Sultan had attempted to participate in international affairs before the protectorate, he was rarely listened to and the French did their best to ensure that French interests, not Moroccan interests, came out ahead.

But this new system played well into the economic side of the *Union Coloniale Française*. Despite the “civilizing” arguments put forth for a French protectorate in Morocco, the form of Protectorate that was agreed upon was also advantageous to the French economically.

If you do not resolutely agree with the [colonial] formula, especially in practice, of maintaining a Muslim ruler...[and] a native administration [know that] our control is strong enough to let the sovereign and the administration have sufficient action to continue to be a reality; what we established in Morocco may be called a protectorate, but direct administration will very quickly entail increased costs and dangers.<sup>136</sup>

The colonialists also proposed a very detailed approach to the colonization and administration process for Morocco. In seeking the best way forward, the *Union Coloniale Française* proposed a two-part system for administering and running Morocco. Because Morocco was internally divided between those regions of relative peace and modernization and those regions that remained rural, and without any of the improvements that the Europeans had brought elsewhere, it was important to deal with the two types of people in Morocco differently.<sup>137</sup> Here again the colonialists were attempting to show their understanding of both the delicate situation that arises when a new colony is absorbed and their understanding of the realities of Muslim life in North

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<sup>136</sup> UCF 10 April 1912.

<sup>137</sup> UCF 10 April 1912.

Africa. The Union's approach had moved completely to a wider view of Morocco; they no longer focused exclusively on the economic and commercial interests in the nation.

As the *Union Coloniale Française* rejoiced in the signing of the Protectorate, the *Petit Parisien* was just as enthusiastic, but more detailed in the specifics of the negotiations and the agreements. The paper discussed in depth the arrangement of the protectorate in Morocco as well as how the new situation would be explained to the independent tribes. In the takeover of Morocco, the paper celebrated the newly expanded empire and worked to quell rumors and false statements from foreign sources.

The *Petit Parisien* has shown this last week how many wrong or misleading indications from foreign sources said that Moulay Hafid refused full approval of the treaty. It is enough to reduce their merit to remember that the Moroccan sovereign had been one of the first heads of state who agreed to the Franco-German Accord in November and that this accord, submitted to the different powers, consecrated the principle of our protectorate over the Cherifien Empire.<sup>138</sup>

In their analysis of the rumors, the paper both praises the Sultan, as an important friend and ally of France, while at the same time bringing doubt on foreign reporting. This combination of purposes in one statement showed their readers not only that things remained good in Morocco and that the protectorate would move ahead, on the one hand, but also served as a word of caution that foreign journals were working to undermine the French Protectorate.

As it turned out, Morocco had lost her independence long before the French envoy arrived in Fez to negotiate the terms of the final settlement. In reality, once the European powers took an interest in Morocco it was just a matter of time, especially in this period of heightened colonial rivalry, before Morocco became part of some European empire. The fact that the main negotiations concerning the protectorate in Morocco took

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<sup>138</sup> *Petit Parisien* 1 April 1912.

place entirely in Europe before the Moroccan government was even involved, demonstrated that no matter what the French said about wanting to work with the Moroccan government, in reality, the colonialists considered the Sultan as little more than a roadblock to their own ambitions. The French had been working around, and against, the Sultan since the 1890s, all the while giving lip service to the idea of a free and independent Moroccan state ruled by the Sultan. In March of 1912, however, the last state in North Africa came under European rule, completing a process for the French that had begun in the 1830s.

The French view was that they had learned from history in Tunisia and had come to appreciate the importance and the role rulers like the Sultan played in the lives of their people. By leaving the Sultan technically as head of state, the French felt that he would exert control over the Muslim population of Morocco, and with this control, that the people would not attempt an uprising against the new French regime.<sup>139</sup> That the French colonialists went out of their way to point out to their readership that the new protectorate was in the best interests of the Moroccans seems somewhat out of place in the *Quinzaine Coloniale*. The journal claimed to be concerned almost exclusively with economics and commerce, even though it willingly addressed many other aspects of the colonial venture. For all their interest in trade and business, they did not in fact cut themselves completely off from the other issues that surrounded the colonial question or the idea of the civilizing mission colonial expansionists espoused. In fact, it is quickly apparent in reading the journal that the good of the Moroccan people took up more space than issues of the

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<sup>139</sup> UCF 10 April 1912.

economic advantages that France would gain in the new colony. By including arguments about the good of the Moroccan people and the advantages and advancements the French would bring to Morocco, the Union showed themselves adaptable to the way that colonies and protectorates were always viewed as more than economic opportunities.

Despite the fact that the French had effectively taken over another nation without much effort, as opposed to their expansion in Tunisia and Indochina, and without any real concern for the people living there, the colonialists wanted to be seen as not taking advantage of the people of Morocco. The members of the *Union Coloniale Française* sought to show they would be better than the Spanish in Morocco; they also sought to show how the French should treat the peoples of a colonized area. By differentiating themselves from the other European colonialists, the French colonialists sought to present French colonization as different, specifically better and more civilized than German or Spanish colonization. “We have acquired experience in the Muslim world by 80 years of action in Algeria,” they declared. “While the Spanish are brand new in the subject matter.”<sup>140</sup> It is this experience they argued that gave the French the right and duty to intervene over the heads of the other European powers.

That the *Quinzaine* also attempted to justify the form of the protectorate – the division of authority between the Sultan and the French – is intriguing. Many members of the chamber expressed some concern over the structure that left the Sultan as the head of state, for, they believed, that made the French work through, not around, Moroccan

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<sup>140</sup> UCF 25 October 1911.

institutions.<sup>141</sup> But the colonialists explained this structure as a realistic one, based upon the experience of history that came from years in Algeria and the more recent takeover in Tunisia. The French were knowledgeable about Muslim culture, far more knowledgeable than the Spanish or Germans; and they therefore understood how to work with the Muslims in setting up the best governing structure possible. Those in the Chamber who did not understand, according to the *Quinzaine Coloniale*, were ignorant about Muslim culture and the great understanding the French had of it.<sup>142</sup> The Union's attempt to head off this concern over the format of the protectorate by offering a detailed explanation of the system was intended to reassure the French about the arrangement and its continued existence. The *Union Coloniale Française* was therefore more than willing to take on the role of defender of the protectorate, and it used its knowledge of North Africa to mount a vigorous defense against those in the government who would oppose it.

### **Conclusion:**

By 1912 Morocco had found an important place in the way the French colonialists and the government viewed the world. France was willing to give up large sections of colonies to ensure their position in Morocco. There was an irony in this, in that the colonialist members of a group that had been formed on purely economic ideals found themselves arguing for the colonization of Morocco using nationalistic and civilizing rationales. The last three years of Moroccan independence were no more than a waiting game as far as France was concerned. The colonialists could see this and knew that negotiations with Germany and Spain were the only obstacles to France's acquiring a

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<sup>141</sup> UCF 10 April 1912.

<sup>142</sup> UCF 10 April 1912.

colony in Morocco. Despite French shows of acting as if the Sultan and his government had a choice in the situations as they evolved over the last three years of independence, the colonialists were, in fact, only counting the hours to acquisition and giving lip service to the notion of Moroccan independence, all the while anticipating, and helping prepare, French success.

The change in the way the *Quinzaine Coloniale* approached the question of establishing a protectorate in Morocco shows how much additional reasons were needed to support the colonization. The combination of nationalistic and economic arguments indicated the central importance Morocco had come to occupy in the minds of the colonialists as a whole. To the colonialists, Morocco by 1912 had become so important that no line of reasoning would be overlooked in the drive for support for France in Morocco and the establishment of the protectorate. At the beginning of 1912, economic arguments were barely needed as the end was in sight and the colonialists turned their focus to less concrete explanations of national pride. Morocco had become a major part of the European way of economic life, so much so that the colonialists who had originally espoused economic intentions were no longer afraid of doing and saying whatever it took to assure that Morocco came under French control.

## CONCLUSION

Colonialism and colonial ideas in France were not static; they changed and adapted as the situation changed. An argument that made sense at the beginning of the century was out of date and unconnected with the reality in Morocco by 1910. Both colonial groups had firm mission statements that expressed their goals and interests but the way they approached the situation did not remain stationary. The *Union Coloniale Française* might claim that they were focused on commercial interests only, but their own journal widened its interests and argued that the conquest of Morocco was about more than commerce. The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* transformed in even larger ways. They first formed the *Comité du Maroc* to coordinate all interests in Morocco. But this subgroup of the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* did not remain the subgroup for long. It took only a few years for the *Comité du Maroc* to dwarf its parent and become the main driving force behind the colonization movement, with all its attention focused on Morocco.

The *Comité de l'Afrique Française* and the *Comité du Maroc* evolved through the decade from an organization dedicated to French colonization in all of Africa to an organization with the narrowest of purposes: Morocco. The increasing narrowness of their concerns raised Morocco from a potential colony, to a nation the members of the *Comité* felt was imperative to the French colonial empire. Nothing changed in Morocco to make it worth more to the French, so the change in how it was viewed came entirely from the colonialists themselves. They focused on Morocco to the exclusion of other regions because of the place it took in the minds of the colonialists. A French success in



Morocco signified defeat of the Germans and Spanish and vindication of French culture in other parts of the world. In taking Morocco, the *Comité* saw more than a decade of policies justified with a single document. The French had proven that it was possible to colonize a nation peacefully, without the need for a full military occupation.

The *Union Coloniale Française* also saw their work come to fruition. The Union was never the blindingly devoted organization the *Comité* was, but their focus on Morocco did change. They increased coverage and focus on Morocco, and funded ever more expeditions to Morocco. The Union was subtler in its increased concern with Morocco, but the additional focus made clear their goals: Morocco as part of greater France. The move away from purely economic concerns and toward the nationalistic arguments employed by the *Comité* shows an expanding understanding of the reality of the Moroccan situation and the need to use everything at their disposal to bring about the colonization of Morocco. By bringing in nationalistic reasons and concerns for French honor, the Union broadened the support base for the conquest of Morocco as well as their membership. Morocco was where French colonial policy created a new colony for the French businessman to exploit. The expansion of the colonial empire meant new and better opportunities for businessmen, and any justification for colonization that allowed the colonialists to improve their economic position was accepted.

The evolution of the colonial groups during the quest for Morocco demonstrates that the groups were not monolithic in nature. No matter how firm they claimed to be about their motivations and goals, it is clear that they were more interested in the outcomes of their policies and ideas and not as concerned with what it took to get there.

The driving forces behind the French colonialists in the years before World War I were far more complex and complicated than the phrase “French colonial movement” would have it appear. There was no unified reasoning and group behind the push. Rather there were competing interests from a very small number of people. These interests drove the colonial movement forward not through great power, but through perseverance. The devoted colonialists reached out wherever possible and modified their analysis to draw in new members. The scattered approach to the conquest of Morocco, and the lack of strong government support meant that the groups acted more as a whispering voice than a strong lobbying force.

The evolution of the colonialist groups in the early years of the twentieth century created a more complex environment for colonialism in France. But it also signaled the end of small-scale private interest colonization in France. Never again would the colonial groups wield the power they did in the conquest of Morocco. Because colonialism was on the rise in the French consciousness following the Great War, there was no longer a need for the private interest groups to push colonial policy forward; the public as a whole had taken their place. After World War I, the French embraced colonialism around the world and actively worked to enlarge their empire.<sup>143</sup> It was no longer a question of moving along slowly and working hard for every change. The support of the French public made the colonialist groups unnecessary and ushered in a new colonial policy.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Christopher M Andrew and A.S. Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas: The Great War and the Climax of French Imperial Expansion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), 210.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

For historians today, the journals and the information they contain paint a picture of how devout colonialists saw colonialism in Morocco and how they encouraged the expansion of French colonialism in Morocco and later around the world. The Bulletin also provides modern historians with detailed information on the internal politics of Morocco and the important tribes there. This information not only shows how involved the *Comité* was in Morocco, but also provides political information that may be difficult to find in other period sources. This boots on the ground approach to reporting and information in the Bulletin should give historians pause and reason to bring the reporting of the colonial groups out of the archives and into modern historical research. This approach would allow a close reading of the journals in combination with the politics of the *parti colonial* and post-colonialist writings, creating a more complete picture of what was occurring from the highest levels of government to the realities on the ground.

In order to completely understand the effects and reasons of colonialism, the old writings of the Europeans need to be combined with our new understanding of colonialism. Without both aspects of colonialism being considered, any study of the larger picture of colonialism will be lacking. For French colonial studies the journals of the colonialist groups are a strong base on which to build an understanding of the colonial movement. The discussions and decisions made in the Chamber of Deputies and Senate are only the official part of French colonial history. For decades, French colonial policy was driven by men of independent means, studying and encouraging the growth of France in Africa. Without addressing all the components of French colonialism,

including the 10,000 men who encouraged colonialism when it was a dead subject, the picture of French colonialism is incomplete.

## APPENDIX: Sample Pages

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BULLETIN DU COMITE

avec la situation économique du pays. Elle ne répond plus à ses véritables besoins, et le moment semble venu de la modifier, du moins dans certaines de ses parties, afin d'assurer un fonctionnement plus régulier de la justice et de donner satisfaction aux intérêts de la population.

Les propositions que M. le gouverneur général de Madagascar m'a adressées et que j'estime absolument justifiées, comportent la création de plusieurs emplois dans les tribunaux déjà existants, la transformation des justices de paix à compétence étendue de Majunga et de Diego-Suarez en tribunaux de première instance, et la création d'une justice de paix à compétence étendue à Mananjary. Cette création permettra de rattacher à ce dernier centre la province de Farafangana et le cercle de Fort-Dauphin, qui communiquent, grâce à un service régulier de navigation à vapeur, plus facilement et plus rapidement avec Mananjary qu'avec Fianarantsoa. Par contre, on pourra supprimer dans cette ville le poste de juge suppléant de la justice de paix. Enfin, deux cours criminelles fonctionnant dans les mêmes conditions que celle de Fianarantsoa seront instituées à Nossi-Bé et à Mananjary.

**Dans le Sud.** — Les nouvelles du dernier courrier annoncent que le chef rebelle Andriampanoa, accompagné des derniers dissidents de l'Ikongo, s'est rendu sans condition au lieutenant Laurent, implorant qu'on lui laissât la vie sauve.

Cet indigène, actuellement incarcéré à Fianarantsoa, fut, dans cette région, notre plus redoutable ennemi. L'influence dont il jouissait sur les habitants était considérable et c'est lui qui suscita et dirigea à maintes reprises les soulèvements qui ensanglantèrent ce pays pendant quatre ans.

Le capitaine Betrix, chargé de purger définitivement le district d'Ikongo des dernières bandes qui l'infestaient, s'était lancé sur les traces d'Andriampanoa, le harcelant sans relâche. Après trois mois d'une incessante poursuite, il réussit à lui rendre la situation intenable, si bien que c'est à cet officier que revient tout l'honneur de cette importante reddition. Les résultats qu'a obtenus d'autre part le capitaine Mouveaux, qui avait été chargé de la pacification du massif Andrabe-Ranofotsy, sont non moins appréciables et la sécurité est maintenant à peu près complète dans toute cette zone, si troublée il y a quelques mois.

Le colonel Lyautey ajoute qu'au cours d'une récente inspection de huit jours qu'il a faite, sans arme et sans escorte, dans ce pays, il a partout trouvé sur son passage les indigènes occupés à reconstruire les villages et à défricher des terrains de culture. Les actions combinées des capitaines Mouveaux et Bétrix ont eu pour conséquence heureuse de nettoyer la forêt depuis Fianarantsoa jusqu'à Fort-Dauphin, de sorte que la pacification de ces vastes régions peut être considérée comme définitive.

— Un décret du 1<sup>er</sup> février a réglementé les opérations d'engagement et de transport à Mayotte et dans les Comores.

## PAYS INDÉPENDANTS

### MAROC

**Les relations avec les puissances.** — L'agitation diplomatique que l'on a constatée autour de la cour pendant qu'elle était à Rabat, d'où elle vient seulement de partir pour Fez, n'a pas eu de résultats, du moins évidents. Les ambassadeurs anglais, austro-hongrois, allemands et français qui se sont rendus auprès du Sultan sur un navire de guerre — les Français avaient désigné un de leurs plus gros cuirassés, le *Charlemagne*, pour cette mission — paraissent s'être neutralisés les uns les autres. La seule innovation qui ait été obtenue du Maghzen, c'est l'autorisation d'exporter les orges. On sait que l'exportation des céréales est souvent interdite au Maroc.

Il est impossible de savoir de quelle manière et dans quelle proportion les différentes ambassades ont réagi sur les intrigues de deux ou trois groupes politiques qui se disputent la prédominance au Maghzen. On ignore jusqu'à quel point sir Arthur Nicholson a pu consolider la situation du caïd Mac-Lean et de El Menehbi. On ne peut dire si la légation allemande a appuyé à cet égard la légation anglaise, bien que les deux diplomates semblent marcher fort bien d'accord au Maroc, tout au moins pour maintenir le *statu quo*, et augmenter autant que possible l'ouverture du marché marocain. Il est donc possible qu'un travail souterrain ait été fait par les diplomates étrangers à Rabat, dont les résultats se laisseront deviner plus tard, mais on ne saurait encore se prononcer à cet égard. Il est d'ailleurs probable, étant donné que l'autorité du Maghzen est actuellement disputée entre les groupes de El Menehbi, celui de Si-Feddoul Gharnit et celui de Si-Abd-ul-Kerim Ben-Sliman, qu'aucun diplomate n'aura pu obtenir, pendant ces derniers temps, des résultats bien appréciables, et que la situation du Maroc reste intacte après l'agitation diplomatique de ces dernières semaines, qui aura été une fois de plus, ce qui est souvent le cas dans ce pays de civilisation orientale, « beaucoup de bruit pour rien ».

**La situation intérieure.** — Le calme — du moins le calme tel qu'on le comprend dans un pays comme le Maroc — semble régner en ce moment dans les diverses parties de l'empire chérifien. On ne signale une situation anormale que du côté de la tribu des Beni Messara, contre laquelle le Sultan a envoyé une expédition, parce qu'elle a refusé de se soumettre à son autorité qui lui enjoignait, entre autres choses, de délivrer les deux enfants espagnols, capturés près d'Arzila, et qui sont, paraît-il, entre ses mains.

Nous avons dit, dans notre dernier *Bulletin*, que le Maghzen avait dépêché une colonne considérable contre les Beni Messara, mais ce n'est pas le seul procédé qu'il a employé pour les réduire. Il a demandé à un marabout influent parmi les

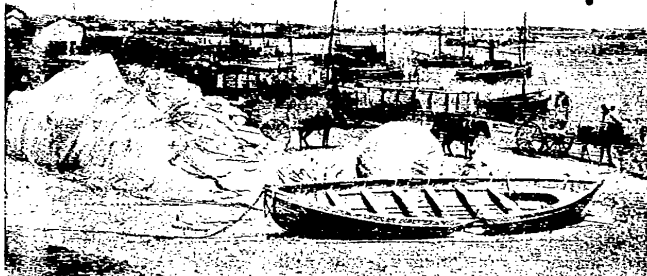
## LE MINISTRE DES COLONIES

EN

## AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE FRANÇAISE

M. Milliès-Lacroix, ministre des Colonies, a quitté Paris le 10 avril pour faire un voyage en Afrique Occidentale Française. Il visitera le Sénégal, le premier tronçon de la ligne de Thiès à Kayes qu'il inaugurerà, la Côte d'Ivoire (29 avril-1<sup>er</sup> mai), le Dahomey (3 au 8 mai) et la Guinée française (12 au 17 mai). Il rentrera en France le 30 mai pour reprendre la direction de son département, dont l'intérim a été confié à M. Doumergue, ministre de l'Instruction publique. M. Milliès-Lacroix est accompagné de M. Bordeaux, directeur du personnel, et de M. Despax, secrétaire particulier.

Ce voyage, quoique rapide, ne pourra manquer



PORT DE DAKAR

d'être fructueux. M. Milliès-Lacroix a prescrit de réduire au strict minimum les réceptions officielles et les fêtes. Bien des questions sont aujourd'hui posées en Afrique Occidentale, qui demandent une solution rapide, notamment l'application du programme de travaux publics approuvé par la loi du 22 janvier 1907. D'autre part, un gouverneur général et des lieutenants gouverneurs nouveaux ont été appelés à diriger les destinées du groupe de l'Afrique Occidentale.

L'étude que va faire le chef de l'administration coloniale vient donc à son heure. C'est la seconde fois qu'un ministre des Colonies visite l'Afrique Occidentale. Le voyage de M. André Lebon, en 1897, s'était limité au Sénégal et au Soudan. M. Milliès-Lacroix rouvre la série, et nous espérons qu'il va établir ainsi une tradition dont nos colonies ne manqueront pas de bénéficier, au moment où elles ont besoin d'avoir devant le

Parlement des défenseurs et des représentants qui leur apportent l'autorité et la documentation de ceux qui ont vu et étudié les problèmes sur place.

## Les Affaires du Maroc

Dût-on nous considérer comme des optimistes, nous dirons que les derniers débats sur le Maroc à la Chambre et au Sénat nous paraissent moins mauvais que les précédents. Ce n'est pas que l'esprit ait changé. On voit toujours le même parti pris d'action minima se contredire lui-même par l'épouvante qu'il a des moyens nécessaires pour amener le temps où nous pourrions nous borner à confier Casablanca à la police d'Algésiras. Mais les faits finissent cependant par forcer les entendements et ils sont un aiguillon puissant même sur les gens qui renâclent le plus. C'est grâce à

leur répétition qu'on n'entend plus guère préconiser à la Chambre la politique des présidios et qu'on y comprend enfin qu'on ne peut se borner à établir la police d'Algésiras dans un port assiégé par l'intérieur du pays en émeute.

Lorsque nous parlons de ce progrès des idées, nous ne faisons pas allusion à M. Jaurès. Celui-ci continue, chaque fois qu'il est question du Maroc, à donner un appui à toutes les attaques possibles de la politique allemande. Il ne sort pas de ce qui serait trahison si ce n'était incompréhension intégrale. Borné à quelques formules *a priori* qui lui tiennent lieu d'idées et qu'il répète d'une manière presque mécanique, M. Jaurès a la cervelle la plus absolument imperméable qui se puisse rêver. Et bien que ce virtuose habille son absurdité d'une grandiloquence qui conserve encore du pres-

tige dans un milieu où l'on se paie volontiers de mots, la Chambre commence à jauger M. Jaurès orateur en matières diplomatiques, coloniales et militaires : sa rhétorique devient peu à peu aussi innocente dans les faits qu'elle l'est à prendre autrement ce mot. Les scrutins le démontrent de plus en plus clairement.

Par contre, M. Ribot évolue : sa pensée suit de bien loin les mouvements de nos troupes dans la Chaouïa, mais du moins elle les suit. M. Ribot ne demande plus que nous restions collés à Casablanca. Il a renoncé à décréter que Settlat devait être *tabou* pour nos troupes. Sans doute, il reste attaché à la chimère d'une neutralité absolue entre le sultan et l'anti-sultan. Il ne veut pas que nous recevions dans la Chaouïa des soumissions à Abd-el-Aziz. Il trouve que c'est inutile, puisque nous ne l'avons pas fait chez les Beni-Snassen. C'est oublier que notre action est autrement facile

déjà en exploitation contribuent à l'amortissement des emprunts antérieurs. Cette proportion a d'ailleurs été calculée très modestement, les excédents paraissant devoir s'élever, pour 1910, à 2.715.000 francs, chiffre qui sera vraisemblablement dépassé en 1911.

D'autre part, la prévision inscrite au titre du versement de l'excédent du maximum de la caisse de réserve passe de 1.791.759 fr. 60, en 1911, à 3.146.722 fr. 90.

Enfin, le rendement des contributions indirectes, qui a été de 23.671.978 francs en 1910, a été prévu pour 20 millions 230.000 francs, soit une augmentation de 2.128.200 francs par rapport à la prévision budgétaire de 1911. La moyenne des trois dernières années ressort à 19.194.000 fr.

Cet accroissement de ressources a permis d'augmenter la dotation de presque tous les chapitres de dépenses et particulièrement celles des chapitres : 1<sup>er</sup>, *Contributions et Dettes exigibles*; XIV, *Travaux publics et d'intérêt général*; XX, *Subventions aux colonies*.

Aux chapitres des contributions et dettes exigibles, il y a une augmentation de 1.593.466 fr. 40 par rapport à 1910. La part la plus importante de cette augmentation représente 1.295.530 francs pour deux semestrialités, l'intérêt et l'amortissement d'une première tranche de 30 millions à réaliser, en 1912, sur l'emprunt projeté. Il faut mentionner aussi une participation plus forte de 100.000 francs dans les dépenses militaires de la métropole, la contribution qui passe à 1.717.000 francs. A propos de cette augmentation, le document officiel fait remarquer que la participation qui s'élève à 1.717.000 francs, en comprenant dans ce chiffre celui des prévisions pour pensions, ne représente pas, tant s'en faut, toute la participation de la colonie. Il convient, pour apprécier approximativement les charges supportées de ce chef par l'Afrique occidentale française, d'ajouter au chiffre ci-dessus celui des dépenses afférentes aux brigades indigènes dont l'entretien, incombant aux budgets locaux, représente, d'après les prévisions de 1912, une dépense de 2.954.000 fr. 93 qui, ajoutée à celle rappelée ci-dessus de 1.717.000 francs, donne un total de 4.674.400 fr. 93 de charges exclusivement militaires.

Les brigades indigènes ont, en effet, un rôle qui se confond avec celui des compagnies régulières de tirailleurs; la police ordinaire étant assurée par les gardes de cercles dont l'entretien représente, pour les budgets locaux, une dépense supplémentaire de 2.665.326 fr. 30.

« D'ailleurs, ce n'est pas seulement pécuniairement, ajoute le document, que l'Afrique occidentale française participe aux charges militaires de la métropole. L'impôt du sang est de plus en plus largement perçu dans les différents territoires du groupe et les troupes noires sont en train de devenir un appoint, non négligeable, de l'organisation de la défense nationale elle-même. »

Le chapitre des travaux publics et d'intérêt général passe de 1.043.000 francs en 1911 à 3.156.500 francs en 1912, soit

une augmentation de 2.113.500 francs. C'est là une bonne méthode. Voici la liste des principaux crédits prévus :

	Francs
Achèvement des postes de télégraphie sans fil de Dakar, Rufisque, Conakry et construction de ceux de Tabou, Grand-Bassam et Tombouctou.	659.000
Création de postes de l'Assistance médicale indigène en Guinée.	100.000
Construction de puits en ciment armé au Sénégal (200.000 fr.) et au Dahomey (30.000 fr.).	250.000
Assainissement de Grand-Bassam	150.000
et des villes du littoral du Dahomey.	200.000
Percement des lagunes de Lahou, Bassam et Assinie.	300.000
Etudes pour la création d'un port à la Côte d'Ivoire.	100.000
Création d'une ligne télégraphique destinée à desservir les centres créés sur le Thiès-Kayes.	100.000
Installation et bâtiments du wharf de Cotonou.	350.000
Travaux de prolongement du chemin de fer de la Guinée entre Kouroussa et Kankan.	500.000

Tel est, dans ses grandes lignes, le budget général de l'Afrique occidentale française pour 1912; il atteste les progrès et la bonne administration de cette colonie où les Français, comme en témoignait l'autre jour un journal anglais très connu, le *Globe*, font preuve d'une grande énergie pour en développer les ressources.

## BULLETIN DE LA QUINZAINE

**Les négociations franco-allemandes.** — Les négociations qui se poursuivaient à Berlin au sujet du Maroc sont interrompues pour quelques jours. M. Jules Cambon, ambassadeur de France en Allemagne est arrivé le lundi 21 août à Paris tandis que M. de Kiderlen-Wächter rejoignait l'empereur et le chancelier au château de Wilhelmshöhe, près de Cassel, puis prenait quelques jours de vacances. Cette interruption dans les négociations ne paraît pas s'être produite à un moment où l'on était d'accord sur les grandes lignes d'une entente et où il n'y avait plus qu'à préciser les détails de cette entente. Bien au contraire, il semble qu'après une période où l'on voyait les choses avec quelque optimisme, il en soit venu une autre où, nos interlocuteurs reprenant des propositions inacceptables, l'entente devenait difficile. C'est au cours de cette dernière période que les négociateurs ont jugé bon de converser avec leurs chefs respectifs. Interruption n'est pas rupture, et le dialogue reprendra. On peut toujours espérer qu'avec de la bonne volonté de part et d'autre une entente n'est pas impossible. Cependant il convient de bien préciser que l'opinion française, dont l'attitude excellente peut soutenir grandement nos négociateurs, n'admettrait pas qu'on lâchât la proie pour l'ombre, qu'on accordât des concessions sans justification. Il apparaît nettement que la France, qui a prouvé souvent ces temps derniers qu'elle ne se refusait point à collaborer avec l'Allemagne en toute courtoisie et sur le pied d'égalité, n'est pas prête à être traitée en subalterne.

**Les sociétés indigènes de prévoyance, de secours et de prêts mutuels d'Algérie.** — Chaque année le secrétaire général du gouvernement algérien, M. Varnier, fournit au

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