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**“Vox clamantis in deserto?” The Evolution of Britain’s Foreign Intelligence
and Security Structures, 1870-1914**

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Abstract

This thesis examines the evolutionary process of Britain's foreign intelligence organisations from 1870 to 1914. There were three main drivers behind the development of British foreign intelligence through this period. These were: the influence of political and administrative culture; the apathy of the military establishment; and the involvement of intelligence officers within policymaking. These latter two steps were guided by the effect of British political and administrative culture. These twin cultural influences informed the character of Britain's foreign intelligence structures, along with Britain's nascent intelligence culture, as they adopted state governance principles. Inter-departmentalism, involvement within the 'committee system', cooperation, and achieving consensus were, to varying degrees, the defining principles of Britain's burgeoning intelligence machinery. These principles served to impel the animosity of the military establishment, while facilitating the intelligence institutions' involvement with the civilian sphere and policymaking. By 1914 Britain's foreign intelligence structures had become incorporated into the civilian sphere, acting as bridges between the civilian and military spheres of the British state facilitating the flow of information in both directions. This thesis will illustrate how important an influence a nation's political and administrative culture can be upon the evolution of its intelligence agencies. The period from 1870 to 1914 laid the foundations for the shape and character of Britain's modern intelligence community, establishing principles and an intelligence culture that persist to this day.

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My research has been conducted at the National Archives at Kew, the Churchill College Archives in Cambridge, the Staffordshire Records Office in Stafford, the Imperial War Museum in London, and the British Library in London. I

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Abbreviations

BEF - British Expeditionary Force

BL - The British Library

CCA - Churchill College Archives

CDC - Colonial Defence Committee

CID - Committee of Imperial Defence

CIGS - Chief of the Imperial General Staff

CGS - Chief of the General Staff

DGMI - Director General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence (Head of the Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence)

DMI - Director of Military Intelligence (Head of the Intelligence Division)

DMMI - Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence

DMO - Director of Military Operations (Head of the Directorate of Military Operations)

DNI - Director of Naval Intelligence (Head of the Naval Intelligence Department)

GC&CS - Government Code & Cypher School

IB - Intelligence Branch

ID - Intelligence Division

Indian IB - Indian Intelligence Branch

IWM - Imperial War Museum, London

JIC - Joint Intelligence Committee

NAUK - The National Archives, UK

NID - Naval Intelligence Department

SIB - Special Intelligence Bureau

SIS - Secret Intelligence Service

SRO - Staffordshire Records Office

T&S Department - Topographical & Statistical Department

Introduction

From 1870 to 1914 the framework that would guide the evolution of British foreign intelligence to the present day was established. Through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the British state underwent extensive bureaucratisation. For instance, between 1832 and 1914 the number of civil servants grew from 21,300 to 280,000.¹ Yet, even as the state's apparatus grew in both size and scope, the principles behind state governance retained their influence. There were ingrained political habits that survived this period of bureaucratisation, which continued to inform British political culture. The latter's importance to state governance was enhanced through the expansion of the state. The administrative culture of Whitehall was infused by the tenets of this political culture. The administrative and political changes of this period were developed under this cultural framework.

From late 1903 to early 1904, the War Office Reconstitution Committee worked to implement significant change within the War Office. Its report reveals the powerful undercurrent exerted by British political culture over state governance:

We must recognise the conditions under which we have to work. There is no *tabula rasa*, and the constitution of this country, and the political habits of our people, are main factors of the problem. You cannot alter them by a stroke of the pen.²

The Committee recognised that there was to be no 'clean state'. This acceptance of the prevailing traditions and principles behind state governance was indicative of the British state's evolution. New state organs were created, while others were enlarged and assigned new roles, but the principles of state governance remained

¹ L.M.E. Goodlad, *Victorian Literature and the Victorian State: Character and Governance in a Liberal Society* (Baltimore, MD & London: The John Hopkins University Press, 2003) p.6

² 'Report of the Committee (2 December 1903)', 'War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I', 14 Nov 1903-19 Mar 1904, *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I: Reports, Evidence and Correspondence*, ESHR 16/4, The Papers of Viscount Esher, Churchill College Archives (CCA), Cambridge, UK, p.1 (emphasis in original)

steadfast. Nowhere was this more evident than in the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence and security structures from 1870 to 1914.

This period witnessed the beginnings of Britain's modern centralised intelligence community. It began with the reformation of the Topographical & Statistical Department from 1870 to 1871. This was followed by the establishment of the Intelligence Branch in April 1873, the Intelligence Division in January 1888, and the Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence in November 1901. The final step was the formation of the Directorate of Military Operations in March 1904 which lasted beyond 1914. The emergence of this intelligence machinery was part of the wider trend of state bureaucratisation and centralisation. Therefore, this evolution on the micro-level was tied into the development transpiring on the macro-level. This meant that the processes affecting the wider development of the state influenced the evolution of these foreign intelligence organisations. It did not matter that they were staffed by soldiers tasked, initially, with the collection of purely military intelligence for the use of the Army. This resulted in these establishments becoming predominantly influenced by British political and administrative culture.

This thesis is focused upon the evolution of the military intelligence services in this period, revealing its growing importance to the business of army and state. British naval intelligence also underwent considerable development too, however, this lies outside the scope of this work.³ Reference will be made to the Royal Navy, but mostly from the perspective of its relations, and their import, with military intelligence. Therefore, when the word 'intelligence' is used in this work it refers to the military intelligence agencies. The thesis will demonstrate how political and administrative culture proved to be the defining element in the evolution of Britain's intelligence agencies from 1870 to 1914, distinguishing their

³ There are several worthwhile studies of British naval intelligence and naval policy from 1870 to 1914. These include: Nicholas A. Lambert's *Planning Armageddon: British Economic Warfare and the First World War*; Matthew Allen's article 'The Foreign Intelligence Committee and the Origins of the Naval Intelligence Department of the Admiralty' in *The Mariner's Mirror* 81 (1); Matthew Seligmann's *Naval Intelligence from Germany: The Reports of the British Naval Attaches in Berlin, 1906-1914*, and his article 'Britain's Great Security Mirage: The Royal Navy and the Franco-Russian Naval Threat, 1898-1906' in *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35/6.

character and operation. The major consequence of this influence was how these intelligence structures came to sit in both the civilian and military spheres of the state. The former consisted of the great departments of state controlled by government and state officials. The latter was constituted from the Army, along with the Royal Navy, and the various military departments led by senior soldiers. Britain's intelligence organisations acted as a bridge between the two, enabling the flow of information between senior soldiers and policymakers. This role as conduits of knowledge became a defining principle for these institutions. This was a direct result of the influence of political and administrative culture, which also started the evolutionary trajectory for these establishments. The predominant effect of these cultures upon the intelligence bodies drew them towards closer cooperation with state and government officials, while also resulting in the persistent apathy and often hostility of the military establishment towards them. This animosity proved an unintentional boon for the development of British foreign intelligence, driving it into the arms of civilian statesmen and officials who helped to raise the importance of foreign intelligence within state governance. Finally, the influence of political and administrative culture facilitated the growing involvement of Britain's intelligence agencies within foreign and imperial policymaking. These other stages worked under the overriding guidance of political and administrative culture. The outcome of this evolutionary process was that Britain's foreign intelligence and security structures experienced a distinct evolution to the intelligence machinery of other nations.

Contribution to the Historiography

There is a broad body of literature that has been written on Britain's intelligence and security organisations, although it mostly deals with post-1914. The focus upon the First World War and beyond is perhaps natural. The two World Wars are major events in human history and in the development of British intelligence, while the three most recognisable British intelligence agencies, MI 5, SIS, and GCHQ, were all established either just prior to 1914 or after 1918. Since they continue to occupy prominent places within the British state it is natural for interest to reside in their history. This has unfortunately resulted in their Victorian

and Edwardian predecessors being overlooked. However, an examination of the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence institutions from 1870 to 1914 illuminates so much about how foreign intelligence developed within Britain, and why the modern British intelligence community occupies the place and form that it currently does. This thesis, therefore, sets out to correct this oversight and give proper recognition to this important period.

There are some works which cover the period from 1870 to 1914 which represented these intelligence bodies' formative years. What is missing, however, is a thorough examination of their evolutionary process. While several dynamics have been mentioned in passing by some scholars, no authoritative study, focused solely upon this aspect, has yet been undertaken. If any evolutionary dynamics are referenced, they fall into one of four categories: institutional, individual, imperial, and international. The first refers to the work of government and state officials working under the direction of government policy. The second to that of specific intelligence officers and heads, along with some government ministers. The third to connections between British intelligence establishments and other institutions across the British Empire. The fourth refers to international impulses and events. There is a crucial missing component, however, in the evolutionary story of British foreign intelligence, the influence of political and administrative culture. This facet is critical in explaining the form, character, and development of intelligence agencies within Britain, and this thesis will argue that it constitutes the most important aspect in elucidating the evolution of British foreign intelligence. Its absence from the current historiography is striking and so this thesis will begin to rectify this problem.

There is also a disconnect between work on Britain's intelligence agencies and on British intelligence culture, with no real study attempting to bring the two elements together. The intelligence structures and intelligence culture developed alongside each other in Britain from 1870 to 1914, with both being primarily influenced and shaped by political and administrative culture. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the two aspects jointly, which this thesis will do. This thesis will provide a rigorous study of what drove the evolutionary process from 1870

through 1914, combine a study of Britain's intelligence structures and intelligence culture in this period, and demonstrate the importance of the period of 1870 to 1914 to the history of British foreign intelligence. Therefore, it will fill an important gap that remains in the existing intelligence studies literature, while also making an important original contribution to the fields of international, political, and imperial history. This section will examine some of the key works in these fields, especially those dealing with Britain's intelligence machinery from 1870 to 1914. This will illustrate the gaps that exist in the current literature.

International Relations

When studying Britain's intelligence organisations from 1870 through 1914, it is important to understand the international relations of this period. This was the environment that these bodies operated within. Examining their evolution, and their developing role within foreign policy, adds another dimension to the study of international relations through this period. In *Britain and the Origins of the War* Zara S. Steiner and Keith Neilson argue that, by the start of the twentieth century, Britain's policymakers felt that it was a power in decline. This required "a careful reappraisal of diplomatic and strategic goals." Simultaneously, through the nation's alliances with France and Russia, British attention became focused on the European balance of power. Steiner and Neilson believe in the primacy of international factors over domestic issues for explaining why Britain entered the First World War. They argue that "Britain entered the war because she feared a German victory in western Europe would threaten her safety and her Empire."⁴

Steiner's and Neilson's study focused upon the importance of both government ministers and permanent officials within the Foreign Office to policymaking. In an earlier work, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914*, Steiner had also propounded the significance of diplomatic tradition and

⁴ Z.S. Steiner & K. Neilson, *Britain and the Origins of the First World War* (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) p.263, p.5, p.259, p.260, p.258

practice to British foreign policymaking. This introduced a cultural dimension to this subject. The work of Steiner and Neilson remains an excellent examination of British foreign policy during this period. The focus on the centrality of the European balance of power to Britain is a useful tool. This thesis will denote how Britain's intelligence establishments became intimately involved within foreign policymaking from 1870 through 1914. It will signal how they came to take an active role within this realm. This aids our understanding of the formation and course of British foreign policy in this period.

Two scholars share a remarkably similar view on a key element of international relations from 1904 to 1914. David Stevenson's *Armaments and the Coming War: Europe, 1904-1914*, and David G. Herrmann's *The Arming of Europe and the Making of the First World War* both argue that the key factor in the outbreak of war in 1914 was what has been termed the 'arms race'. Both draw a link between armaments and diplomacy in Europe in the years before the First World War.⁵ They stress the link between armaments competition and international relations.⁶ A criticism of their work might be that Herrmann and Stevenson focus too heavily on armaments, not lending credence to other factors that affected international relations. Yet both make a compelling case. Their work exhibits how military leaders became more important to foreign policy formation prior to 1914. This thesis will continue this theme by examining it from a different angle. Between 1870 and 1914 British intelligence chiefs and officers became

⁵ For Stevenson, "Governments may build up armaments not only to prepare for or insure against hostilities, but also to add force to their diplomacy." (D. Stevenson, *Armaments and the Coming War: Europe, 1904-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) pp.10-11) Herrmann argues that "In an age of diplomatic confrontation...the military strength of the European powers was a subject of increasingly vital interest to the public as well as to policy makers." (D.G. Herrmann *The Arming of Europe and the Making of the First World War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) p.3)

⁶ Stevenson believes that "the pre-1914 evidence supports the view of competitive armaments as a cause as well as a consequence of international tension." (Stevenson, *Armaments and the Coming War*, p.417) Herrmann contends that, "The relationship between armaments competition and international politics was one of interdependence throughout." (Herrmann *The Arming of Europe and the Making of the First World War*, p.6)

increasingly involved within foreign policymaking. This adds a novel dimension to the study of international relations in this period.

In his consummate examination of the years 1817 to 1914 *The Origins of the First World War*, William Mulligan argues against framing the history of international relations in this period around the backdrop of war in 1914. In explaining the maintenance of peace for over forty years, Mulligan asserts that this was due to “long-standing practices in European politics.” These included, among other things, compensation, great power congresses, and alliance systems. Mulligan downplays the importance of military elites, public opinion, and global economic factors in causing war. Instead, he argues that “after 1911...vital interests - as defined by the great powers - were at stake.” When it came down to a choice between peace and the defence of these interests, the latter would always win out.⁷ The theme of ‘vital interests’ is one that fits well into the study of British foreign intelligence. To protect these interests Britain needed to gain information about its rivals’ intentions. While Mulligan is quick to dismiss the importance of military elites, this thesis will display the importance and influence of British intelligence officers on the direction of foreign policy.

Institutional History

Martin van Creveld’s *The Rise and Decline of the State* sought “to look into the future of the state by examining its past.” From 1560 to 1648 he asserted that the state’s “overriding purpose was to guarantee life and property by imposing law and order.” Yet, from 1789 to 1945 he argues that various forces, especially growing nationalism, were adopted by expanding states, leading to their “bureaucracy extending its tentacles into fields which had previously been largely free of government interference.” These included areas such as health,

⁷ W. Mulligan, *The Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) p.3, pp.227-8, p.23, p.91, p.93, p.134, p.206, p.91 (emphasis in original)

education, and financial affairs.⁸ As his work is a more general history, van Creveld does not delve into all the specifics of bureaucratisation and state growth. For instance, he does not reference the expansion of national intelligence machinery, although this was an important part of the process of state growth. The collection of foreign intelligence was an integral element of the modern state's information gathering apparatus. Therefore, this thesis fits into a wider framework of political history and the process of bureaucratisation, illuminating wider trends that were occurring within the British state from 1870 to 1914.

A key development within Britain from 1870 to 1914 was the growth of centralised defence organisations. The foreign intelligence services were part of this as were institutions like the Committee of Imperial Defence established in 1904. Several excellent studies have been undertaken on this area. In *Cabinet Government and War 1890-1940*, John Ehrman declared how Britain's modern defence organisations grew from the nineteenth century system of cabinet committees. He also posited the supreme importance of the principle of 'Departmental government' in this developmental process. Ehrman argued that the Whitehall departments were the powerhouses within Victorian state governance, providing the impetus for the centralised organisation of state defence. He also highlighted the twin problems that faced Britain's political and military leaders when trying to create modern defence organisations: departmental and service reform, and "the provision of a central control." These challenges were tackled in the early 1900s, by measures such as reform of the War Office and the formation of the Committee of Imperial Defence.⁹ Ehrman's work is excellent. He was correct to identify the prominence of committee culture, revealing the impact of political and administrative culture, in the creation of centralised defence organisations within Britain during this period. Yet, there remains an important issue with this work. While Ehrman discussed structures such as the Committee of Imperial Defence and the Colonial Defence Committee, he paid relatively little attention to the expansion of British foreign intelligence. This

⁸ M. van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) p.vii, p.189, p.190, p.191

⁹ J. Ehrman, *Cabinet Government and War 1890-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958) pp.4-5, p.7, p.21

is a serious omission as the foreign intelligence agencies formed an integral part of Britain's growing centralised defence machinery, becoming important players within organisations like the Committee of Imperial Defence. Examining this facet will provide a fuller picture of the institutional development of defence machinery within Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

An excellent study of British defence machinery from this period remains Franklyn Johnson's *Defence by Committee: The British Committee of Imperial Defence 1885-1959*. Johnson argued that this organisation "did not possess executive power, but it wielded immense influence." He stressed accurately how the Committee conformed to the principles of British state governance, with informal terms of reference, an ad-hoc nature, the avoidance of publicity, a focus upon "the group or committee aspect," and "adherence to the traditional principle of civil control over the military." He noted how, before the twentieth century, "there existed no organ short of the cabinet which could consider all aspects of defence and recommend a policy for all departments." In response to this, the Committee was designed to obtain expert advice on imperial defence issues before presenting this information to the Cabinet for final decision. Johnson contended that the Committee was so successful in its aim that, by 1914, "its decisions were virtually final in the field of inter-departmental planning for defence." Johnson believed in the importance of political and administrative culture to the Committee's development, declaring that its evolution was "always within the framework of British cabinet and Parliamentary traditions." Interestingly, Johnson also observed within the Committee "a growing tendency to perform its regular tasks in the subcommittees rather than in the plenary sessions." Another compelling point raised by Johnson is the apparent limited influence of the Committee's military members. In conclusion, Johnson declared that the Committee was largely successful "both as an interdepartmental committee of the British government and an imperial defence council."¹⁰

¹⁰ F.A. Johnson, *Defence by Committee: The British Committee of Imperial Defence 1885-1959* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960) p.1, p.353, p.13, p.353, p.354, p.355, p.357, p.358, p.362

Johnson's study is admirable in its intent and execution. He identified several important aspects of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and wider British state governance, while providing an astute summary of the Committee's work. It remains an important contribution to the history of defence organisation within Britain, despite Johnson's admission of his inability to access some official material.¹¹ An important issue, however, with this study is the failure to examine the relationship between the Committee of Imperial Defence and Britain's foreign intelligence institutions. This is perhaps an unfair criticism as this was not the intention of Johnson's study. Nevertheless, it means that the role of the intelligence agencies in the development of centralised defence machinery within Britain is neglected. This thesis will address this aspect and reveal the importance of the link between organisations such as the Committee of Imperial Defence and the foreign intelligence services. Yet, this thesis will draw on several of the points made by Johnson. It will show the similarities that exist between the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence organisations and defence machinery. These include the influence of political and administrative culture, their respective roles as reservoirs of expert advice, and their interdepartmental nature. This thesis will also tackle the issue of military influence upon policymaking, through the impact of British intelligence officers upon policy decisions, to illustrate how this factor grew across the period under study and as foreign intelligence became absorbed into the civilian sphere of the British state.

Nicholas d'Ombrain's *War Machinery and High Policy* is another excellent study of the establishment of Britain's centralised defence machinery in the early twentieth century. When distinguishing between the new defence organisations of the early 1900s and their predecessors, especially the Defence Committee of 1902 and the Committee of Imperial Defence, d'Ombrain argued that the real difference lay in Prime Minister Arthur Balfour's use of them "rather than any organic distinction." Agreeing with Johnson, d'Ombrain argued that the soldiers suffered a limited role within the new defence machinery in the early to mid-1900s. In comparison to this d'Ombrain asserted that the Admiralty possessed a

¹¹ Ibid, p.3

preponderating influence over the Committee of Imperial Defence and its decisions in the early 1900s. Yet, from 1906 onwards he declared that the military element of the Committee began to dominate, and the General Staff's continental strategy became accepted by political leaders. Interestingly, d'Ombraïn viewed the Committee of Imperial Defence as incredibly susceptible to partisan strife in the 1900s, firstly falling under naval and then military dominance and rubber-stamping their respective plans with little debate. He stated that after 1910, to try and overcome inter-service rivalry, the Committee transformed into "a useful organ of interdepartmental administration," focusing on more technical work rather than grand strategic questions. By 1914 d'Ombraïn argued that the Committee had reached something of a nadir due to this decision.¹²

Many of the same commendations and criticism can be aimed at both d'Ombraïn's and Johnson's works. They are excellent focused studies of British defence organisation. Yet, both do not fully deal with the important link between the new defence machinery and Britain's foreign intelligence agencies. d'Ombraïn's study does contain more material about this connection, but he failed to note the crucial similarities between the character and evolution of foreign intelligence and centralised defence machinery within Britain during this period. This resulted in these institutions resembling each other in both form and character. Neither d'Ombraïn nor Johnson treat the foreign intelligence establishments as a proper part of the newly created defence machinery of the late 1800s to the early 1900s. These intelligence structures were a critical part of this new centralised machinery. Therefore, an examination of their evolution can reveal more about the wider institutional developments occurring within Britain from 1870 to 1914. This is what this thesis will accomplish, while also demonstrating the inherent similarities between the foreign intelligence services and other important state defence bodies.

¹² N. d'Ombraïn, *War Machinery and High Policy: Defence Administration in Peacetime Britain 1902-1914* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973) p.1, p.64, p.3, p.11, p.16, p.17, p.273

Imperial History

When it comes to fusing imperial history and intelligence studies, there is perhaps no better work than Martin Thomas' *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914*. It centres upon the British and French Arab Colonies created during and after the First World War. Thomas' work is "a study of intelligence gathering as a primary weapon of occupying powers." He posits the idea of, "a new model for the colonial states of the interwar Arab world as what may be termed *intelligence states*." He stresses the close links between colonial governance and intelligence. He argues that "Most operations of government were ultimately dependent upon the quality of information received about the socioeconomic activity, customs, laws, and political attitudes of dependent populations denied basic rights and freedoms." Thomas makes an interesting observation about colonial intelligence efforts. For him, "Intelligence and empire were inextricably linked in a symbiotic relationship, the growth of one nourishing the consolidation of the other."¹³ This thesis will develop Thomas' analysis over intelligence links between empire and metropole. The connections that existed from 1870 to 1914 between British intelligence officers and their Indian counterparts propelled the former into imperial policymaking. Exploring this link will show how Britain's foreign intelligence structures adopted a growing role within this policy realm, adding a missing dimension to our understanding of British imperial history.

Intelligence History

Several histories of British intelligence have been produced. *The Intelligencers: British Military Intelligence From the Middle Ages to 1929*, by Brigadier B.A.H. Parritt, is a work that examines the development of British military intelligence. The period covered is broad, meaning that the work focused

¹³ M. Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914* (Berkley & Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2008) p.1 (emphasis in original), p.2, p.13

on 1870 to 1914 is limited. He does briefly reference some of the factors that he believed drove the evolution of Britain's intelligence agencies. He argues for the importance of international factors. He contends that a fear of Prussia sparked a renewed interest in modernising Britain's intelligence machinery. He also asserted the importance of individuals within the evolution process, including Captain Charles Wilson and Major William Robertson. Finally, Parritt suggests that imperial dynamics played an important role, referencing the link between the Indian Army and the British Intelligence Branch.¹⁴ This shows the potential importance of imperial connections, which could facilitate an exchange of ideas and personnel. While there is some merit to Parritt's work it remains a general study. The main aim is to describe the history of British military intelligence over a large period, not to examine the evolutionary process. The work also suffers from a lack of archival sources. Parritt makes little use of a wealth of material that can be found at the National Archives in London. *Military Intelligence: The British Story* by Peter Gudgin suffers from many of the same issues as Parritt's work, using an even smaller evidence base than *The Intelligencers*.

Matthew Seligmann has written extensively upon the role of British military and naval attachés in gathering information for the British Army and government in the years before the First World War. His three major works upon this subject are: *Spies in Uniform: British Military and Naval Intelligence on the Eve of the First World War*; *Naval Intelligence from Germany: The Reports of the British Naval Attachés in Berlin, 1906-1914*; and *Military Intelligence from Germany 1906-1914*. Seligmann rightly argues that British attachés were one of the premier sources of intelligence, due to their permanent position in foreign nations and their ability to combine military and political information.¹⁵ In fact, Seligmann views these attachés as a compact and elite group who hegemonized the "systematic acquisition of military information on potential rivals." Beyond acting

¹⁴ B.A.H. Parritt, *The Intelligencers: British Military Intelligence From the Middle Ages to 1929* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 2011) p.92, p.96, p.217, p.103, pp.105-106

¹⁵ M.S. Seligmann, *Spies in Uniform: British Military and Naval Intelligence on the Eve of the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) pp.16-17. M.S. Seligmann (ed.), *Naval Intelligence from Germany: The Reports of the British Naval Attachés in Berlin, 1906-1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007) pp.xxv-xxvi

as an excellent wellspring of intelligence, Seligmann contends that British attachés possessed an evident influence over the direction of British policy towards Germany in the lead-up to the First World War. For instance, while careful to note the lack of direct evidence, Seligmann notes the commonality of views between Colonel Frederick Trench, Military Attaché in Berlin, and the British General Staff in the late 1900s and early 1910s.¹⁶ Proving the influence of intelligence is always a tricky proposition; one that this thesis shall revisit later. Seligmann is correct to highlight the role of British attachés in this period. He is also to be commended for noting the difficulties concurrent with this topic. The only problem with his work is its limited scope. It is an excellent study of the attaché system in this period, but does not allow for a proper examination of the growth of Britain's modern centralised intelligence machinery. The attachés were important assets for British intelligence agencies, but the involvement between the two is only a small fraction of the story of the latter's evolution.

Christopher Andrew has written several works on the British intelligence community. One of these is *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community*, which investigates the creation of the modern British intelligence community from the nineteenth century through to the early years of the Second World War. Most of the work is dedicated to the period after 1914, but Andrew does advocate for the importance of several evolutionary dynamics prior to 1914. He discusses the influence of institutional dynamics especially the Northbrook Committee of 1870 to 1871. He also highlights the significant connections between the Intelligence Branch and the important Whitehall departments, including the Foreign and India Offices. He references the influence of imperial dynamics, such as how the Branch's first major concerns were the North-West frontier and Africa. He also states the importance of individuals to the evolutionary process including Major-General Henry Brackenbury. Andrew also mentions the influence of international dynamics again referencing the Prussian influence in the late nineteenth century. He also emphasises the importance of the "assorted naval,

¹⁶ M.S. Seligmann (ed.), *Military Intelligence from Germany 1906-1914* (Stroud: The History Press, 2014) p.1, p.22. Seligmann argues that Britain's naval attachés also played an important role in policy decisions, citing the influence of Attaché Captain Herbert Heath on naval policy during the alleged acceleration of German shipbuilding from 1908-1909. (Seligmann, *Spies in Uniform*, pp.258-259)

invasion and spy scares of late Edwardian England,” from both France and Germany.¹⁷

Secret Service is a masterful study and far more authoritative history of the development of the British intelligence community than Parritt’s work. Andrew appears more interested in the dynamics that drove the evolutionary process. However, once again, this is not the primary aim of the work. Another problem is that the major focus is on secret intelligence and the interest is in the role of institutions such as the Secret Intelligence Service, created towards the end of the period under study in this thesis. While there is interesting information on the formative years of Britain’s intelligence community, the title of the first chapter ‘Victorian Prologue’ summarises where Andrew’s curiosity lies. This is on the period from 1900 to 1945. There is a distinct lack of primary source material utilised by Andrew in this first chapter, which is another clear signal that his focus lay beyond the late nineteenth century. This is disappointing as much evidence remains from the late 1800s which illuminates the evolution of British foreign intelligence, while it also sadly constitutes a mark against *Secret Service*. It remains a fascinating read, but Andrew’s work still does not answer the question of what drove the evolutionary process from 1870 to 1914.

John Ferris has written prolifically upon British intelligence, publishing numerous articles. They stand on the other end of the spectrum when compared to the works of Parritt and Gudgin. Rather than being general histories, Ferris’s articles are concise, target-focused, highly analytical examinations of various parts of British intelligence or on narrow time periods or single events. The article ‘Before ‘Room 40’: The British Empire and Signals Intelligence, 1898-1914’ traces the history of British signals intelligence. Ferris argues that contrary to popular opinion, “the origins of British cryptology...lie years before” the First World War. He also sought to overturn the idea that British statesmen held an aversion to the use of cryptography. He asserted instead that, between “1816 and 1914, few

¹⁷ C. Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann, 1985) p.10, p.12, p.11, p.21, p.49

practices were entirely beyond the pale for British statesmen, subject to the overriding principle that they not be caught publically in the act.”¹⁸ *Intelligence and Strategy: Selected Essays* contains several articles written by Ferris, most of which focus upon the period after 1918. There is one that examines British intelligence efforts in the late Victorian period, entitled ‘Lord Salisbury, secret intelligence and British policy toward Russia and Central Asia, 1874-1878’. This examines the attempts of Benjamin Disraeli’s government to discover Russian intentions in Central Asia. Ferris also attempts to illuminate the relationship between intelligence and certain British statesmen, in this case the Secretary of State for India and then Foreign Secretary Lord Salisbury.¹⁹

While these articles are focused upon only narrow elements of British intelligence, Ferris does comment upon some of the potential evolutionary dynamics. For instance, he believes in the importance of institutional dynamics. In both articles, he references the ad-hoc nature of British secret intelligence collection. In ‘Before ‘Room 40’’, he contends that, “secret intelligence was collected by bodies which were jury-rigged to meet specific problems and disbanded once that latter were resolved.” This reveals an institutional response to the issue of secret intelligence collection. Ferris sees institutional dynamics combined with individual efforts as significantly important in the evolutionary process. He asserts that attempts to intercept and then decode foreign communications, “usually stemmed from the individual initiative of middle level decision-makers rather than from the official policy of any department.” The influence of international dynamics is especially clear in Ferris’s article upon British intelligence efforts against Russia. The whole article discusses how British statesmen attempted to construct Russian intentions in Central Asia and how, in the 1870s, this objective dominated British intelligence efforts. Finally, Ferris references the importance of imperial dynamics mostly focused upon the efforts of the Indian colonial state and Army. According to Ferris, the latter “was solving

¹⁸ J. Ferris, ‘Before ‘Room 40’: The British Empire and Signals Intelligence, 1898-1914’, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 12/4 (December 1989) p.431

¹⁹ J. Ferris, ‘Lord Salisbury, secret intelligence and British policy toward Russia and Central Asia, 1874-1878’, *Intelligence and Strategy: Selected Essays* (London & New York: Routledge, 2005) p.15

foreign military codes in peacetime long before any European powers began to do so.” There is one final aside. Ferris comments on how Conservative statesmen received intelligence gained from cryptographic means far more positively than Liberal politicians.²⁰ This is the closest reference to political and administrative culture that appears in the current literature. Even then, it remains a fleeting reference and might not rightly be termed as falling under the purview of these cultural influences.

These articles are accomplished studies and are the closest attempt that has been made to try and marry an inquiry of intelligence agencies and culture, although it remains limited. The analysis that Ferris displays is praiseworthy elevating the utility of his work. His articles allow for an interesting view into specific elements of British intelligence in this period. Yet, they remain narrow studies. While this does provide certain advantages, it means that only a small fraction of the bigger picture is revealed. This thesis will cast a wider gaze across a larger period. Ferris utilises a good primary source base for his work, but this also suffers from his narrow focus. There remains a wealth of evidence untapped by Ferris, including private correspondence and official state documents, which elucidate the evolutionary path of Britain’s foreign intelligence agencies in this formative period. By using a wider lens this thesis will draw on the considerable evidence base to provide a more comprehensive overall study than Ferris’s laser targeted inquiries. While he makes repeated references to several dynamics, once again, Ferris has not made an extensive effort to investigate the evolutionary process. The issue of what drove the evolution of British foreign intelligence in this period remains to be charted.

Thomas G. Fergusson’s *British Military Intelligence, 1870-1914* closely examines the formative history of British foreign intelligence. He identifies several dynamics driving the evolutionary process. He asserts that “nineteenth-century Britain possessed a superb and constantly improving capability for the collection of political, economic, military, naval, geographic, and scientific-technical

²⁰ Ferris, ‘Before ‘Room 40’’, pp.431-2, p.435, p.441, p.443, p.433

information throughout the world.” Where the weaknesses lay, he argues, was in “processing-analysis and dissemination-reporting.” The chief problem was cultural; “in the nineteenth century, there was a growing attitude of disdain for secret service...this outlook regarded espionage as something indecent and out of keeping with British traditions.” This thesis will explore and develop this insight. Of even greater importance for Fergusson were international dynamics. These included the organisational achievements of other nations, along with British foreign policy that eschewed foreign entanglements. This meant that British policymakers “required continuous collection and assessment of military information regarding...powerful potential adversaries.” He also places emphasis upon the role of individuals. These included intelligence officers such as Captain Charles Wilson, Henry Brackenbury, and James Grierson, and government officials like Secretary of State for War Edward Cardwell. Fergusson also divines imperial dynamics at work. He stresses the importance of the links that were created between the Intelligence Branches in Britain and India. Most important was the effect of the Second Boer War upon the Intelligence Division. He contends that, after 1903, imperial concerns fell down the priority list for British foreign intelligence, as affairs on the European Continent took precedence.²¹ This trend will be signified by this thesis.

The main issue with Fergusson’s work is that it remains a more general history. His work is not as basic as that of Gudgin or Parritt; the focus on a narrower period is a boon. Fergusson’s work also uses a wider base of archival material, but again he fails to reference important primary sources. Fergusson appears to have focused his research upon those documents and papers contained in the War and Cabinet Office files of the National Archives. There is good material within those collections, but he has missed important sources which can be found in the records of other important Whitehall departments, crucially the Foreign and Colonial Offices, which this thesis shall interrogate. These documents reveal more of the story behind what drove the evolution of British foreign intelligence

²¹ T.G. Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence, 1870-1914: The Development of a Modern Intelligence Organization* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984) p.1, p.3, p.11, p.40, p.79, p.37, p.16, p.95, p.217, p.56, p.103, p.224

and why the intelligence organisations adopted their particular form. Not referring to these sources comprises a significant issue with Fergusson's history. While some potential evolutionary dynamics are presented, again there is no attempt to investigate them rigorously. Therefore, Fergusson's work is lacking in real analytical content, a feature that will be central to this thesis. Despite this, his work remains an excellent historical study of the formative years of Britain's modern intelligence machinery.

William Beaver's *Under Every Leaf: How Britain Played the Great Game from Afghanistan to Africa* details the histories of the Topographical & Statistical Department, the Intelligence Branch, and the Intelligence Division from 1854 to 1901. International dynamics were important for Beaver, especially how some intelligence officers sought to transform Britain's intelligence machinery into "a continental-style general staff." He also rates the importance of individuals, especially many of the early intelligence chiefs who helped to introduce "realistic strategic planning into the government's thinking...raising [Britain's intelligence machinery] to the status of an influential and virtually autonomous department of state." Beaver also briefly references some imperial dynamics, again focusing on the connections between intelligence organisations in Britain and India during the late 1870s. Interestingly, he identifies a fascinating new strand to institutional dynamics. This was the involvement of Britain's intelligence agencies within foreign policymaking. He argues that, from Lord Salisbury's second ascension to Foreign Secretary in 1885 onwards, senior government officials, including Salisbury, "and increasingly the Colonial and Indian offices came to rely more and more on one voice, that of their intelligencers, for facts and what to do with them."²² Beaver is completely accurate in his assessment. Involvement in foreign and imperial policymaking form an important part of this thesis. He fails to identify, however, the significant influence of political and administrative culture, which drove the development of this trend. That is a central point of this thesis.

²² W. Beaver, *Under Every Leaf: How Britain Played the Great Game from Afghanistan to Africa*, Kindle edition (London: Biteback Publishing, 2019) loc.476, loc.2303, loc.605, loc.2227, loc.934, loc.2906, loc.2630

Beaver's work is another compelling history of British intelligence. He is to be commended for identifying trends that have escaped the notice of other scholars. His work is also based on a significant amount and wide variety of archival material; the best of any of the works reviewed so far. Yet, once again, his work is more focused upon detailing the history than providing rigorous analysis. This omission does not harm the effectiveness of Beaver's book, since his goal was not to examine the evolutionary process. Yet it does mean that while he should be commended for utilising such a large base of primary evidence, Beaver does not exploit this material to its full potential. This wealth of sources can reveal so much about how British foreign intelligence developed from 1870 to 1914, which is what this thesis will use it to do. It illustrates again a significant gap within the existing literature, which this thesis aims to fill.

Institutional, individual, imperial, and international dynamics were all important factors in the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence and security structures from 1870 to 1914. At various times one or more of these facets spurred on the development of British foreign intelligence. Yet, they do not explain what drove the evolutionary process, or why Britain's intelligence establishments adopted the form that they did. The historiography is missing a work that critically examines this evolutionary process and answers this latter question. There has also been virtually no examination of the influence of political and administrative culture upon the evolutionary process. Work like this has been undertaken regarding France's intelligence institutions during the same period.

Sébastien Laurent's *Politiques de l'Ombre: État, renseignement et surveillance en France* is an example of this. He rigorously examines the development of France's intelligence machinery from 1814 to 1914. His central argument is that its evolution was significantly influenced by French state governance practices. For instance, he contends that while once the preserve of monarchs, by the nineteenth century intelligence organisations became "components of the administration subjected to a process of bureaucratisation." He asserts that the political and administrative context is key for understanding this evolutionary process; "The administration and the men of intelligence...took

place in a very specific political context, that of the gradual formation of a liberal democracy in France.” The result of this was that a ‘Secret State’ developed within the French State, relying on “bureaucratic forms destined to remain discrete, if not secret, and on a new right, based rather on regulation, attribute of executive power, than on the law, prerogative of the assemblies.”²³

In her PhD thesis, entitled ‘Marianne is Watching: Knowledge, Secrecy, Intelligence and the Origins of the French Surveillance State (1870-1914)’, Deborah Susan Bauer also focused on the evolution of French intelligence through this particular period. To an extent, Bauer agrees with Laurent’s contention. For instance, she agrees that, before long, France’s intelligence agencies “began to take on the familiar characteristics of bureaucratic organization,” including hierarchies, full-time paid officials, and career tracks. Yet, she also argues for the importance of other factors in the evolutionary process. These included how French military culture shaped these structures, and how French intelligence developed “without significant oversight” from civilian departments.²⁴ Bauer’s thesis takes an encompassing view which greatly adds to its effectiveness. Her focus on both the civilian and the military spheres will serve as a model for this thesis, demonstrating how military apathy combined with civilian interest to help drive the evolution of British foreign intelligence.

This thesis seeks to emulate the work of Laurent and Bauer, to produce an extensive study of the evolution of Britain’s foreign intelligence and security structures from 1870 to 1914, a period which has languished out of the spotlight for too long. The thesis will at times compare the British process to that in France. This will reveal the unique position and evolutionary progress of British foreign intelligence in this period. Particular attention will be paid to the significant impact of political and administrative culture upon the evolutionary process since

²³ S. Laurent, *Politiques de l’Ombre: État, renseignement et surveillance en France* (Paris: Fayard, 2009) (translation my own) p.12, p.601, p.602

²⁴ D.S. Bauer, ‘Marianne is Watching: Knowledge, Secrecy, Intelligence and the Origins of the French Surveillance State (1870-1914)’ (Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, 2013) p.111, p.490, p.269

this area has been all but ignored. This was the single most important influence which drove the evolutionary process and it needs to be given its proper place within the history of British intelligence. It will also utilise an extensive base of primary source material, much of which has not been fully examined. This means that this thesis will fill an important gap that exists in the current historiography.

Methodology

This thesis borrows key elements from Michael Warner's definition of intelligence. These include intelligence activities being "Performed by officers of the state for state purposes," "Focused on foreigners - usually other states," "Linked to the production and dissemination of information," and "Involved in influencing foreign entities by means that are unattributable to the acting government."²⁵ This thesis sits at the junctions of intelligence, political, international, and imperial history. Due to the constraints of space, it uses a narrower lens when considering the imperial realm. As state and military officials oversaw the development of Britain's intelligence machinery, a similar process was underway in India. Reference will be made to Indian developments mainly for what they reveal about the role of India in imperial policymaking within Britain. A fuller investigation of India's intelligence machinery will not be undertaken. Several excellent works have already examined this subject,²⁶ while this thesis is more concerned with the impact of political and administrative culture which guided the evolution of British foreign intelligence. As a final point, this thesis will treat imperial and foreign policy as separate realms. In the Victorian and Edwardian British Empire these policy areas usually intertwined. Yet international and imperial concerns provided separate impulses for Britain's foreign intelligence machinery between 1870 and

²⁵ M. Warner, 'Wanted: A Definition of "Intelligence"' (<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol46no3/article02.html>) [Accessed 06/08/20]

²⁶ One such work is *Empire & Information: Intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780-1870* by C.A. Bayly. Another is *The Imperial Security State: British Colonial Knowledge and Empire-Building in Asia* by James Hevia. Also see Richard J. Popplewell's *Intelligence and Imperial Defence: British Intelligence and the Defence of the Indian Empire 1904-1924* for a later period.

1914. Hence the decision has been made to divide the two policy realms in this thesis.

Culture

Culture forms an important part of this thesis. The influence of British political and military culture, along with the administrative culture of Whitehall will be examined to assess their impact on the development of British intelligence culture. Culture has never been an easy issue to define.²⁷ Culture itself is best defined as “the values, norms, and assumptions that guide human action.” It is the lens through which social actors view their world and which enables them to make sense of it. This subsequently shapes their responses to their world. Providing a single workable definition of culture, this thesis draws on the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and his “cultural theory of action.” Bourdieu saw culture as being formed by the interaction between a person’s ‘habitus’ and the ‘field’ in which they are operating. The first concept describes a person’s “conscious and unconscious learned experience on the one hand, and by the cumulative impact of practices on the other.” The second idea is trickier but refers to “a network of social relations between ‘positions’ that are occupied by social agents.”²⁸ The ‘field’ could be a particular institution or it could be the international arena. The benefit of this conceptualisation of culture is that it reveals the innate differences in cultural outlook and values that can exist between different members of society. With respect to this study this means between soldiers, politicians, state civil servants, and intelligence officers.

²⁷ For an example of this, see M. Broers, P. Hicks & A. Guimerá (eds.), *The Napoleonic Empire and the New European Political Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). The work compares the various political cultures of Europe in the age of Napoleon; for instance, Michael Broers contends that, “Piedmont, Liguria, the Duchies and the Papal states could not have had more different political cultures.” (Ibid, p.222) Yet none of the contributors take the time to define what they mean by the term political culture.

²⁸ P. Jackson, ‘Pierre Bourdieu’ in J. Edkins & N. Vaughan-Williams (eds.), *Critical Theorists and International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009) p.111, p.106, p.108

Therefore, it is worth examining some of the facets that differentiate military, administrative, political, and intelligence culture.

When discussing military culture, I have borrowed from Peter H. Wilson's definition. He lists military culture as comprising five aspects: "mission, relationship to the state and other institutions, relationship to society, internal structure, and resources." The first aspect describes what defines the military's purpose "and legitimates its existence." The final aspect refers to money, technology, and education.²⁹ This definition provides an excellent foundation for which to examine the norms, values, and assumptions which guide the thoughts and actions of a military establishment, meaning those soldiers occupying the most senior positions within an army's hierarchy. This thesis will focus particularly upon the first, second, fourth, and fifth aspects of Wilson's definition.

With reference to administrative culture, I have utilised Fred W. Riggs' definition which listed the six concepts of administrative culture. These are: The Arts; Knowledge and Sophistication; Shared Beliefs and Practices; People who share a Culture; Shared Attitudes; and Improvement. The third concept will be employed in this thesis which Riggs describes as the anthropological approach, including "all the distinctive attitudes and behaviors of a community." Interestingly, he argues that "the dynamics of governance by officials generates distinctive cultural features that exist independently of the local cultural system."³⁰ This differentiates administrative from political culture, but this thesis views administrative culture as being informed by political culture. Governance practices are created under the auspices of the 'values, norms, and assumptions' that govern political thought and practice. The two are intricately linked with political culture guiding administrative culture. Therefore, this thesis mostly will examine both together, showing how Whitehall's distinctive administrative

²⁹ P.H. Wilson, 'Defining Military Culture', *The Journal of Military History* 72/1 (January 2008) p.14, p.41, p.17, pp.35-37

³⁰ F.W. Riggs, 'Administrative Culture - the Concepts', *International Review of Sociology* 12/1 (2002) p.62

culture, influenced by British political culture, significantly influenced the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence machinery from 1870 to 1914.

Political culture is by the far the most difficult concept to define.³¹ While many have used the term in their research, fewer have defined what they mean. The nature of political culture has provoked a lively debate in the field of political science since it was first floated in the 1950s.³² In 2000 Ronald P. Formisano urged historians to consider the history of the concept, drawing on work in political science. He noted that, "political scientists...have engaged in a virtually continuous assessment, re-evaluation, and criticism of the political culture concept's theoretical grounding, methodological implications, and substantive results."³³ Gabriel A. Almond first developed the concept of political culture in a 1956 article entitled 'Comparative Political Systems'. He asserted that, "Every political system is embedded in a particular pattern of orientations to political action. I have found it useful to refer to this as the *political culture*." He stressed two salient points. Firstly, "[political culture] does not coincide with a given political system or society. Patterns of orientation to politics may, and usually do, extend beyond the boundaries of political systems." Secondly, he asserted that there was a difference between political culture and general culture. This was because, according to Almond, "political orientation involves cognition, intellection, and adaptation to external situations, as well as the standards and values of the general culture, it...has a certain autonomy."³⁴ Almond's approach was challenged in 1979 by David J. Elkins & Richard E.B. Simeon in an essay entitled 'A Cause in Search of Its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?'. They criticise the lack of specificity in the concept. They also argue that culture should be viewed as a variable, a contention not supported in this thesis, arguing

³¹ Stephen Welch acknowledged this problem, arguing that, "Political culture research has been underway for nearly sixty years, without...the benefit of an adequate theory." (S. Welch, *The Theory of Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) p.210)

³² Welch argues that the divisions, "have been more cost than benefit to political culture research and the project of political culture theory." (Ibid)

³³ R.P. Formisano, 'The Concept of Political Culture', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31/3 (November 2000) p.425, p.394

³⁴ G.A. Almond, 'Comparative Political Systems', *The Journal of Politics* 18/3 (August 1956) p.396 (Emphasis in original)

for studying the interplay between culture and institutions. Finally, both contend that political culture should be used to describe collectives; the “use of culture for explanation...must always be comparative.”³⁵ Elkins and Simeon raise some important points about the use of political culture as a concept, especially over specificity and comparison.

Since 1956, historians and political scientists have chosen to define political culture in different ways. The definition of political culture posited in this thesis borrows the following concepts from social scientists and historians. Lucian W. Pye’s contention was that political culture “is the set of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and which provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behavior in the political system.”³⁶ Stephen Welch identifies two key features of political culture: “its inertial and fluid properties, and its relationship to resistance and persistence as well as to conflict and change.”³⁷ In her examination of the French Revolution, Lynn Hunt argues that the “values, expectations, and implicit rules that expressed and shaped collective intentions and actions are what I call the political culture of the Revolution; that political culture provided the logic of revolutionary political action.”³⁸ María Eugenia Vázquez Semadeni defines political culture as, “the set of discourses and symbolic practices through which individuals and groups articulate their relationship with power, elaborate their political demands and put them into play.”³⁹ Finally, Angus Hawkins asserts the importance of history in shaping Victorian political culture, what he terms as “partisan pasts.” These were

³⁵ D.J. Elkins & R.E.B. Simeon, ‘A Cause in Search of Its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?’, *Comparative Politics* 11/2 (January 1979) p.127, p.140, p.143, p.131

³⁶ L. Pye, *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/sociology-and-social-reform/sociology-general-terms-and-concepts-35>) [Accessed 07/04/17]

³⁷ Welch, *The Theory of Political Culture*, p.210

³⁸ L. Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkley, Los Angeles, CA & London: University of California Press, 1984) pp.10-11

³⁹ M.E. Vázquez Semadeni, *La formación de una cultura política republicana: El debate público sobre la masonería, México, 1821-1830* (Mexico, D.F. & Zamora: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/El Colegio de Michoacán, 2010) (translation my own) p.14

not “academic attempts to understand the world as it was,” instead they were “practical readings of the past intended to serve present purposes.”⁴⁰

For the purposes of this thesis, political culture represents the beliefs, values, expectations, and attitudes that collective groups hold towards the political system that they operate in. Political culture influences the actions and behaviours of actors in a political system, regulating how they operate within the political process. Political culture particularly impacts how collective groups both view and respond to their relationship to the centres of power within their political system. Political culture is not static. It is fluid and is forever being shifted by ideas of persistence, conflict, resistance, and change. Finally, political culture is particularly influenced by historical experience, which is the foundation for all the beliefs and values that collective groups share.

Intelligence culture refers to the norms, values, and assumptions which define the character and operation of intelligence structures. Bob De Graaff and James M. Nyce have argued that “National intelligence cultures are shaped by their country’s history and environment.”⁴¹ There is truth to this argument. Yet, a nation’s intelligence culture can be critically influenced by its political and administrative culture. For instance, Peter Jackson has argued in relation to the French intelligence community that, “the lack of a community ethos can be traced to the political origins of state intelligence in France.” For Jackson, “Intelligence culture was shaped in fundamental ways by the political culture of the Third French Republic.”⁴² Michael S. Goodman and Philip H.J. Davies have both

⁴⁰ A. Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture: Habits of Heart and Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) p.4

⁴¹ B. de Graaff & J.M. Nyce, ‘Introduction’, B. de Graaff & J.M. Nyce (eds.), *Handbook of European Intelligence Cultures* (Lanham, MD & Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016) p.xxx

⁴² P. Jackson, ‘Political Culture and Intelligence Culture: France before the Great War’, in *Cultures of Intelligence* (German Historical Institute, 2018) p.37. In this chapter, Jackson makes two main points. Firstly, “the role of foreign intelligence in French politics and policy was shaped in fundamental ways by the fact that it emerged within a political culture characterized by a lack of ministerial integration and interdepartmental co-ordination.” The second is that the concentration of foreign intelligence within the French General Staff meant that, it “was orientated overwhelmingly towards the acquisition of military knowledge for the army high command.” (Ibid, p.38)

conducted excellent studies of how British intelligence culture was partly influenced by British political and administrative culture. Despite the work of these excellent studies, the relationship between political and intelligence culture remains an area of limited study.⁴³ This thesis takes the work of Jackson, Goodman, and Davies as a foundation, pushing further the connection between British political and administrative culture and intelligence culture. The former facets acted as guiding influences over the latter. It also shows how the link dates further back than both Goodman and Davies have posited.

Political and Administrative Culture and State Governance

It is a contention of this thesis that a nation's political and administrative culture influences state governance. Therefore, it is worth briefly examining the model of British state governance in this period, outlining the defining principles behind it. A study of management and organisational theories in different nations from the 1970s, conducted using business students, found that most French students emphasised the importance of hierarchy. Most German students believed that it was crucial for a company to create a written policy. Most British students subscribed to the notion that interpersonal communication was the key to effective organisation. The conclusion, and cultural analysis, reached was that the "implicit model" of a company's organisation for the French was a 'pyramid', a model which was "both centralized and formal." For Germans it was a 'well-oiled machine', which is "formalized, but not centralized." For the British the model was that of a 'village market', which is "neither formalized nor centralized."⁴⁴

The 'village market' model provides a judicious description of British governance principles, especially from the Hanoverian to the Edwardian periods.

⁴³ P. Jackson, 'Political Culture and Intelligence Culture: France before the Great War' in S. Ball, P. Gassert, A. Gestrich & S. Neitzel, *Cultures of Intelligence in the Era of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020) p.37

⁴⁴ G. Hofstede, 'Motivation, Leadership, and Organization: Do American Theories Apply Abroad?', *Organizational Dynamics* 9/1 (1980) p.60

The model implies flexibility, a lack of rigid hierarchy, and the use of informal connections for communication and cooperation. This later point is key as informal links, particularly within the setting of the London gentlemen's clubs, were a hallmark of British governance especially in the nineteenth century. This model also suggests a level of autonomy for actors within it. This is illustrated in this period by the lack of clarity attached to several high-profile roles within the British state, including for several intelligence heads. This point will be examined later on in the thesis. The model indicates a focus upon deliberation and discussion. Crucially, the 'village market' model infers a degree of ad-hoc planning, dealing with situations as they arise rather than rigidly preparing for potential scenarios. Ad-hoc organisation can be used to describe many facets of British administration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One example of this was the large number of committees spontaneously formed to examine and resolve particular issues. Another example is the growth of Britain's modern intelligence machinery, which never followed a definite plan but instead was the result of international events and individual actions. For this very reason, I have chosen to utilise the 'village market' model to help explain the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence and security services from 1870 to 1914.

The 'village market' model of British governance dates to before 1870. A lack of rigidity has defined the British state since the late seventeenth century, shown by how Britain has done without a written constitution. The cabinet system, at the very heart of the British government, has, since its establishment in 1644, operated "not by statute but by constitutional convention - essentially, established tradition." Simon James correctly argues that there has been a sustained general acceptance, amongst state and government officials, that "institutions change to reflect social reality, and the conventions are adapted accordingly." This has ensured that the cabinet has continued under monarchical, Protectorate, and parliamentary rule since 1644, and that there is no fixed

structure or *modus operandi* for each Cabinet.⁴⁵ This a prime example of the flexible nature of British government since the seventeenth century.

Even as the state became increasingly centralised and bureaucratic, the ‘village market’ model remained at the core of state governance. For instance, the growth of Cabinet government through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with its focus on collective decision-making, signifies the adherence to this ideal of governance. Principles that underpinned this model were inter-departmentalism, the ‘committee system’, cooperation, and consensus.⁴⁶ These all became key governance principles within Britain. Even with increasing bureaucratisation they remained fundamental to governing and even became extended practices, especially the ‘committee system’.⁴⁷ Even Britain’s involvement in an industrialized total war from 1914 could not break the stranglehold of these governance tenets.⁴⁸ The ‘village market’ model links neatly with Bourdieu’s cultural theory. This governance model represented the ‘field’ in which the various civil and military branches competed for influence. Bourdieu described how different ‘fields’ each had their own separate ‘logic’, which regulates the behaviour of social actors.⁴⁹ This provides another reason for the unique evolution of British foreign intelligence, as these intelligence structures had to operate under a different set of rules to their foreign counterparts. This reality resulted in a marked differentiation of the development, character, and culture of Britain’s foreign intelligence and security agencies.

⁴⁵ S. James, *British Cabinet Government: Second Edition* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002) pp.3-4

⁴⁶ These principles will be discussed in greater detail later in the thesis.

⁴⁷ Writing in 1958, John Ehrman argued that Britain was governed “not through a Privy Council combining in itself policy and execution, but through a system of Cabinet committees co-ordinating the executive functions of Departments.” (Ehrman, *Cabinet Government and War 1890-1940* p.4)

⁴⁸ David French notes how, after the outbreak of war, the government of Herbert Asquith tried to exercise “growing control through a steadily increasing number of *ad hoc* committees.” In fact, Asquith’s goal was “to combine rapid decision-making with the maintenance of Cabinet responsibility and control.” (D. French, *British Economic and Strategic Planning 1905-1915* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982) p.174, p.175)

⁴⁹ Jackson, ‘Pierre Bourdieu’, *Critical Theorists and International Relations*, p.109

This thesis will reveal how Britain's intelligence institutions adopted these governance principles, which came to define their character and operation. These concepts also formed the foundation of Britain's nascent intelligence culture. The influence of political and administrative culture also shaped the other stages of the evolutionary process.

Sources & Structure

This thesis is based on extensive archival work. Most of this work was conducted at the National Archives in Kew, London. Additional research was carried out at the Imperial War Museum and the British Library in London, the Churchill College Archive in Cambridge, and the Staffordshire Record Office in Stafford. Among the most useful archival material are the minuted and supporting documentation for various committees and sub-committees; reports and assessments produced by the various intelligence agencies of this period; official documents from the War, Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices; and the records produced by the Committee of Imperial Defence. A large amount of private correspondence has also been consulted. The diaries of Director of Military Operations Henry Wilson, 1910 to 1914, and Lieutenant-Colonel Adrian Grant-Duff, Assistant Military Secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence from 1910 to 1913, were also consulted. Extensive use has been made of John Ardagh's collection of private papers, now held by the National Archives. Also important are the memoirs of former intelligence officers such as James Edmonds, Edward Gleichen, Charles Callwell, and Henry Brackenbury. There is less material for the period from 1870 to 1885 than for the rest of the period under study. While this presents a challenge, enough material exists for this initial period to demonstrate the influence of political and administrative culture. Within the National Archives this documentation is spread across numerous collections, including in papers relating to the Cabinet, Foreign, Colonial, and War Offices. This is a visible illustration of the inter-departmental nature of British governance. It also reveals how connected the foreign intelligence agencies were with the great Whitehall departments through these years. The expansion of these links will be a key theme of this thesis.

Some of this material has been well-used in the current historiography, including the committee reports, CID minutes, and intelligence reports and assessments. However, this thesis examines this material from a different perspective. Using these sources to explain the peculiar evolution of Britain's intelligence machinery has not been attempted so far; specially to reveal the influence of political and administrative culture. Therefore, this thesis utilises all this documentation in a novel manner to previous scholars. Other material, particularly the private correspondence of Director of Military Intelligence John Ardagh and the letter book of Director of Military Intelligence Edward Chapman, has been relatively ignored. When this latter source has been used it has been misquoted, but this thesis will utilise it, along with the private correspondence, to show again the unique developmental track of British foreign intelligence through this period.

When examined this material reveals how, from 1870 to 1914, Britain's foreign intelligence structures developed along an evolutionary trajectory that comprised three elements. These were 1. The influence of political and administrative culture, 2. The apathy and hostility of the military establishment, 3. Expanded involvement within foreign and imperial policymaking. Expanded involvement refers to the growing presence of intelligence officers within policymaking, and how they started to shape important policy debates. This process also led to an increased influence of intelligence over policy formulation from the mid-1900s onwards. The latter two stages were ultimately guided by the influence of political and administrative culture.

It is a difficult proposition to demonstrate the influence of intelligence upon policymaking, especially in this period. Official state documents do not explicitly disclose any influence that intelligence officers had upon state governance. More intimate sources, such as letters, hint at an intelligence influence upon policy formulation, but again they do not constitute direct evidence. Yet, by combining the available sources it is possible to construct a case to prove the influence of British foreign intelligence upon policy formation from 1870 to 1914. This influence was not sustained throughout the whole period; from

the 1870s to 1900s it was very limited. However, from 1904 onwards, British intelligence officers were able to exercise a greater impact upon foreign policymaking. Hence, this thesis uses the term ‘expanded involvement’, rather than influence, as the former better describes the activities of British intelligence officers for this whole period.⁵⁰ As the intelligence agencies furthered their ties to state and government officials, and took on a greater role within foreign and imperial policymaking, their influence upon policy decisions grew.

All seven of the chapters in this thesis are structured similarly. Each chapter examines, in turn, the different stages of the evolutionary process. They all demonstrate how these three stages combined to position Britain’s foreign intelligence establishments between the civilian and military spheres of the state. Chapter 1 examines the reformation of the Topographical & Statistical Department and the establishment of the Intelligence Branch from 1870 to 1885. It illustrates the beginning of the process and the importance of political and administrative culture. Chapter 2 investigates the final years of the Intelligence Branch and its transformation into the Intelligence Division, from 1886 to 1891, coinciding with Henry Brackenbury’s tenure as head of both agencies. This chapter displays the continuance of the process and how political and administrative culture influenced the creation of Britain’s unique intelligence culture. Chapter 3 focuses on the continued growth of the Intelligence Division from 1891 to 1899. It shows how the Intelligence Division began to assume a greater prominence within foreign and imperial policymaking. Chapter 4 handles the last years of the Intelligence Division from 1899 to 1901. It examines the effect of the Second Boer War upon the Intelligence Division and the latter’s position within the civilian and military spheres of the state. Chapter 5 examines the establishment and life of the Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence from 1901 to 1904. It exhibits how the Department further utilised state governance practices to increase its involvement foreign and imperial policymaking. Chapter 6 investigates the establishment of the Directorate of Military Operations, and the tenures of its heads James Grierson and John Spencer Ewart from 1904 to 1910. It reveals the

⁵⁰ Similarly, in his monograph on the Committee of the Imperial Defence, Franklyn Johnson noted how Britain’s military and naval leaders struggled to have their policy recommendations accepted by state leaders. (Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, p.358)

change in the relationship between the Army's leaders and the Directorate. Finally, Chapter 7 deals with the Directorate under the leadership of Henry Wilson from 1910 to 1914. This chapter evinces how the Directorate adopted significant positions within both the civilian and military spheres, acting as a bridge between the two.

Chapter 1: The First Steps, 1870-1885

Intelligence Before 1870

Before beginning this study, it is worth briefly examining the history of intelligence within Britain prior to 1870. From the time of the Norman Conquest through the Medieval to the Early Modern period, the business of intelligence collection and collation took place under the auspices of the English Royal Court. These intelligence networks were founded to provide information on court intrigue and domestic matters.⁵¹ This intelligence system was analogous to other royal courts in Medieval and Early Modern Europe.

The reign of Queen Elizabeth I, 1558-1603, saw the first true establishment of a foreign intelligence network within Britain, as the English Crown was threatened by powerful foreign states, particularly Spain. In control of this network was Sir Francis Walsingham, described by his biographer John Cooper as, “justly famous as a spymaster, a pioneer in cryptography and an expert in turning enemies into double agents paid by the state.” Through his network of spies, Walsingham was instrumental in thwarting the dual threats of plots to supplant Mary Queen of Scots on the throne, through the 1570s to 1580s, and the Spanish Armada in 1588.⁵² The importance of Walsingham to Elizabeth’s reign was illustrated by how he combined the role of intelligence chief with that of the Foreign Secretary, holding these positions until his death.⁵³ This set the precedence for the close connection between the British Foreign Office and secret service work, which continued into the twentieth century. While it was a more intricate intelligence network than had previously existed, it remained reliant

⁵¹ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.8

⁵² J. Cooper, *The Queen’s Agent: Francis Walsingham at the Court of Elizabeth I* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011) p.xvi

⁵³ C. Andrew, *The Secret World. A History of Intelligence* (London: Allen Lane, 2018) p.158. Cooper argues that, “Queen Elizabeth I believed that she was in command of the ship of state, but Francis Walsingham was often at the tiller.” (Cooper, *The Queen’s Agent*, pp.xvii-xviii)

upon one individual, Walsingham, to draw everything together. With his death, on 6 April 1590, the Elizabethan intelligence network began to collapse.⁵⁴

With the Civil Wars and the overthrow of King Charles I, in 1647, the power of Parliament began to rise. This saw the transfer of foreign and domestic intelligence activities from the orbit of the monarch to that of Parliament's. The new Council of State, established after Charles' execution in 1649, was faced with the "hostility of foreign powers to the regicide English Republic, the threat of royalist invasion from Scotland and Ireland, and the danger of rebellion in England." These conditions created a renewed demand for a functional intelligence network. This new organisation was led by the lawyer and MP Thomas Scot. He created an effective network of agents within the royalist conspirators and radical republicans and restarted extensive codebreaking efforts. After Oliver Cromwell's assumption of the position of Lord Protector in 1653, Scot was replaced by John Thurloe who continued to run an efficient intelligence network.⁵⁵

The Restoration of Charles II in 1660 witnessed "increasing centralisation and the creation of a government system of intelligence and espionage activities." Increasingly, intelligence activities came under the purview of the office of the Secretary of State, where it remained from 1660 to 1685.⁵⁶ The initial major effort of Charles II's intelligence organisation was to track down the men responsible for Charles I's execution. These efforts achieved some success. Yet, Charles II's regime was marked by a significant failure in the collection of foreign intelligence. From 9-14 June 1667, during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, the Dutch made an extraordinary raid up the River Medway and attacked the English fleet while it lay at anchor. The damage to the fleet, and to the reputation of Charles II's regime,

⁵⁴ Andrew argues that this problem was compounded by budget cuts, which left foreign agents bereft of funds and support. This led to a decline in English intelligence through the early seventeenth century. (Andrew, *The Secret World*, p.185, p.203)

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.220, p.221, p.223

⁵⁶ A. Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage in the Reign of Charles II, 1660-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) p.28

was extensive. It forced a peace settlement favourable to the Netherlands.⁵⁷ This event demonstrated the lack of an effective foreign intelligence organisation within England.

After his ascension to the English throne in 1688, William III also faced the problem of internal dissent. William's new regime had to gather reliable information about the various Jacobite networks that operated within England. William's new regime had "to prove both that it could survive threats to its security and that it could make good on the story it told to justify its existence...that it had restored law and liberty." The new regime utilised the newly established General Post Office system both to disseminate propaganda and to spy on potential Jacobite conspirators. This was a demonstration of the continued centralisation and bureaucratisation of intelligence within the state. Williamite state officials recognised, "the need for a loyal, efficient bureaucracy to discipline and spy on a not entirely cooperative population."⁵⁸ William III also took a keen interest in foreign intelligence efforts, due to his concern over the ambitions of King Louis XIV of France.⁵⁹ William made full use of a 'cabinet noir', an organisation "responsible for the interception, opening and copying of correspondence, for decryption when required."⁶⁰ This again continued the trend of bureaucratising intelligence within the upper echelons of state governance.

The Duke of Marlborough was a firm believer in the value of intelligence. He stated that, "No war can be conducted successfully without early and good intelligence."⁶¹ During the War of the Spanish Succession, from 1702 to 1714, his

⁵⁷ Andrew, *The Secret World*, pp.235-236

⁵⁸ R. Weil, *A Plague of Informers: Conspiracy and Political Trust in William III's England* (New Haven, CT & London: Yale University Press, 2013) p.27, pp.76-77, p.71

⁵⁹ Christopher Andrew claims that, "William III's understanding of foreign intelligence...exceeded that of any other rule of his time - or any other monarch in British history." (Andrew, *The Secret World*, p.255)

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.210

⁶¹ Quoted in J. Keegan, *Intelligence in War. Knowledge of the Enemy from Napoleon to Al-Qaeda* (London: Hutchinson, 2003) p.9

Quartermaster-General William Cadogan established an effective intelligence system, which directly led to Marlborough's great victories at Blenheim, 1704, Ramillies, 1706, and Oudenarde, 1708. Cadogan's intelligence operations included reconnaissance, prisoner interrogation, and a network of agents in France. These efforts proved effective, but a faulty assessment by Cadogan of plummeting French morale led to Marlborough's pyrrhic victory at Malplaquet in 1709, where he suffered about double the casualties of the French. While it mostly proved a useful organisation, Cadogan's intelligence organisation and activities were ad-hoc operations which did not survive past the end of the War. This was indicative of the trend in Britain of forming temporary intelligence institutions to deal with specific events. The regime of Queen Anne continued to engage in intelligence operations as well. An intelligence operation led by the Northern Secretary of State Robert Harley used secret agents to try and influence opinion in Scotland towards union with England. These efforts paid off with the Act of Union in 1707.⁶²

The Hanoverian regimes that took power in Britain, from 1714 on, continued to operate intelligence networks to monitor persistent Jacobite conspiracies. Government spies detected the planned Jacobite rising in 1715, although the Rebellion still proved to be a major challenge to the regime of George I. A government spy named Dudley Bradstreet claimed, during the Jacobite Rising of 1745, to have been instrumental in convincing the Council of Charles Edward Stuart to order a retreat to Scotland after they had reached Derby, although there is no real evidence to support this. During the Seven Years War, 1756-1763, intelligence became ever more important to the government. Intercepted diplomatic despatches informed Cabinet discussions over peace negotiations with France. Cabinet member William Pitt the Elder was a keen reader of these diplomatic intercepts.⁶³ This demonstrates how intelligence continued to evolve as a key part of British governance through the eighteenth century.

⁶² Andrew, *The Secret World*, pp.261-262, p.265

⁶³ Ibid, p.270, p.283, p.289

During the American Revolutionary War, 1775-1783, British intelligence efforts met with both success and failure. British intelligence agents reported on the growth in support for the American rebels within France and the material that was being sent to their aid. Yet, British intelligence efforts failed to provide accurate reporting upon the position of the French Navy, meaning that British Commander-in-Chief Henry Clinton struggled to form an accurate picture of events. Overly optimistic reports about the active loyalty of the southern colonists led to Britain shifting its military focus to this region in late 1778, while there was a failure to provide accurate topographical information about the southern Colonies. Reviewing all British intelligence efforts, Major S.E. Conly concluded that, "British intelligence developed substantially throughout the conflict and did an admirable job of informing the commanders of the *facts*. It was the analysis off those facts, coupled with political, logistical, and leadership failures that lead to...defeat."⁶⁴

After the initial outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 the British government, headed by Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger, wanted to gather as much information about the ongoing events as they could. In mid-1790, the Foreign Office sent two agents to Paris to report on the activities of the new republican groups and National Assembly. This illustrates the continued connection between this department of state and intelligence. The British Ambassador to France, Earl Gower, was also tasked with gathering information from the French royal court. Gower's task of intelligence collection was typical of the role that was often assigned to ambassadors and consular staff of most nations, through the Early Modern period. After the imprisonment of King Louis XVI, on 13 August 1792, Britain broke off diplomatic relations with France and closed its embassy. This meant that intelligence operations could no longer be conducted from it. In response, the Foreign Office sent army officer Captain George Monro

⁶⁴ Major S.E. Conly, *British Intelligence Operations as they Relate to Britain's Defeat at Yorktown, 1781* (Auckland: Pickle Partners Publishing, 2014) p.18, p.26, p.30, pp.47-48, p.81 (emphasis in original)

to report on developments within Paris. Monro was also tasked with monitoring the activities of British republicans staying in the capital.⁶⁵

Along with the Foreign Office the Home Office was also responsible for conducting espionage and counter-espionage operations. This illuminates again the developing connection between state and government officials and intelligence. The Post Office continued to be utilised as an organisation for the surveillance of foreign correspondence and potential domestic agitators. The government also licensed secret service payments to pamphleteers, who issued proclamations in support of the government and against the activities of the new French Republic. In February 1793, France declared war on Britain. This led to increased efforts by the Home Office to establish intelligence networks within France. The driving force behind this endeavour was William Wickham, an official at the Home Office. For instance, through 1795 Wickham subsidised a force of French émigrés led by the Prince de Condé, and started negotiations with the leading republican general Jean Charles Pichegru. British espionage efforts against the French Republic continued through the late 1790s and into the 1800s. After Napoleon Bonaparte took control of the French government, in November 1799, Britain undertook a relentless campaign to destroy Napoleon, utilising propaganda and espionage operations. Tim Clayton argues that from 1800 to 1804, to secure Britain's position as a leading power, British state and government officials orchestrated a successful plan to blacken Napoleon's reputation. At the same time, the governments of William Pitt the Younger and Henry Addington sponsored resistance efforts within France, including assassination attempts upon Napoleon.⁶⁶ This all reveals how important intelligence became to leading British statesmen through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Andrew, *The Secret World*, p.313, p.314, p.317, p.319

⁶⁶ T. Clayton, *This Dark Business. The Secret War Against Napoleon* (London: Little, Brown, 2018) p.24, p.31, p.32, pp.33-34, pp.36-37, p.42, pp.9-10

⁶⁷ Andrew argues that "Senior ministers during the Napoleonic Wars took a more active interest in intelligence from across Whitehall departments than in any previous conflict." (Andrew, *The Secret World*, p.343)

While successive British governments were running extensive intelligence operations, they were not of much use to British commanders in the field during the Napoleonic Wars, 1803-1815. In April 1803, based on recommendations by Quartermaster-General Sir Robert Brownrigg and with the active support of the Commander-in-Chief the Duke of York, the Depot of Military Knowledge was established. Influenced by the French *Dépôt de la Guerre* this structure was formed of four departments. These were focused upon the collection of foreign military information, the preparation of plans for troop movements, creating a military library, and collecting topographical information and preparing maps. The Depot, however, faced serious problems as it struggled to retain competent officers, an issue that would plague later British intelligence bodies. It also became discredited due to its links with the Duke, who was forced to resign after a scandal in 1809. Finally, there was a prevalent belief amongst Army officers that intelligence organisations in the field were of greater value than a centralised body in London.⁶⁸ The persistence of a conservative military culture would continue to hinder the development of Britain's intelligence from 1870 to 1914. In the end it was left to commanders in the field to collect their own intelligence.

For the Duke of Wellington, intelligence formed “the basis of strategic and operational planning.” Learning from his experience campaigning in India, by the Peninsular War, 1807-1814, Wellington “had developed a sound understanding of the importance of an interlinked intelligence collection organisation, and of integrating all levels of intelligence to produce a complete operational picture.” In the Iberian Peninsula, Wellington relied upon civilian agents, under the pay of the British Minister-Plenipotentiary to Portugal, for the collection of strategic intelligence,⁶⁹ the “intelligence necessary to create and implement a strategy.”⁷⁰ Wellington's divisional staff ran their own intelligence networks to collect

⁶⁸ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, pp.18-19

⁶⁹ H. Davies, ‘The Influence of Intelligence on Wellington's Art of Command’, *Intelligence and National Security* 22/5 (2007) p.619, p.620, p.630

⁷⁰ J.G. Heidenrich, ‘The State of Strategic Intelligence’ (<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol51no2/the-state-of-strategic-intelligence.html>) [Accessed 11/08/20]

operational intelligence,⁷¹ the information, as Clausewitz defined, about “the enemy and his country...the foundation of all our ideas and actions.”⁷² Wellington also benefited from the codebreaking efforts of one of his Quartermasters George Scovell. Cryptanalysis played an important role in Wellington’s decisive victory at the Battle of Vitoria, on 21 June 1813, after intercepted despatches revealed that the French forces facing Wellington were being weakened.⁷³

After the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, interest in the collection of military intelligence faded away in Britain. The surveillance of foreign correspondence, however, continued through the early 1800s. These efforts had to be curtailed after the Post Office Espionage Scandal. In June 1844, it was discovered that the government was utilising the Post Office to spy on foreign exiles in the country. This information was then being shared with foreign governments. Much of the British public was shocked to discover that, the “British Government...practised techniques of state surveillance usually associated, according to public belief, with continental authoritarianism.”⁷⁴

Despite this scandal, Ferris has shown how cryptographic efforts continued in Britain post-1844. The difference was in the acceptance of these practices by Liberal and Conservative governments. While most Liberal politicians rejected the use of these methods, Conservative statesmen, along with some state officials, “were willing to intercept or to solve correspondence in peacetime regarding subversion or espionage within the British Empire...and to do whatsoever was fair

⁷¹ Davies, ‘The Influence of Intelligence on Wellington’s Art of Command’, pp.631-632

⁷² C. von Clausewitz, *On War* (translated by J.J. Graham) in *Strategy Six Pack* (USA: Enhanced Media Publishing, 2015) p.270

⁷³ Andrew, *The Secret World*, p.347, p.349

⁷⁴ P. Cove, ‘Spying in the British Post Office, Victorian Politics and Wilkie Collins’s *The Woman in White*’, *Journal of Victorian Culture* 22/3 (2017) p.390. John Ferris correctly highlights, however, that the real reason for the reduction in British cryptographic efforts was due to the “failure to meet a revolution in communication and cryptology,” especially as mail services became more efficient and focused upon faster delivery. (J. Ferris, *Behind the Enigma. The Authorised History of GCHQ Britain’s Secret Cyber-Intelligence Agency* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020) p.14

in time of war.”⁷⁵ This reveals the continued connection between intelligence efforts and government and state officials into the nineteenth century. It also highlights how important personality could be to the reception and use of intelligence. Overall, from 1870 to 1914, Conservative statesmen appeared to place a higher value on intelligence assessments, when conducting policy, than their Liberal counterparts.

Britain’s intelligence efforts during the Crimean War, 1853-1856, have often been painted as ineffective.⁷⁶ Yet, in his study of British military intelligence during this conflict, Thomas Harris asserted that “a comprehensive and successful intelligence system evolved from virtually nothing and with speed.” The intelligence organisation created in the Crimea was named the Secret Intelligence Department. Harris’ work revealed that this Department “had a significant and demonstrable effect on Allied operations and strategy.”⁷⁷ The conflict also spurred the creation of a new intelligence structure within Britain. In February 1855, the War Office established the Topographical & Statistical Department. The driving force behind this new structure was Major Thomas Best Jervis, who had spent much of his career as a surveyor in India. During a trip to Brussels, Jervis found a copy of the latest Russian secret staff map of the Crimea and brought it to the attention of the British government. Yet, the Secretary of State for War the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Raglan, the Commander of the British force to be sent to the Crimea, showed little interest in the map. Jervis selflessly agreed to pay for the translation of the map and produce additional copies. After this endeavour, Jervis argued to Newcastle that Britain needed a department that would act as a repository for topographical information. After a change of government in January 1855, the new Secretary of State for War Lord Panmure seized upon Jervis’

⁷⁵ Ferris, ‘Before ‘Room 40’’, p.433

⁷⁶ For instance, Fergusson claims that, “Neglect of military intelligence on both the strategic and tactical levels came back to haunt the British Army in the Crimean War.” (Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.136)

⁷⁷ S.M. Harris, *British Military Intelligence in the Crimean War, 1854-1856*. [eBook] Taylor and Francis (2018). Available at: <https://www.perlego.com/book/1380891/british-military-intelligence-in-the-crimean-war-18541856-pdf>, (Introduction, para.4)

recommendations. The Topographical & Statistical Department was established the next month.⁷⁸

From the beginning, there were hopes amongst some, including Jervis and the Radical MP Joseph Hume, that the Topographical & Statistical Department would prove the seed for a great military reorganisation within Britain, potentially leading to the creation of a General Staff.⁷⁹ This dream was to be realised by the Department's successors. The name of the new Department demonstrated how it was to have the dual focus of collecting both topographical and military intelligence. It is worth briefly examining the term 'statistical' and the way it reveals how intelligence was viewed differently in Britain prior to 1870, and for several years after. The Department's statistical duties were defined in 1871 as being, "to collect all possible information relating to the statistics, equipment, and organization of foreign armies; the resources, railways, available means of transport, &c., of Great Britain and Ireland, the colonies (exclusive of India) and foreign countries."⁸⁰ Compare this to a modern definition of intelligence from the CIA's website which states that, "Intelligence is the collecting and processing of that information about foreign countries and their agents which is needed by a government for its foreign policy and for national security."⁸¹

This latter definition provides both a much more encompassing view of what constitutes intelligence and its importance to policymaking. In comparison, the Topographical & Statistical Department was tasked with the collection and compilation of narrow military intelligence. This comprised troop numbers, logistical capabilities, and information in military organisation amongst other

⁷⁸ Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, loc.221, loc.245, loc.257, locs.282-296

⁷⁹ Ibid, loc.296

⁸⁰ 'Report of the Northbrook Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department', 1871, *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, The National Archives UK (NAUK), Kew, London, UK, p.3

⁸¹ M.T. Bimfort, 'A Definition of Intelligence' (https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol2no4/html/v02i4a08p_0001.htm) [Accessed 03/04/20]

items. The term 'statistical' indicated that the Department was expected to collect information that could be compiled into volumes and reports, about the numbers and data of foreign armies. From 1870 to 1914 this narrow definition of duties would expand along with the remit of the Department's successors.

With his cartographic focus, under Jervis' direction the Topographical & Statistical Department focused mainly on producing maps and collecting topographic information. This focus was confirmed by a committee, appointed by Secretary of State Panmure, which placed the Ordnance Survey and the Topographic Department of the Quartermaster-General's Department under the Topographical & Statistical Department. Jervis' successor, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry James, continued the near total focus upon the Department's topographic functions.⁸² Its statistical functions rapidly decayed through the 1850s to 1860s, but even during the latter decade the Department's topographical duties became neglected. This was the situation then leading into 1870 when a new committee was formed to report on potential reformation of the Department.

1871-1885

The reformation of the Topographical & Statistical (T&S) Department began with the work of the Northbrook Committee from 1870 to 1871. This was followed by the establishment of the Intelligence Branch in April 1873. Although small and prescribed a limited remit, the Branch proved useful to state and government officials through the 1870s. By the mid-1880s, however, its fortunes declined, and it looked as if the Branch would fall into obscurity like the T&S Department before it. The efforts to reform the T&S Department demonstrates the dominant influence of political and administrative culture, a trend that remained until 1914.

⁸² Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.24

The establishment of the Intelligence Branch then illustrates the formation of the process that would drive its evolution and that of its successors.

The recommendations for the reform of the T&S Department were informed by the prevailing system of dual control within British state governance. This system saw authority over military affairs shared between civilians and soldiers. Operating under this system meant that both the T&S Department and the Intelligence Branch (IB) were subject to the impact of political and administrative culture. Attempts were also made to connect both structures with the wider state apparatus, linking both with the principle of inter-departmentalism. This became a foundational principle for both structures and their successors. This denotes how important political and administrative culture were to the very beginning of the evolutionary process. This influence ensured that both organisations found a receptive audience within the civilian sphere. Both establishments developed strong relationships with important departments of state, such as the Foreign, India, and Colonial Offices through the 1870s. The connection with the Foreign Office flourished rapidly and remained the most important external connection possessed by the IB and its successors. The IB also formed relationships with important policymakers, including Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli and Foreign Secretary Lord Salisbury.

The military establishment had shown little interest in the T&S Department. Caught amid the conflict between the reformers and the traditionalists within the British Army, the T&S Department and the IB were faced with the apathy of the latter group, who occupied most of the senior positions within the military leadership. Attempts were made to link both intelligence bodies with other parts of the establishment, especially the military attachés. What really hindered the development of both organisations was the conservative nature of British military culture. Intelligence work was not viewed with importance or interest especially amongst the traditionalists. Therefore, employment at the T&S Department and the IB was not seen as a particularly attractive prospect. The soldiers who staffed both agencies formed a unique group within the Army. This led to both structures possessing a distinct culture informed

by professionalism and intellectualism. This brought them into line with the reformers but placed them in opposition to the traditionalists. The predominant influence of political and administrative culture did little to endear either institution to the Army's leaders. This fact, alongside its conservative culture, resulted in the apathy of the latter towards the T&S Department and the IB.

The influence of political and administrative culture and its ties with policymakers propelled the IB into the realms of foreign and imperial policymaking. Through the late 1870s its members provided advice upon some of the key foreign policy issues of the day, including Russian designs in the Balkans. The IB even began to advocate policy options, a trend that would continue until 1914 and beyond and which was outside the remit of the T&S Department. At the same time the IB took a growing role within imperial policy formation. Through the late 1870s, its members sought to challenge the alarmist reports arriving from India over Russian intentions in Central Asia. As a repository of information the IB proved exceptionally useful to policymakers dealing with the international and imperial challenges of this period. This ensured that the IB, and its successors, became ever more involved in these policy realms. The influence of political and administrative culture aided the IB's ability to gather information, increasing its knowledge base. This eased its assimilation into the civilian sphere and its expanded involvement within foreign and imperial policymaking. This again demonstrates the importance of political and administrative culture upon the evolution of the T&S Department and the IB. Between 1870 to 1885, the evolutionary process formed and immediately began to drive the development of both agencies. This period also saw the influence of political and administrative culture take precedence. This set the pattern for what was to come.

Charles Wilson, the Northbrook Committee, and the Reform of the T&S Department

The T&S Department's fortunes had declined through the 1860s. By 1870 it appeared to be moribund. The Department's statistical duties were rarely carried

out. Instead, it was charged with mundane and routine work.⁸³ The decay was reversed with the arrival of Captain Charles Wilson to the Department in 1869.

Charles Wilson was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in 1855. In early 1858, he was selected to become secretary to the North American Boundary Commission. The Commission was tasked with the important goal of demarcating the boundary between Canada and the USA from the Great Lakes to the Pacific. His selection for this duty demonstrated that his superiors held him in high regard. After the Commission completed its task in 1862, he undertook numerous topographical studies across Britain and the Middle East. Wilson's exemplary performance through these years was noticed by the Director of the T&S Department Colonel Sir Henry James, and the former was offered the role of executive officer in January 1869. He accepted and in May Wilson arrived at the Department.⁸⁴

Within a year of his arrival Wilson became Director of the T&S Department. He was appalled at the state of the Department and was determined to rectify the situation.⁸⁵ He was fortunate that at the same moment that he sought to improve the T&S Department, a large-scale reform programme was underway at the War Office. The chief figure behind these reforms was Secretary of State for War Edward Cardwell.

Edward Cardwell became Secretary of State for War under William Gladstone's first Liberal government in December 1868. Cardwell was dedicated to the issue of military reform. He sought to streamline Britain's military system,

⁸³ For instance, in the 1860s the Department was charged with the production of illustrations for dress regulations. (Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.24)

⁸⁴ Colonel Sir Charles M. Watson, *The Life of Major-General Sir Charles William Wilson Royal Engineers K.C.B., K.C.M.G., F.R.S., D.C.L., L.L.D., M.E.*, Kindle edition (London: John Murray, 1909) p.9, p.16, p.41, p.65, p.73, p.77

⁸⁵ All scholars of British intelligence in this period agree upon Wilson's importance to the reform of the T&S Department. (Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, locs.425-437. Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.37. Gudgin, *Military Intelligence*, p.25)

both for the Army and the War Office, by tackling the issues of appointment, promotion, recruiting, and by reducing military expenditure.⁸⁶ The abolition of the purchase system in 1871 was an effort to ensure meritocracy within the Army's officer corps. The Army Enlistment Act, 1870, introduced short service for new soldiers. The Localisation Acts, 1872-1873, were measures to reform the regimental system. The hope was that the Army could carry out its imperial policing duties while also being capable of rapid expansion in case of a European war.

Cardwell was also determined to ensure civilian supremacy over the direction of military affairs. To this end he introduced the War Office Act of 1870. This Act rearranged the Army into three major branches: The Supply, Finance, and Military Departments. These departments were made subordinate to the Secretary of State for War. Cardwell also forced the Commander-in-Chief, the most senior soldier within the Army and one of its nominal heads, to move offices into the War Office at Pall Mall. This was a symbolic measure but it highlighted the system of dual control over the Army that existed in Britain.

Dual control was designed to allow for both soldiers and civilians to control military affairs.⁸⁷ It had been instituted in Britain after the fall of Oliver Cromwell's dictatorship. The aim was to ensure that Parliament possessed a significant role in the oversight and direction of the Army. Cardwell was determined to enforce the precepts of dual control. He, therefore, forced the

⁸⁶ Christopher Brice highlights the preoccupation of Gladstone's government with this third issue. Brice argues that Cardwell's reforms, "were not designed to improve the army as a fighting force but to improve its efficiency and hopefully reduce costs." (C. Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier: The Life and Career of General Sir Henry Brackenbury 1837-1914* (Solihull: Helion & Company Ltd, 2015) p.22) Edward P.J Gosling agrees with Brice. In his Ph.D. thesis from 2016, Gosling states that "Cardwell was a product of his political climate. Retrenchment and efficiency were his primary remits, as they were for the Liberal Party." (E.P.J. Gosling, 'Tommy Atkins, War Office Reform and the Social and Cultural Presence of the Late-Victorian Army in Britain, c.1868-1899' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Plymouth, 2016) p.51)

⁸⁷ Hew Strachan argues that it was tripartite control, as the Crown possessed significant authority over army affairs. (H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004) p.73). The most striking demonstration of this was in the personage of the Duke of Cambridge, Queen Victoria's cousin, as Commander-in-Chief.

military leadership into the hub of civilian control over the Army, the War Office. Concurrently, this reinforced the Secretary of State for War's supremacy over control of the Army. The conflict between soldiers and civilians over control of military affairs would have important ramifications for the T&S Department and its successors.

The Cardwell reforms were an ambitious attempt to reform Britain's military organisation. Scholarly opinion is divided over the effectiveness of the reforms. This thesis is not concerned with the overall effect of the Cardwell reforms. Instead, the interest lies in the relationship between this reform environment and the T&S Department. In April 1870, Cardwell asked Wilson to provide an assessment of the Department's state. Wilson submitted his reply on 30 April 1870.

Wilson highlighted the lack of funds for topographical and intelligence gathering work and how there was a lack of adequate staff. He also argued that the T&S Department, and the War Office generally, needed an organised system for the collection of foreign intelligence. Finally, he pointed out how the Department was disconnected from other parts of the military establishment, especially the military attachés, and from the great departments of state, particularly the Foreign Office.⁸⁸ This final point is crucial. Wilson demonstrated his prescience by highlighting it. Being detached from the state's apparatus was hampering the T&S Department's ability to function effectively. Within the 'village market' model of British governance information was supposed to flow between different departments. Britain's Army had yet to take part actively in this system of information sharing. As part of this institution this meant that the T&S Department was also outside of the 'village market'. Lord Panmure's committee of 1857 had sought to connect the Department with the wider state apparatus, but this had clearly failed. Wilson realised how detrimental this situation was. If the T&S Department was to be connected properly into the state apparatus, able to share and receive information, then, he discerned, the

⁸⁸ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, pp.40-42

Department would reap immediate benefits. This was undoubtedly why he had sought help from Cardwell. Not only was the latter head of the War Office and committed to reform, but he possessed the ability to link the T&S Department with the great departments of state.

Cardwell received Wilson's report in May 1870. In October, the former appointed Lord Northbrook to chair a committee to "recommend the best means of turning the [T&S] Department to the greatest account."⁸⁹ Named the 'Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department', it is more commonly referred to as the Northbrook Committee. The historical context is important. The Committee sat and deliberated during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to 1871. The Committee had been appointed one month after the staggering French defeat at Sedan in September. The Committee published its report on 24 January 1871, the same month that Paris fell to the Prussians.

Alongside Northbrook sat the Adjutant-General Richard Airey and the Inspector-General of Fortifications, Frederick E. Chapman, two senior military figures. Northbrook was then the Under-Secretary of State for War, one of the senior civilian positions at the War Office. The presence of such high-ranking figures on the Committee illustrates the priority that was being assigned to the reconstitution of the T&S Department. Wilson was appointed as the Committee's secretary. He and Northbrook were to be the key figures.⁹⁰ The Northbrook Committee was comprised of a distinctly military flavour. This set it apart from later committees that investigated the T&S Department's successors. Yet, civilian influence dominated. The Committee's recommendations were infused with the influence of political and administrative culture.

⁸⁹ 'Report of the Northbrook Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department', *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, NAUK, p.1

⁹⁰ Beaver claims that Northbrook wanted to ensure that Charles Wilson would be instrumental in drawing up the Committee's recommendations. (Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, loc.515)

The Northbrook Committee outlined several major recommendations in its report. It recommended that the T&S Department should become the repository of all maps and reconnaissance work. The Department should have increased funding, to allow for the purchase of more maps and books, and to pay the expenses of officers travelling abroad to collect information. Officers who travelled abroad should communicate any information they collected to the Department. Military draughtsmen should be employed over civilian ones. Two more officers should be added to the Department's staff. Parliamentary and other reports should be sent to the Department. Britain's military attachés should be linked to the Department and brought further under War Office control. This would secure a significant flow of foreign military information to the Department. Finally, the T&S Department should be considered a confidential department.⁹¹

The Northbrook Committee's recommendations were accepted by Cardwell and the T&S Department was reorganised along these lines. Therefore, the Gladstone government defined the duties of the T&S Department's officers as:

To collect and classify all possible information relating to the strength, organization, &c., of foreign armies; to keep themselves acquainted with the progress made by foreign countries in military art and science, and to preserve the information in such a form that it can be readily consulted, and made available for any purpose for which it may be required.⁹²

This reinforced the importance of the Department's statistical work and underpinned that it should be an important advisory structure. Interestingly, the Department was not defined as being an advisory body solely to the military

⁹¹ 'Report of the Northbrook Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department', *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, NAUK, pp.6-7

⁹² 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', 1878, *Papers, 1878*, WO 33/32, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.5

establishment. This afforded the potential for it, and its successors, to become further linked to the civilian sphere of the state.

The T&S Department's statistical work was reorganised along the lines of Wilson's proposal into three sections. The first dealt with statistical information about Britain, Ireland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. The second dealt with Russia, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the US. The third dealt with France, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Ottoman Empire, Greece, Asia, and Africa.⁹³ The relatively random assortment of different foreign nations reveals how, even with a small increase of staff, the Department remained understaffed to collect and collate intelligence from around the globe.

The Influence of Foreign Methods in the 1870s

The Franco-Prussian War was an important influence upon the Northbrook Committee's report. The rapid success of the Prussian armies underscored the dire situation of Britain's foreign intelligence machinery. During the War, France's military machine had compared unfavourably with that of Prussia. In the area of intelligence collection and utilisation the French had appeared as woeful amateurs.⁹⁴ Yet, Britain did not even compare favourably with France's intelligence machinery. Prussia's rapid defeat of France shocked the British Army and served to induce an added necessity for the reform of the T&S Department. Eight years after the Northbrook Committee's establishment, an official report declared that "On the outbreak of the war in 1870, when the Government were in want of military information as to continental armies, it was apparent that a

⁹³ Ibid, p.6

⁹⁴ Bauer argues that the failure "to properly utilize intelligence played a major part in the French loss." (Bauer, 'Marianne is Watching' (Ph.D. Thesis) p.107). Allan Mitchell wrote several works upon the influence that Prussia had upon the newly established French Third Republic. In these works he demonstrated how the new French State and Army modelled themselves after Prussian practices. They include *The German Influence in France after 1870: The Formation of the French Republic*.

reorganization of the [T&S] department was urgently needed.”⁹⁵ This signals the importance of the Franco-Prussian War to the reformation of the T&S Department.

Several of the Northbrook Committee’s recommendations were prompted by foreign examples. The Committee referenced explicitly the practice of the Prussian intelligence machinery. It recommended reforming the structure of the T&S Department along Prussian lines. Charles Wilson was particularly in favour of this adoption. The Committee stated that:

We approve of the arrangement proposed by Captain Wilson that, as in the Prussian War Office, the statistical work should be divided between three sections, presided over by a Director, who would be responsible for the general conduct of the whole business of the Department.⁹⁶

The reformed T&S Department was constituted along these lines. This is a clear example of how foreign methods influenced the evolution of Britain’s intelligence machinery.

The Northbrook Committee referenced the intelligence machinery of other European nations in its report. It recommended allotting a sum of £250 to the Director of the T&S Department to allow for the purchase of foreign maps. In support of this the Committee referenced how “The French *Dépôt de la Guerre* spend [£]500...a year on this service.”⁹⁷ The Committee also stated that:

We consider that the present staff of Officers is quite inadequate to the work which such a Department should

⁹⁵ ‘Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General’s Department of the Horse Guards’, *Papers*, 1878, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.4

⁹⁶ ‘Report of the Northbrook Committee’, *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, NAUK, p.3

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p.2

be called upon to perform: we find that in the Dépôt of a small country like Belgium four officers are employed solely in translating passages from foreign works, and that the Topographical and Statistical Dépôts of other countries are organized on an extensive scale.⁹⁸

The Northbrook Committee's proposal, therefore, to increase the staff of the T&S Department was based upon foreign examples.

In his work interrogating the use of the term 'Anglo-Saxon' in French discourse, Emile Chabal describes how Britain came to use the term 'the Continent' to describe mainland Europe. Chabal argues that both terms ('Anglo-Saxon' and 'the Continent') were used to conjure up an imaginary vision of the other. This was usually as something that was to be resisted. There has been a recurrent trend in British public discourse, which continues to this day, that attempts to distance Britain from the rest of mainland Europe. The argument has been that Britain represents a unique entity and, therefore, must follow its own path rather than ape European developments.⁹⁹

This view was prevalent from 1870 to 1914. For instance, Lord Hardwicke's Committee in 1903, dedicated to investigating one of the IB's successors, stated that there was "no analogy between Great Britain and the Continental Powers, each of which, so far as the defence of their land frontiers is concerned, has only to solve a comparatively small number of clearly defined problems."¹⁰⁰ The Northbrook Committee's report serves to challenge the foundations of this belief. The Committee showed no hesitation in recommending the adoption of foreign methods. These recommendations were accepted wholesale by Secretary of State

⁹⁸ Ibid, p.3

⁹⁹ E. Chabal, 'The Rise of the Anglo-Saxon: French Perceptions of the Anglo-American World in the Long Twentieth Century', *French Politics, Culture & Society* 31/1 (April 2013) p.42

¹⁰⁰ 'Report of the Committee', *Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division*, March 1903, WO 279/537, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.9

Cardwell. This exemplifies how willing British state officials, ministers, and soldiers were, in this period, to ape their European rivals.

The desire to ape foreign examples was certainly heightened by major world events, such as the Franco-Prussian War. This desire to copy and utilise foreign methods continued through the 1870s. In December 1874, Major C.B. Brackenbury of the IB produced a 'Report on the Departments of Foreign Staffs corresponding with the Intelligence Branch'. The object of Brackenbury's report was, to demonstrate what parts of the foreign intelligence organisations of Austria, Prussia, and France "may be usefully adopted in arranging the work of the Intelligence Branch."¹⁰¹ Even as the shock caused by the Franco-Prussian War receded, the interest in the intelligence machinery of foreign nations lingered. It would persist into the twentieth century.

From the T&S Department to the IB

The reorganisation of the T&S Department proved inadequate for Director Wilson. He wrote again to Cardwell in 1872 requesting that it should be further increased. Cardwell agreed and asked Wilson to prepare another report. The latter highlighted four key points. Firstly, a high-ranking officer should be appointed as Director of the Department. Secondly, all candidates for staff employment should pass through the Department. Thirdly, the staff should be increased. Finally, additional sections should be added to deal with subjects such as home and colonial defence.¹⁰² Cardwell accepted Wilson's recommendations, but it took until the next year for further action to be taken.

¹⁰¹ 'Report on the Departments of Foreign Staffs corresponding with the Intelligence Branch of the Quartermaster-General's Department', 1876, *Papers, 1876*, WO 33/28, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

¹⁰² 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', *Papers, 1878*, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.6

In a speech on the Army Estimates, on 25 February 1873, Cardwell praised both Wilson and the T&S Department. Cardwell then declared his intention to enlarge the Department. On 1 April 1873 the IB was established, replacing the T&S Department. Major-General Patrick L. MacDougall was appointed its head and made a Deputy Adjutant-General. This was a relatively senior rank within the military establishment. A further two officers were appointed to the IB including Major C.B. Brackenbury. The core duties of the IB were defined as follows: 1. "The collection of all the statistical and topographical information which it would be useful to possess in the event of invasion or of foreign warfare." 2. "The application of such information, in respect to the measures considered and determined on during peace which should be adopted in war, so that no delay might arise from uncertainty or hesitation."¹⁰³ These duties provided a more defined military angle to the IB's work. Yet, they again did not preclude contact between the IB and the civilian sphere.

On 22 July 1874, the IB was transferred from the Adjutant-General's Department to the Quartermaster-General's Department. Intelligence work within the British Army had traditionally been under the Quartermaster-General's purview. Therefore, this transfer made sense. The Adjutant-General, however, had grown in importance within the Army's hierarchy through the nineteenth century. Being attached to the Adjutant-General had given a level of prestige to the IB which the Quartermaster-General could not provide.¹⁰⁴

On 16 April 1875 Charles Wilson, now a Major and the Deputy Director of the IB, prepared a memorandum that proposed a reorganisation of the IB. Alongside the Topographical Section Wilson proposed a further five sections. Section A would deal with France and its Colonies, Africa (apart from Britain's Colonies there), and the mobilisation and distribution of the military forces in Britain. Section B would be focused upon colonial defence. Section C would

¹⁰³ Ibid

¹⁰⁴ There is debate over the importance of the IB's transfer. This issue will be further discussed in the next section.

concentrate upon Belgium, Switzerland, the US, Spain, and Portugal. Section D would centre on Germany, Russia, the Netherlands, Asia, and India. Finally, Section E would deal with Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Italy, the Ottoman Empire, and Greece.¹⁰⁵ This scheme was approved. Each section had one officer in charge and at least one clerk. Sections A and B had additional officers attached. The increase in staff allowed for more specialisation than had been the case in the T&S Department. The devotion of Section A to France signifies the importance of information about that nation to British policymakers and soldiers. There remained a mixed assemblage of nations in Sections C, D, and E. This illustrated the need for a further enlargement of the IB's staff.

On 24 March 1876, a further revision was undertaken. Information about Belgium was transferred from Section C to A. Germany and the Netherlands and its Colonies were transferred from Section D to C. Section C also began to collect information about Central and South America. Spain and Portugal were transferred from Section C to D. Section D was to collect information relating to Japan. Africa was transferred from Section A to E.¹⁰⁶ Previously, Section C had collected information about both Germany and Russia. The separation of the two nations showed the importance that both held for Britain's political and military leaders.

In March 1876, Charles Wilson's tenure at the IB concluded. He became head of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland. In the seven years since he had joined the T&S Department, Wilson had successfully managed to revitalise it. He had then helped to establish a new structure dedicated to the collection, collation, and dissemination of foreign intelligence. On 1 May 1878, Major-General Sir Archibald Alison replaced MacDougall as IB Director. Alison remained nominally Director until January 1886. However, in July 1882, upon the outbreak of the Anglo-

¹⁰⁵ 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', *Papers, 1878*, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.9

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p.11

Egyptian War, he left to assume a field command in Egypt. Although he remained nominal head, Alison did not return to the IB.

The IB of 1885 was better placed than the T&S Department had been in 1870. Yet, many of the same problems that had hampered the latter remained for the former. The reform of the T&S Department, and the establishment of the IB, illuminates the impact that political and administrative culture would have upon the evolutionary process.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

The British state underwent a rapid expansion through the mid to late nineteenth century. The characteristics that defined the Edwardian state were all established or expanded through the late Victorian era. To handle the multitude of domestic, international, and imperial problems arising in this period, successive Victorian governments and state officials constructed a centralised and bureaucratic state apparatus. This new centralised state overrode the power and authority of local power structures absorbing the practices of governance.¹⁰⁷

Edward Higgs has provided an informative analysis of the growth of the information state within Britain since the 1500s. Higgs correctly asserts how, for Victorian policymakers and state officials, “the central state was seen as the answer to the problems of society and Empire.” Higgs accurately shows how this tenet led to the need for a greater state information gathering machine.¹⁰⁸ The

¹⁰⁷ P. Harling, ‘The Powers of the Victorian State’ in P. Mandler (ed.), *Liberty and Authority in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) p.25

¹⁰⁸ E. Higgs, *The Information State in England: The Central Collection of Information on Citizens since 1500*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004) p.99

reformation of the T&S Department, and the establishment of the IB, fulfilled the need for greater knowledge on imperial and international issues.

The growth in the central state caused significant changes in British political culture. Before the late 1860s, the political parties within Parliament had been relatively weak organisations by modern standards. MPs often acted autonomously rather than simply towing the party line. This changed after the 1867 Reform Act. This Act doubled the size of the British electorate to about two million. By the end of 1868 the male head of every household in Britain could vote. The growth the electorate's size resulted in a growth in their power. As a result, tighter discipline was instituted by the major political parties. Angus Hawkins rightly notes that the growth of party discipline instigated a change in British political culture. He argues that "MPs during the 1870s and 1880s willingly embraced greater party solidarity as a necessary means of achieving their collective aims." The result of this was that "Party government, giving authoritative expression to electoral judgement, was replacing the sovereignty of parliament as the effective keystone of Britain's constitutional arrangements."¹⁰⁹

The most significant element of this constitutional change was the centralisation of power within the Cabinet. As John P. Mackintosh correctly highlighted, the growth in the electorate's power gave added authority and freedom to the government to pursue its legislative programme.¹¹⁰ The centralisation of power within the Cabinet increased the importance of ministers and the need for a greater bureaucratic framework to support them. The Civil Service, therefore, began a rapid expansion as the size of departments grew alongside the centralised state. This new bureaucracy was divorced from politics and was designed to stay in place regardless of the ideology of a government.¹¹¹ While not a part of the Civil Service, the T&S Department and the IB fitted this

¹⁰⁹ A. Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture: 'Habits of Heart and Mind'*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) p.305, p.315

¹¹⁰ J.P Mackintosh, *The British Cabinet* (London: Stevens & Sons Limited, 1962) p.170, p.176

¹¹¹ K.G. Robertson, *Public Secrets: A Study in the Development of Government Secrecy* (London: MacMillan, 1982) p.44

model of dispassionate advice. These structures would serve successive Liberal and Conservative governments without bias.

The result of these changes was the growth of an effective centralised state within Britain. Comparing the process of state centralisation in this period across Europe, Peter Baldwin argues that Victorian Britain had “what was possibly a small, but none the less strong and effective State.” In comparison, he contends that the “Continental nations...often seem to have possessed States that blustered and swaggered, but which, in any reasonable accounting, were in fact less effective and strong.”¹¹² Once again, rather than standing apart, Britain was actively involved in a similar process to its Continental neighbours.

To handle the growth in centralised power and bureaucracy, state practices were either created or expanded. The T&S Department and the IB were both recipients of this growth in state practice. These agencies adopted the political and administrative culture of the British state. Government and state figures took an interest in the T&S Department and the IB, ensuring that they became connected to the civilian sphere. This, in turn, assured that state practices and culture would filter into the workings of both organisations. The Northbrook Committee was instrumental in starting the evolutionary phase. It was also significant because it reveals the dominant influence that political and administrative culture would play. This would be the case until the present day.

Although three-quarters of the Northbrook Committee were soldiers, the chairman was a high-ranking state official. Lord Northbrook was an important official within the War Office and a career politician. He was the key figure upon the Committee. He empowered Wilson to produce a scheme for the reorganisation of the T&S Department. He accepted Wilson’s scheme and based the Committee’s recommendations around it. The Northbrook Committee set the example. In every

¹¹² P. Baldwin, ‘The Victorian State in Comparative Perspective’, *Liberty and Authority in Victorian Britain*, p.54

other committee that followed, which examined future intelligence bodies, a civilian figure chaired. The civilian element on these subsequent committees increased as well.

While the reformed T&S Department's duties were based around the collection of military intelligence, the Northbrook Committee's advice was designed to strengthen the system of dual control that existed at the War Office. The Northbrook Committee recommended allowing a level of civilian control over the work of the Department. The Committee advised that, "No work should be published without the previous sanction of the Secretary of State [for War] on the recommendation of the Director."¹¹³ This proposal ensured that there would be contact and cooperation between the Director of the T&S Department and the Secretary of State. Civilian direction over the Department's work meant that state officials and government ministers would have access to its products. They would also potentially be able to direct the focus of the Department's work.

The civilian control that was instituted over the T&S Department contrasted sharply with the situation in France during the 1870s. The major foreign intelligence organisation within the French state was the Deuxième Bureau, created in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War. Rather than the dual control established in Britain the Deuxième Bureau was under tight military control. The only civilian involvement in its affairs came through the material that the Bureau sent daily to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.¹¹⁴ This situation remained relatively unchanged until the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair at the end of the nineteenth century. The level of civilian control over the T&S Department was unique when compared to other European nations.

¹¹³ 'Report of the Northbrook Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department', *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, NAUK, p.5

¹¹⁴ R. Deacon, *The French Secret Service* (London: Grafton Books, 1990) p.65

The Northbrook Committee's report also demonstrates how the practice of inter-departmentalism influenced the reformation of the T&S Department. Inter-departmentalism was a practice that had evolved within the British system of governance through the eighteen and nineteenth centuries. It was not a planned concept, but one that was adopted as it aided with growing state bureaucratisation. Inter-departmentalism refers to the concept of different departments working together and sharing information. It served as an effective method for efficient governance across the 'village market' model of the British state, while conforming Whitehall's administrative culture with its emphasis on ministerial and departmental cooperation. The practice was mostly confined to the civilian sphere of the state. Yet, the Northbrook Committee's report signals how the practice was promoted as an effective model for the reformation of the T&S Department.

In its report, the Northbrook Committee noted its surprise that "copies of Parliamentary Papers on Military Matters, Reports of Committees, &c., are not, as a rule, supplied to the [T&S Department], and we recommend that in future these should be sent regularly as they are published."¹¹⁵ This represented an attempt to link the T&S Department into the wider state apparatus. The Committee realised the benefit of connecting the Department to the flow of information. The T&S Department's successors would move from simple beneficiaries to active participants. They acted as perfect conduits to enable information exchange across different departments and between the military and the civilian sphere. This was the first example of British political culture and Whitehall's administrative culture actively influencing the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence machinery.

Both the T&S Department and the IB were placed under the auspices of the War Office. This department of state embodied the principle of dual control. Soldiers and civilians met within this forum to discuss military affairs. The

¹¹⁵ 'Report of the Northbrook Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department', *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, NAUK, p.4

Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State for War shared the responsibility for overseeing the Army and its workings. In a legal sense, the latter ruled supreme over the former. The Commander-in-Chief was to act as the chief military advisor to the Secretary of State. In practice it was found that the latter's authority was diminished by his being a civilian rather than a soldier. Most Secretaries of State for War did not possess a detailed knowledge of military affairs. Therefore, they were forced to rely upon their advisers, especially the Commander-in-Chief.¹¹⁶

Many soldiers expressed dislike at working within the confines of the War Office. In his memoirs Sir James Edmonds, who worked in Britain's intelligence machinery in the 1890s-1900s, acidly declared that "in my experience, the Civil Service as a whole...did not cooperate with, indeed offered sturdy resistance to, the soldiers in the War [Office]."¹¹⁷ While they may have despised working there, the conditions of the War Office afforded the soldiers an excellent opportunity to influence government policy. The War Office provided an environment to meld civilian and military thought. It proved especially auspicious for the IB and its successors. From this framework of fusion they became hybrid structures that bridged the divide between civilian and soldier.

Operating within the War Office, and the dual control system, the T&S Department and the IB were influenced by state practices and methods of governance. Both structures were participating in the inter-departmental system of the British state. The influence of state practices and culture became more apparent in the late 1880s and 1890s. The IB and its successors would internalise these practices and adapt themselves. They incorporated elements of British governance into their organisation and workings.

¹¹⁶ W.S. Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations 1885-1905* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970) p.x

¹¹⁷ Brig.-Gen. Sir J. Edmonds, *Memoirs of Sir James Edmonds* (Brighton: Tom Donovan, 2013) p.263

Inter-departmentalism survived the transition from the T&S Department to the IB. In October 1878 Captain E.H.H. Collen of the Indian Army produced a report on the IB. Collen was the assistant military secretary to the Indian colonial government. In June 1876 Collen had proposed establishing an intelligence department in India, akin to the IB in Britain. Both the Indian government and the Indian Commander-in-Chief, Sir Frederick Haines, supported the proposal. In 1877 discussions were underway in India about the formation of an intelligence department. This suggests that, regarding the importance of foreign intelligence, the Indian Army was more enlightened than the British Army in the late nineteenth century. In October of that year Collen was on furlough in England and received permission to be attached to the IB. He remained there for one year producing a detailed report of the IB's organisation and work.¹¹⁸

Collen aimed, through his report, to demonstrate to the Indian colonial state's political and military leaders the utility of forming an intelligence department. Collen envisaged the IB in Britain and the new Indian intelligence department working closely together. He presented three major conclusions within his report. These were: 1. "The great benefit which will be conferred on India by the permanent establishment of an Intelligence Department on the basis of that established at home, adapted to Indian requirements." 2. "That a line should, as far as practicable, be drawn between the work of each department concerning Eastern Countries." 3. "That the two departments should work together for the common good and in the closest intercourse attainable."¹¹⁹ While Collen imagined the two structures working closely together, he also desired that work on the various Eastern countries should be divided between the two.¹²⁰ What is of greater interest is how Collen propounded an extension of inter-departmentalism. Collen envisaged a robust system of communication and information sharing between the intelligence machinery of Britain and India. This

¹¹⁸ 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', *Papers, 1878*, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.1

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*

¹²⁰ Collen attached to his report a separate memorandum providing a division of work for the two structures. ('Memorandum on the Distribution of Eastern Countries to the English and Indian Intelligence Branches', 5 January 1878, *Ibid*)

was aligned to what the Northbrook Committee had proposed for the reformed T&S Department. It denotes how ingrained inter-departmentalism was to the practice of governance in Britain. The practice was also filtering through to the military sphere of the state and to the wider Empire.

Collen produced a separate memorandum, on 28 January 1878, entitled 'Memorandum on the system to be established for communication of information between the Intelligence Branch, Horse Guards, and the Intelligence Branch in India'. Besides listing the information that each intelligence agency should provide to the other, Collen also recommended methods to facilitate communication. Fascinatingly, Collen suggested utilising the Foreign and India Offices to expedite the transfer of information.¹²¹ This demonstrates how intricately connected the IB in Britain was becoming with the civilian sphere. It also illustrates too how the IB had become inter-departmental in character. Collen's memorandum was laced with inter-departmental principles. For instance, examining the subject of military information of interest to the Indian IB and government, Collen provided a list of four general rules. These were:

1. That a monthly return of work in progress, or completed, should be sent to the Intelligence Branch, India.
2. That the channel of official communication would be usually through the Political Department, India Office, demi-official information taking place between the two branches.
3. That each Chief of Section shall be responsible for the supply of information to the Indian Branch from his section.
4. That free communication should take place between the two branches as to the points on which mutual assistance can be given.¹²²

¹²¹ 'Memorandum on the system to be established for communication of information between the Intelligence Branch, Horse Guards, and the Intelligence Branch in India', 28 January 1878, *Papers, 1878*, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.104

¹²² *Ibid*, pp.107-108

All four of these rules are infused with inter-departmentalism. They stress the importance of ease of communication, and that both parties update the other on relevant information they possess and their progress. These rules were symptomatic of the whole memorandum. Whether he realised it or not, Collen was helping to further the system of inter-departmentalism across imperial boundaries.

Working within the IB, Collen saw at first-hand the practice of inter-departmentalism. In his report, he noted how the IB received despatches and papers from “the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, the Admiralty, the India Office, and other branches of the War Office.”¹²³ Witnessing this practice, and presumably seeing its effectiveness, it is unsurprising that Collen chose to stress the necessity of inter-departmentalism, consciously or unconsciously, in his later memorandum on communication between the intelligence machinery of India and Britain.

Collen’s report demonstrated the dual control system in action. He related how work was initiated for the IB. He stated that “It may be initiated by [the Commander-in-Chief], or by the Secretary of State for War, who may consider it desirable that the Intelligence Branch shall turn its attention in a particular direction.”¹²⁴ The involvement of a senior government minister in the work of the IB, partly, explains the perseverance of inter-departmentalism within the latter structure.

The influence of political and administrative culture expedited the growing associations between Britain’s intelligence establishments and the civilian sphere. One method to track the integration of these organisations into the civilian sphere is to trace their physical location. Since January 1874 the IB had been situated at

¹²³ ‘Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General’s Department of the Horse Guards’, *Ibid*, p.17

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, p.16

Adair House, 20 St. James Square. From here, it was about a four-minute walk to the War Office and about a fourteen-minute walk to reach Whitehall and the offices of the other great departments of state. In 1884 the IB was resituated to Nos. 16 and 18 Queen Anne's Gate. It would remain here until 1901. Queen Anne's Gate was on the opposite side of St. James's Park to Adair House. The walk to Whitehall and the Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices on King Charles Street was reduced to about nine minutes. The War Office was now about a twelve-minute walk away.¹²⁵ This physical move paralleled neatly the tightening of bonds between the IB and these departments of state. The former was physically and philosophically well positioned to become a truly inter-departmental body.

The Northbrook Committee sought to connect the T&S Department with other organs of the state apparatus. Captain Collen's report highlights that the IB, by 1877 to 1878, was linked with the Foreign, India, and Colonial Offices. These three departments of state were major providers of information to the IB's five sections. Section B, dealing with information about Britain's Colonies, relied on the Colonial Office for a great deal of its information. Section D, focused upon Russia and India, relied on the Foreign and India Offices to supply it with relevant information.¹²⁶ In fact, every section, except for Section B, received information from the Foreign Office. A connection with the Foreign Office obviously provided the IB with a wealth of information, but it provided other benefits as well.

Association with the Foreign Office afforded the IB access to Britain's network of ambassadors, consuls, and embassies. Correspondence with the embassies expedited the transfer of information between the military attachés to the IB. Through March 1880, the latter received several despatches from Britain's ambassador in France Lord Lyons. He sent new maps of France's north-eastern and eastern frontiers, and information about the annual training of France's reserve

¹²⁵ All time statistics have been taken from Google Maps [Accessed 11/06/2019]

¹²⁶ 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', *Papers, 1878*, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.47, p.63

forces.¹²⁷ This was likely information that the military attaché collected. Interestingly, although the attachés were soldiers, it was through an increased relationship with the Foreign Office that the IB could access their information quicker. This connection proved to be the most important relationship for the IB and its successors.

The T&S Department and the IB proved adept at adopting elements of British administrative culture and state practices. The combination of utility and interaction with state and government officials ensured that this would continue. The influence of political and administrative culture proved pervasive, demonstrated by the rapid and prolonged adoption of inter-departmentalism. Both establishments were proficient at working under and alongside civilian officials and policymakers, due to the direction of political and administrative culture on both agencies. This ensured the growth in relations between these intelligence structures and the civilian sphere. This influence, however, caused problems for both organisations in their relationship with the military establishment.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

The British Army was facing somewhat of a crisis by the 1870s. It was linked to Britain's "dual strategic roles" as a Continental and an imperial power. To prepare for a potential war on the Continent, there needed to be a field army ready for transport across the Channel. This would need to be backed up by ample reserves who could be quickly called up. This would have required a short-service army like those in France or Prussia. On the other hand, this type of army would not prove sufficient to garrison Britain's imperial possessions such as India. Long-service

¹²⁷ *Volume 1*, 10 May 1875-30 September 1886, WO 106/11, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.35

troops were needed for this purpose.¹²⁸ Edward Cardwell had tried to tackle this problem with the Army Enlistment Act of 1870, but the issue continued to plague the Army into the twentieth century.

The 1870s proved to be a time of change for the Army. The reforms inaugurated by Cardwell certainly appeared revolutionary in concept, but opinions differ over how radical the change was. W.S. Hamer argued that, between 1854 to 1871, “the administration and command of the British army was completely revolutionized.” He cited the creation of a centralised organisation under the Secretary of State for War, intended to supervise every aspect of military life, as evidence for his assertion.¹²⁹ Albert V. Tucker provided a more sober analysis. He contended that Cardwell’s reforms failed to institute wide-scale change across the whole Army. He asserted that, between 1854 and 1899, in a multitude of areas from planning to tactics, “the British army had learned all too little during a period of remarkable activity and debate in military policy.”¹³⁰ The reform of the T&S Department, and the evolutionary period that followed, was a revolutionary development that was inaugurated by the reforms of Edward Cardwell.

The Army not only faced an external threat from the Cardwell reforms but was also racked by a serious division within its own ranks. One group, led by the Commander-in-Chief the Duke of Cambridge, were the traditionalists. They were staunchly set against any major reforms. The Duke saw it as his duty to preserve the Army as it had been under Wellington during the Napoleonic Wars.¹³¹ To outsiders, it appeared that the traditionalists were deliberately obstructing reforms that would improve the efficiency of the Army. Yet, to the Duke and those who supported him, there was no “contradiction between the traditions and

¹²⁸ C. Barnett, *Britain and Her Army 1509-1970: A Military, Political and Social Survey* (London: Allen Lane, 1970) p.304

¹²⁹ Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.ix

¹³⁰ A.V. Tucker, ‘Army and Society in England 1870-1900: A Reassessment of the Cardwell Reforms’, *Journal of British Studies* 2/2 (May 1963) p.141

¹³¹ Hamer accurately argued that the Duke’s opinions on military reform reflected those prevalent across the entire officers corps. (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.14)

interests which they defended and the maintenance of military efficiency.” Despite ministerial pressure for reform the traditionalists refused to abandon their ideals. This hastened the development of what Edward Spiers rightly terms as a “citadel mentality.”¹³²

Arrayed against the traditionalists were the reformers. This group contained both soldiers, civil servants, and statesmen, such as Edward Cardwell and Lord Northbrook. Their figurehead was Sir Garnet Wolseley, Assistant Adjutant-General in the early 1870s. This disparate group had their own motivations for wanting military reform. This meant that the coalition would not survive long past the 1870s. The core of the reformers was Wolseley and his ‘ring’ of subordinate officers. These men often served together on colonial campaigns and shared the same views for what they wanted the Army to become.¹³³ Wolseley’s ‘ring’ was relatively small. Most officers chose to support the Duke. Some shared the Duke’s opinions but others believed in the need to present a united front against outsiders trying to interfere with the Army. There were also the powerful inducements of loyalty to their chief, such as how the Duke controlled the system of military promotion.¹³⁴ Their isolation within the Army forced the reformers to ally themselves with statesmen and civil servants.¹³⁵

The members of the T&S Department and the IB found themselves in an awkward position, through the 1870s and early 1880s. These structures were predominantly staffed by soldiers, but it quickly became apparent that the Duke and the traditionalists did not favour the T&S Department or the IB. This placed the members of both institutions within the reformist camp. It also ensured that

¹³² E.M. Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (London & New York: Longman, 1980) p.227

¹³³ “The reformers were drawn together by a common desire to improve the training of the army in peacetime, to substitute manœuvres for parade-ground drill, to encourage education and military studies, and to develop the professional and technical branches of the service along continental lines.” (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.25)

¹³⁴ Spiers, *The Army and Society*, p.227

¹³⁵ Hamer correctly states that it was the division within the Army that allowed for civilian influence to become predominant, through the late nineteenth century. (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.29)

they, like the Wolseley ‘ring’, needed the support of politicians and state officials. The conservative influence of British military culture drove the members of both agencies towards the civilian sphere.

Before 1870, there had been a clear separation between intelligence organisations in Britain. There were those that would collect and supply information for the consumption of the state, be it for the monarch or for Parliament, while others procured information for the military. In the 1850s, the T&S Department had been formed to work exclusively for the Army. The report of the Northbrook Committee reinforced this division. The Northbrook Committee defined the duty of the T&S Department to be:

to collect all possible information relating to the statistics, equipment, and organization of foreign armies; the resources, railways, available means of transport, &c., of Great Britain and Ireland, the colonies (exclusive of India) and foreign countries; and to prepare any information relating to foreign countries which might be required by the heads of Departments in the War Office.¹³⁶

This definition limited the Department to the collection of pure military intelligence. It also restricted its audience to people working in the War Office. This included state officials, but the primary recipients of the Department’s information were intended to be soldiers.

The Northbrook Committee also recommended limiting the number of civilians working at the T&S Department. The Committee advised employing military draughtsmen and translators over their civilian counterparts. In fact, it

¹³⁶ ‘Report of the Northbrook Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department’, *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, NAUK, p.3. Christopher Andrew raises an important point about the Northbrook Committee’s report. Andrew accurately states that, “As a result of the Northbrook report, military intelligence ceased at last to be regarded as an offshoot of map-making.” (Andrew, *Secret Service*, p.10)

was counselled that the Department should dispense with the services of specialist civilians altogether. Any specialist work could be completed by soldiers. There was to be a high professional standard upheld for those working within the Department. The Committee considered, “it essential that all Officers appointed to the Department should possess a thorough knowledge of two foreign languages.”¹³⁷ Intellectual abilities were deemed paramount. The Committee recognised the technical nature of the work, which required persons of high ability and an intellectual persuasion.

At the same time, the Northbrook Committee sought to connect the T&S Department with the wider military establishment. The Committee recommended that the reports of Britain’s military attachés should be sent to the Department. Officers working at the Department were to be allowed to communicate officially with the attachés. It was also stated that, “Military Attachés should, when possible, be selected from Officers who have served in the [T&S] Department, and who have shown, whilst there, that they possess the necessary abilities.”¹³⁸ Traditionally, the role of gathering military information and news from abroad had been the purview of Britain’s ambassadors, consuls, and other diplomats. This system was found inadequate. The Crimean War spurred on the British government to appoint military attachés. This position was to be staffed by soldiers. Their duty was “to observe, judge, and report on foreign military events and economy, organizations, developments, personalities, materiel, perhaps military thought as well.”¹³⁹ By the 1870s, Britain had appointed military attachés to several major European cities.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ ‘Report of the Northbrook Committee on the Topographical and Statistical Department’, *WAR OFFICE: General (Code 1(A)): Report of Northbrook Committee on Topographical and Statistical Department*, WO 32/6053, NAUK, pp.2-3, p.3

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p.4

¹³⁹ A. Vagts, *The Military Attaché* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967) p.ix

¹⁴⁰ These were: Paris, Berlin, Turin, St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Frankfurt. Two Naval Attachés were assigned to Paris and Washington. (*Ibid*, p.29)

The Foreign Office had been the department of state responsible for the attachés. Their reports were sent directly to the Foreign Office. The Northbrook Committee recommended dividing the responsibility with the War Office. This ensured continued civilian control, but it also allotted a greater role to the Army, in this case meaning the T&S Department. The IB proved to be a beneficiary of this suggestion. Through 1883 to 1884, the IB received information from the military attaché in Germany, Colonel Leopold Swaine.¹⁴¹ This signifies that the Northbrook Committee's proposals were being implemented.

The Northbrook Committee had provided a newly revitalised instrument to aid the Army and its leaders. The T&S Department had been linked closer to parts of the Army. Yet, this did not ensure that the latter would appreciate the T&S Department or the IB. The latter's removal from the Adjutant-General's Department to that of the Quartermaster-General's, in July 1874, has been cited as evidence for the apathy of the military establishment towards the IB.¹⁴² Certainly, there was a lower level of prestige attached to the Quartermaster-General's Department. The positioning of the IB here was likely a slight against it from the traditionalists. Yet, the move was also logical. Traditionally, the Quartermaster-General had been responsible for intelligence duties.¹⁴³ The move was a sign of the conservative culture of the British Army obsessed with tradition. There is profounder evidence of the indifference held towards the IB.

The clearest indication of the latent hostility that existed comes from Major Brackenbury's report on the structures of foreign nations that equated to the IB, from December 1874. In his report, Brackenbury had examined the methods used by Austria, Prussia, and France "for utilizing the Services of the Military Attachés." Brackenbury wanted to see if any of these foreign methods could be used by the

¹⁴¹ *Volume 1*, WO 106/11, NAUK, p.35

¹⁴² Beaver believes that this event showed the traditionalists' apathy. He cites as evidence, alongside the lower prestige attached to the Quartermaster-General's Department, the temporary removal of several officers from the IB, and halt in the collection of foreign statistics. (Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, loc.711)

¹⁴³ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, pp.47-48

IB, in its relations with Britain's military attachés.¹⁴⁴ This reveals that the connection between them and the IB needed further refinement. This suggests that there was a lack of interest, amongst Army leaders, for devoting energy to perfecting this relationship. This, in turn, hints at an apathy towards the work of the IB.

This ignorance, perhaps even hostility, was demonstrated within Brackenbury's report. Interestingly, Brackenbury felt that he had to justify the position of the IB. He argued that "there is nothing new or un-English in the idea of studying...such features of country and such statistics, as must be known in order to make sound plans for the eventualities of war."¹⁴⁵ This exhibits the apathetic nature of military leaders towards the IB's work. There was no apparent place for intelligence within the conservative mindset of the traditionalists.

In his report, Brackenbury sought to utilise foreign examples to highlight the inadequate situation in Britain. He produced twelve key points in the conclusion of his report. In these points he argued for the further adoption of foreign methods. Brackenbury contended that France, Austria, and Germany all contained an organisation "which originates the ideas, decides upon the means, superintends the execution, accumulates and arranges the results, of all such studies made by the Staff for defensive and offensive purposes." He argued that each of these nations recognised, "the wisdom of publishing the results of their researches in what relates to foreign armies. The quantity of information thus offered to continental officers in their own languages, is quite without parallel in England."¹⁴⁶ The crux of his argument was that:

It is acknowledged universally that no good plans for defence can be made until a large amount has been

¹⁴⁴ 'Report on the Departments of Foreign Staffs corresponding with the Intelligence Branch of the Quartermaster-General's Department', *Papers*, 1876, WO 33/28, NAUK, p.1

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p.31

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p.30

accumulated of information, such as the [IB] is now seeking to obtain. This information is at present non-existent in England at least in any form suitable for military requirements.¹⁴⁷

Brackenbury was determined to raise the IB to the level of its foreign counterparts. This final quotation displays the neglect and apathy from which the IB suffered in the mid-1870s, only a year and a half after its establishment. It remained a small and isolated department, situated within an institution that cared little for it. There is no record of whether Brackenbury's recommendations were adopted. Certainly, the IB continued to correspond with the military attachés. Brackenbury was unable to transform the opinions of the traditionalists. The IB continued to suffer from apathy and hostility of senior soldiers through the remainder of the nineteenth century.

A major reason for the attitude of the traditionalists was because of the men who staffed both the T&S Department and the IB. Charles Wilson was a committed military reformer. Alongside this, he was also an intellectual soldier, conducting numerous topographical surveys before his arrival at the T&S Department. Work of this kind required a great deal of knowledge and technical experience. He applied these principles to his work at the Department. From his recommendations for the reform of the Department, it was clear that Wilson wanted it to be a scientific branch. This did not play well with the traditionalists and, especially, the Duke of Cambridge. There was a serious anti-intellectual predisposition to the views of the traditionalists. For instance, in the late 1850s, the Duke was displeased when an emphasis was placed upon the study of mathematics at the Staff College.¹⁴⁸ Wilson and the traditionalists stood at opposing ends when it came to the issue of military intellectualism. With a man

¹⁴⁷ Ibid

¹⁴⁸ Spiers, *The Army and Society*, p.154

like Wilson in charge of it, the T&S Department was unlikely to receive favourable consideration from the traditionalists.

The first Director of the IB, Patrick L. MacDougall, was of the same ilk as Wilson. MacDougall was a prolific writer and lecturer. He had served abroad, in Canada and the Crimea, but MacDougall is better remembered for his contributions to military thought in Britain. In 1856, he published a textbook entitled 'The Theory of War'. The work was well received and MacDougall subsequently became the first commandant of the Staff College, from February 1858 to September 1861. He performed his duties at the Staff College well, if unremarkably, and set the new institution on its feet.¹⁴⁹ MacDougall was a more attractive person than Wilson to the traditionalists. The former had extensive service in the field, a fact that was prized by the traditionalists.¹⁵⁰ His time at the Staff College might have lowered his esteem in the eyes of the traditionalists. The Duke of Cambridge, however, had played an important role in the foundation of the College in the 1850s.¹⁵¹ There remained the issue of MacDougall's military writing. The traditionalists disliked soldiers who wrote about and studied their profession. Even if he were an attractive personage in several respects, the traditionalists would have held his writing career against MacDougall and, in turn, the IB.

The last Director of the IB, in this period, was Archibald Alison who had a distinguished service career. He had served in the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny (where he lost an arm), and the Ashanti War of 1873 to 1874. During his service, Alison was "twice thanked by both Houses of Parliament, repeatedly mentioned

¹⁴⁹ B. Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College 1854-1914* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972) pp.83-84

¹⁵⁰ Christopher Brice accurately states how, in the British Army, the battlefield "was the place to be for career advancement." (Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.xxi)

¹⁵¹ In fact, Brian Bond asserts that without the Duke's "cautious encouragement the Staff College would scarcely have been established in 1858." (Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College*, p.76)

in Despatches, and three times promoted for distinguished service in the field.”¹⁵² This would have endeared the traditionalists towards him, but there was one issue. Alison’s service in the Ashanti War linked him closely with Wolseley who commanded the British forces deployed during this conflict. Wolseley handpicked the officers he wanted to serve under him, and the Ashanti War saw the formation of his ‘ring’. Wolseley and the Duke were set against each other through the 1870s. Alison’s association with the former would have worked against him in the eyes of the traditionalists. Alison was also something of a military reformer, which would have been held against him.¹⁵³ This, in turn, would have hampered the image of the IB.

The officers who staffed the T&S Department and the IB were akin to their superiors. The majority were officers from the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers. For instance, in 1878 out of the thirty-one soldiers employed within the IB nineteen were officers from the Royal Artillery or Engineers.¹⁵⁴ Service in both these branches required significant intellectual ability and knowledge.¹⁵⁵ The men of these branches were differentiated from those serving in regular infantry battalions. The fact that Royal Engineer and Artillery officers were employed within the T&S Department and the IB gave these structures a different ethos. Both organisations were defined by scientific study, intellectualism, and an emphasis on increased professionalism.¹⁵⁶ This was all repellent to the

¹⁵² *General Archibald ALISON. General Staff, 1846-1907*, WO 339/6742, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, pp.1-2

¹⁵³ Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, loc.711

¹⁵⁴ ‘Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General’s Department of the Horse Guards’, *Papers, 1878*, WO 33/32, NAUK

¹⁵⁵ David French notes how the Royal Artillery and Engineers could, instill “in each recruit the notion that he was a man with special skills and a member of a ‘scientific corps’.” (D. French, *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People c.1870-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) p.77

¹⁵⁶ James Hevia argues that the growth in empiricism and applied sciences in Britain, in the nineteenth century, was an important development in the history of intelligence in this period. He correctly states that, the “direct effect...on military intelligence was to form it into a discipline believed to be governed by rational principles.” (J. Hevia, *The Imperial Security State: British Colonial Knowledge and Empire-Building in Asia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) p.4)

traditionalists. It explains why both agencies caused such apathy amongst them and the military leadership.

The professional attitude of the members of the IB made it ideally placed to aid the reformers' goal of increasing professionalisation throughout the Army. The report of Captain Collen, from October 1878, signals how it was tied into this goal. Collen discussed the practice of attaching temporary officers to the IB to undertake work, who were, "to be selected from those who passed annually from the Staff College, and to be attached to the Intelligence Branch for three months." Crucially, he reported how there was a desire to propose "that work of proved value should help an officer towards employment on the staff of the army." This shows how it was hoped that the IB could become a viable gateway for young intellectual officers to enter higher military office. These efforts at professionalisation were hamstrung by the short period of attachment for officers. Three months proved too short. This was changed in March 1876, interestingly under the agreement of the Duke of Cambridge, so that officers were attached for at least one year.¹⁵⁷ This illustrates both the reformers' hopes for the IB, and the way that it could be utilised to increase both professionalism and intellectual ability across the Army's higher offices. The IB could provide a potential portal to higher military office for intellectually driven soldiers. This, in turn, would, it was hoped, revolutionise the Army's leadership with the infusion of new blood and ideas.

The IB suffered from one other major problem. It was not considered an attractive place to work by many soldiers. British military culture was not only anti-intellectual, but it was also field service orientated. Despite the hopes of the reformers, the pathway to promotion lay almost exclusively with field over headquarters service. The most striking illustration of this principle was the conduct of Director Alison. A man of undoubted bravery Alison was not

¹⁵⁷ 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', *Papers*, 1878, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.7, p.10

temperamentally suited for headquarters work.¹⁵⁸ Before his appointment to the IB Alison had briefly been commandant of the Staff College. He only held this appointment for four months. This suggested a restless spirit and that Alison was likely uncomfortable working in an administrative capacity. He provided effective leadership to the IB through the late 1870s and early 1880s.¹⁵⁹ Yet, when the opportunity arrived for field service in July 1882 Alison jumped at the chance. He travelled to Egypt to take command of the Highland Brigade. His departure, along with four IB officers that went with him, seriously damaged the IB's effectiveness. This episode reveals how British military culture damaged the growth of the IB. If its director could abandon his post to serve in the field, what was preventing junior officers from doing the same?

In comparison to the positive influence of political and administrative culture, senior soldiers and military culture provided only obstacles to the development of the T&S Department and the IB. Faced with an apathetic and even hostile attitude from military leaders, it was little surprise that both establishments grew closer to the civilian sphere. The result was that both became involved in state policymaking.

Involvement in Policymaking

The traditional view of Victorian foreign policy has been that British policymakers sought to keep the nation free of foreign entanglements. The aim was to preserve a state of 'Splendid Isolation'.¹⁶⁰ Supporting this theory, Kenneth Bourne argued that the "obstinacy with which British foreign secretaries resisted supposedly tempting offers of understanding and alliance, marked them off from their

¹⁵⁸ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, pp.70-71

¹⁵⁹ Beaver speaks glowingly about his leadership of the IB. (Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, loc.711)

¹⁶⁰ Interestingly, John Gooch argues that rather than being a firm policy of isolation, the "period of so-called 'Splendid Isolation' had in reality been a period of indecision." (J. Gooch, *The Prospect of War: Studies in British Defence Policy 1847-1942* (London & Totowa, N.J.: Frank Cass, 1981) p.81)

colleagues overseas.” Seeking the goal of independence in their foreign policy, he contended that successive British governments found it “more flexible and more valuable to support a Balance of Power policy in Europe,” rather than commit to any alliances.¹⁶¹

One reason given for the adoption of this policy was the force of Parliamentary and public opinion to retain Britain free of any serious international burdens. There appeared to be a consistent policy continued by successive governments. Consecutive foreign secretaries continually expressed their unwillingness “to give any pledge that would bind the country, should a given contingency arise at some time in the future, to go to war.”¹⁶² In his celebrated Midlothian campaign of 1878 to 1880, William Gladstone laid out his six principles of foreign policy. The fourth principle was “to avoid needless and entangling engagements.”¹⁶³ This theory has come under serious challenge. While noting Victorian views, Howard rightly asserted that, “they constitute...no sort of proof that Britain really enjoyed freedom of action in her foreign relations, or that this freedom...was the result of a policy, or of adherence to a principle.” He highlighted numerous treaties and conventions which bound Britain to other nations, especially what he termed ‘prospective engagements’.¹⁶⁴ These were “a pledge that would bind the country to go to war in a hypothetical contingency.” While he argued that the avoidance of these engagements was the goal of British

¹⁶¹ K. Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970) p.8, p.10

¹⁶² C. Howard, *Britain and the ‘Casus Belli’ 1822-1902* (London: The Athlone Press, 1974) p.3

¹⁶³ J. Charmley, *Splendid Isolation? Britain and the Balance of Power 1874-1914* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999) p.173

¹⁶⁴ Howard, *Britain and the ‘Casus Belli’*, p.5. Howard noted as examples: the treaty signed by Britain, Prussia, and France over the neutrality of Belgium in 1870; the defensive alliance signed between Britain and the Ottoman Empire in 1878; and the long-standing alliance between Britain and Portugal. There were also various imperial treaties signed by British policymakers during the Empire’s expansion. (Ibid, pp.9-21)

foreign policymakers, Howard correctly demonstrated that between 1822 to 1902 Britain entered into three such agreements.¹⁶⁵

While ‘Splendid Isolation’ is a disputed term, several scholars assert that the 1870s marked a definite shift in British foreign policy. Two reasons are given for this. They are the deep transformations in Europe at the time, and the arrival of new personalities into British foreign policymaking. Thomas Otte argues that through the 1860s to 1870s, although Britain’s isolated position may have caused some discomfort, “Foreign Office thinking was suffused with assumptions of the country’s continued ascendancy in European politics.” This was upset abruptly by several radical shifts in European diplomacy and international affairs. These were the creation of the League of Three Emperors and the growth of Russian influence in Asia. Otte accurately contends that Russian ascendancy in Asia, with British isolation in Europe, “shattered all notions of a British ascendancy.”¹⁶⁶

The late 1860s and early 1870s witnessed the entry of new personalities into British foreign policymaking. They arrived with different views on foreign policy and methods of how to conduct it. Two of the most important were William Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli. Bourne rightly argued that both men could “be described as active idealists.”¹⁶⁷ They favoured a more interventionist foreign policy, even if they shared quite different goals. John Charmley correctly identifies that Disraeli’s foreign policy, “amounted to a reassertion of the importance of the balance of power and of the need for Britain to actively readjust it in her favour.”¹⁶⁸ Gladstone wanted Britain “to adopt a vigorous [foreign] policy, but one with the moral purpose of promoting international co-operation.”¹⁶⁹ In

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p.8, pp.20-1

¹⁶⁶ T. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) p.74, p.79. Bourne also noted the shifting of the international scales against Britain. He dated it earlier than Otte to the 1850s to 1860s. (Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.96)

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p.123

¹⁶⁸ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.4

¹⁶⁹ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.124

their respective terms as Prime-Minister both men tried to implement their more interventionist foreign policies.

There was also the figure of Lord Salisbury. There is more disagreement over his foreign policy views. Charmley argues that, for Salisbury, “fears about ‘isolation’ were secondary to the greater fear of the catastrophe of a European war.” He also asserts that, “Salisbury never moved from the position that a Continental commitment would cost Britain more than it would benefit her.”¹⁷⁰ On the other hand, Bourne contended that Salisbury “believed Britain now had to undertake an active, positive role in European affairs. If she did not involve herself in these affairs she would be ignored in the great changes that were about to take place.”¹⁷¹ All scholars agree, however, on the importance of Salisbury to Victorian Britain’s foreign policy. His relationship with the IB proved an enormous boon to the latter. To deal with the volatile international system, British policymakers needed information. Fortuitously, the IB was established during a time where it could make a significant impact. Britain’s state and government officials saw the benefits that it could provide. This resulted in the IB becoming intricately connected with policy formation.

The importance of this relationship is illustrated in Captain Collen’s report. He discussed some of the important work that the IB had undertaken through 1877, specifically the work it had done in relation to the Russo-Turkish War. This conflict, which pitted Russia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro against the Ottoman Empire, had begun on 24 April 1877. It arose out of the surge of Balkan nationalism and a Russian desire to reconquer territory lost during the Crimean War. The Ottomans fared badly during the fighting. As the War dragged on, Disraeli’s government became increasingly concerned that Russia would seize possession of the Dardanelles. British battleships were sent to protect Constantinople and force Russia to come to terms. The treaty of San Stefano, signed on 3 March 1878, ended the War. Russia reabsorbed the Kars and Batum

¹⁷⁰ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.399

¹⁷¹ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.134

oblasts, Bulgaria was re-established as a state, and Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro received de jure independence from the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷²

The IB's work in the Balkans through the late 1870s began its association with key policymakers. On 12 December 1876, Secretary of State for India Salisbury ordered Captain John Ardagh of the IB to "proceed to Bulgaria to obtain information as to the state of feeling of the population." Ardagh was given a certain amount of discretion to carry out his orders. He was instructed to communicate with Salisbury's private secretary, Philip Currie, and "keep him constantly informed of his movements."¹⁷³ Salisbury favoured using intelligence when conducting policy.¹⁷⁴ He carried this principle through to his tenure as Foreign Secretary and was one of the first British statesmen to recognise the benefits of the IB. Salisbury entrusted Ardagh with several important tasks through the late 1870s. This demonstrates his belief in the ability of the IB.

During 1877, the IB prepared papers upon the European and Asian theatres of the Russo-Turkish War. These showed the "statistics, topography, and strategical features" of the different theatres. A journal of the War was made and issued. IB officers travelled to Russia, Turkey, and the Trans-Caucasia. Sketches were made that illustrated different parts of the War. Maps of Bulgaria, Romania, Turkish Armenia, and the Trans-Caucasia were produced.¹⁷⁵

The IB's work continued into 1878. Alarmed by the expansion of Russian power into the Balkans, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and

¹⁷² 'The Preliminary Treaty of Peace, signed at San Stefano' (<https://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/1878mr17.SanStef.trt.htm#bulgaria>) [Accessed 05/11/20]

¹⁷³ 'Memorandum (12 December 1876)', *Papers*, PRO 30/40/7, Domestic Records of the Public Record Office, Gifts, Deposits, Notes and Transcripts, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1, pp.3-4, p.4

¹⁷⁴ Ferris accurately states that, "More than any other Victorian statesman, Salisbury believed secret intelligence was essential for the formulation and execution of external policy." (Ferris, *Intelligence and Strategy*, p.15)

¹⁷⁵ 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', *Papers*, 1878, WO 33/32, NAUK, pp.11-12

Italy met in Berlin to alter the Treaty of San Stefano. At the Congress of Berlin negotiations lasted from 13 June to 13 July 1878. Russia was forced to give up some of the territory it had gained under the former Treaty. Austria-Hungary gained more land in the Balkans, Britain claimed Cyprus, while the Balkan nations became independent but with reduced territory. The IB was intimately involved with the Congress's work. Captain Ardagh was attached to the British embassy sent to the Congress, which was comprised of both Prime Minister Disraeli and Foreign Secretary Salisbury. Both men praised Ardagh's work after the conclusion of the Congress.¹⁷⁶ This work related to the delimitation of the new boundaries throughout the Balkans. In September four members of the IB (Colonel Home, Captains Ardagh and Clarke, and Lieutenant Ross of Bladensburg) were all sent to undertake further boundary work in Turkey. After the conclusion of the Congress, Salisbury expressed his "thanks for the assistance which has been so frequently and so ably rendered to the Foreign Office, on many occasions during the recent Congress, and the preceding diplomatic negotiations" by the IB.¹⁷⁷ This reveals the importance of the IB's work to statesmen and policy formation.

Ardagh was not the only member of the IB to work alongside Disraeli and Salisbury. Colonel Robert Home joined the T&S Department in 1871 and carried on his work to the IB. Home was incredibly important in facilitating the latter's involvement in state policymaking.¹⁷⁸ During the Russo-Turkish War, he became intimately connected with Prime Minister Disraeli. Home was a key adviser to Disraeli during the late 1870s and was the Prime Minister's "chief adviser" during the British occupation of Cyprus. During the War and the Congress of Berlin, he was "constantly at the Foreign Office." An article in 'The Forum', from November 1900, praised Home, "whose mental gifts were of the highest order." The article's writer argued that Home played a role "then comparatively new for a member of

¹⁷⁶ 'Statement of Services of Sir John Ardagh under the Foreign Office (21 July 1908)', *Miscellaneous Papers*, Sir John C. Ardagh, 1900s, PRO 30/40/4, Domestic Records of the Public Records Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.2

¹⁷⁷ 'Report on Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department of the Horse Guards', *Papers*, 1878, WO 33/32, NAUK, p.12

¹⁷⁸ Beaver declares that Colonel Home was "the man who would catapult to extraordinary heights the role of intelligence in British policy making," during the 1870s. (Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, loc.632)

the Intelligence Staff, but since adopted much more largely.”¹⁷⁹ This was not hyperbolic. Colonel Home helped, alongside men like Ardagh, to propel the IB into the realm of policymaking. In the decades that followed, future intelligence officers followed the example set by Colonel Home. His association with statesmen in the highest echelons of the government brought attention to the IB. While the military establishment showed little enthusiasm for it, senior statesmen witnessed first-hand the advantages of utilising the IB.¹⁸⁰ This drew the latter towards the civilian sphere creating a mutually beneficial relationship.

All these connections dramatically increased the IB’s ability to collect information. It also shows how the Northbrook Committee’s recommendations had been successfully implemented. Finally, it reveals how adept the IB was at working within the civilian sphere, aided by its adoption of state governance principles. Statesmen and state officials provided a receptive audience for its information. This was how the IB became involved in policy formation. Due to the nature of its work, the IB was best suited to aid the formation of foreign and imperial policy. The volatile international arena of this period opened the door for the IB to enter policymaking circles. Yet, the continuation and expansion of its involvement was the result of both the IB’s ties to policymakers and the influence of Whitehall’s administrative culture upon its workings.

The IB’s involvement with foreign and imperial policymaking began around the same time that its members became aligned with senior statesmen in the late 1870s. Its work revolved around the pressing issues of Russian aggression and the stability of the Ottoman Empire. On 16 November 1876, the IB’s Captain E. Baring produced a memorandum entitled, a ‘Memorandum on the probable course of action which would be adopted by the Russians in the event of their attempting to occupy Bulgaria and march on Constantinople’. He provided a consideration of

¹⁷⁹ ‘‘The Forum’ (November 1900)’, 1899-1902, *Official and private papers: South African War. Intelligence Division*, PRO 30/40/16, Domestic Records of the Public Record Office, Gifts, Deposits, Notes and Transcripts, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.345

¹⁸⁰ Christopher Andrew agrees with this point. He rightly states that the ‘‘IB was more quickly appreciated by the Foreign and India Offices than by the army.’’ (Andrew, *Secret Service*, p.12)

the routes that Russia might utilise, through the Balkans and across the Danube, to achieve an occupation of Bulgaria and investment of Constantinople. Baring also considered how the political situation might affect the potential Russian advance. His contention was that the Ottomans would struggle to resist any Russian advances on Constantinople without outside military and naval assistance.¹⁸¹ He argued that:

the presence of a British fleet in the Black Sea would largely enhance the difficulties of the Russian advance. The Turkish Government would feel that Constantinople was safe against a *coup de main*, and would direct all its efforts to arresting the progress of the Russians either on the Danube or at the Balkans mountains.¹⁸²

Baring had moved from simple consideration to active promotion of policy. This marked an important development in the evolution of the IB. The T&S Department and the IB had long been expected to provide information, but not to advocate for policy. He did add a caveat to his memorandum:

It is beyond the province of the writer of this report to discuss generally what course it would be advisable for England to pursue were it decided to afford active support to the Porte, but inasmuch as the obtaining of information on foreign countries comes especially within the scope of this Department, the following remarks may not be considered out of place.¹⁸³

Even with this admission, Baring was clearly pushing for the government to adopt a more active policy by aiding the Ottomans. Disraeli's government did not provide

¹⁸¹ 'Memorandum on the probable course of action which would be adopted by the Russians in the event of their attempting to occupy Bulgaria and march on Constantinople (16 October 1876)', *Memoranda on strategy in the event of Russian invasion of the Middle East and Balkans including British expedition up the valleys of the Euphrates or Tigris. Including memoranda on organisation of the Royal Artillery. With plan, 1876-1877*, FO 633/16, Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, pp.8-9

¹⁸² Ibid, p.9 (emphasis in original)

¹⁸³ Ibid, p.20

active military assistance to the Ottoman Empire during the War. Yet, when Russia appeared poised to dominate the whole Balkan area, the government sent naval forces to dissuade the Russians from approaching Constantinople. He might not have succeeded with his original intention, in pushing Britain to aid the Ottomans at the outset of hostilities, but Baring's memorandum had an impact. British naval forces were able to secure the safety of Constantinople.

Alongside foreign policy, the IB was able to aid in the prosecution of imperial policy. Through the nineteenth century the British Empire grew exponentially.¹⁸⁴ The old 'informal' empire was replaced by one centred around the holding of territory. To control this vast territory, statesmen and officials in Britain decided to enact a greater level of central control over imperial affairs.

As India was the jewel in the crown, British policymakers desired that "Indian government thinking...be brought into line with emerging imperial policy."¹⁸⁵ Information about Russian intentions in this period was at a premium for Britain's foreign policymakers.¹⁸⁶ This was the era of the 'Great Game'.¹⁸⁷ This is the term used to describe British efforts to control Central Asian affairs, and protect India, using economic and political power. British and Indian policymakers and soldiers hoped that these methods would compensate for Britain's relative military weakness compared to its main antagonist Russia. To play this 'Great Game' British and Indian colonial policymakers needed information about Russian activities. This was especially critical in the 1870s. Britain and the Indian colonial

¹⁸⁴ Between 1874 and 1902 the Empire grew by around 4,750,000 square miles across Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Nearly 90 million more people were added to the Empire's population. (R. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1993) p.204)

¹⁸⁵ Beaver, *Under Every Leaf*, Kindle edition, loc.799

¹⁸⁶ Otte noted that "Suspensions of Russian policy were hard-wired into the 'Foreign Office mind'." (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.146)

¹⁸⁷ Some scholars have raised issues with the use of this term. (Hevia, *The Imperial Security State*, p.10) This discussion is beyond the remit of this thesis but it is an interesting debate to highlight.

state were on the defensive in Central Asia.¹⁸⁸ Forced to react to Russian moves, accurate information was a necessity for the British and Indian colonial governments. The latter was best placed to collect this information. There was a level of distrust, however, about the information emanating from India. Much of it promoted the active dangers that Russia posed. British statesmen and officials believed that the information was based upon hearsay and was unreliable. They, therefore, needed an accurate analysis of the situation in Central Asia. This provided a golden opportunity for the IB to demonstrate its worth once again.

On 8 January 1877, Baring prepared a study entitled 'Memorandum on the Central Asian Question'. Baring examined the relative positions of Britain and Russia. While he sought to examine the strategical situation in Central Asia, Baring had an ulterior motive. He wanted to discredit the arguments of statesmen and soldiers from the Indian government who he termed the 'alarmists'. He argued that "the opinion so often entertained 'that the continued advance of the Russians in Central Asia is as certain as the movement of the sun in the heavens' is one that cannot be accepted without many qualifications." Baring mixed discussion of both foreign and imperial policy. Assessing the routes that the Russians may take for an invasion of India, he argued that the route running from the Caucasus to Tehran, in Persia, and then onto Herat, in Afghanistan offered the most potential danger. Yet, Baring stated that "it would be an undertaking of such enormous difficulty, and one involving so many improbable contingencies, as to constitute no real danger whatever at present."¹⁸⁹

Through the seventy-one pages of his memorandum, Baring tried to dismantle the case of the 'alarmists'. He used both foreign and imperial arguments to demonstrate the security of India from Russian attack. Baring analysed the

¹⁸⁸ E. Ingram, 'Great Britain's Great Game: An Introduction', *The International History Review* 2/2 (April 1980) pp.164-165, p.168

¹⁸⁹ 'Memorandum on the Central Asian Question (8 January 1877)', *Memoranda on strategy in the event of Russian invasion of the Middle East and Balkans including British expedition up the valleys of the Euphrates or Tigris. Including memoranda on organisation of the Royal Artillery. With plan*, FO 633/16, NAUK, p.62, p.54

minds of Russia's foreign policy elite. He contended that, "whilst intelligent Russians recognise the 'imperious necessity' which impels them onwards...they view the continued extension of Russian territory with some alarm, and look forward to the time when the necessity for any further advance shall no longer arise." Baring illustrated the constraints imposed on Russia's foreign policymakers. He sought to make the Russian Empire appear as a rational actor, rather than an entity consumed by the desire to expand limitlessly. Even if Russia did advance to threaten India's security, Baring argued that the Indian Army was capable of effective resistance. He asserted that "it is not too much to suppose that 200,000 men...would be prepared to meet the Russian Army."¹⁹⁰ For Baring the logic of the situation proved the irrationality of the 'alarmists'.

This was the type of information that British statesmen and officials were looking for. Baring's memorandum provided the counterpoint that they sought to the information from India. Baring supplied the information upon which the government could base their imperial policy. His information allowed the government to challenge the opinion from India. By disputing their thinking, the British government could begin to force the Indian colonial government into an alignment of perspective. The IB, once again, demonstrated itself as a useful tool for the conduct of policy.

The IB was well placed in the 1870s to support foreign and imperial policymaking. In doing this, it illustrated its use to statesmen and state officials. This strengthened the fledgling links developing between the IB and the civilian sphere. Although it was in a weaker position in the 1880s, with the absence of Director Alison, the IB continued to supply information for the conduct of foreign policy. Anglo-Russian tension in Central Asia continued through the 1880s. In Spring 1884 Russia annexed Merv (in present day Turkmenistan) advancing closer

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, p.16, p.41

to Afghanistan. As British foreign policymakers decided upon how best to confront Russia, the IB stepped in to assist.

On 7 July 1884 Major J.S. Rothwell of the IB produced a memorandum on 'England's means of offence against Russia'. Rothwell undertook an examination of the points where Britain could use its military and naval forces to threaten Russia. His conclusion was that there were three points: Afghanistan, the Baltic, and the Black Sea. Rothwell argued that the Indian Army would need to pursue a defensive policy if engaged in Afghanistan, so for offensive action Britain would need to strike in the Baltic or Black Seas. Rothwell considered that, due to their relatively small size, Britain's military forces would need to be concentrated at one point. Rothwell's conclusion was that "while a simple blockade would be useless, military operations could only be successful in the Baltic under exceptional conditions, and in the Black Sea if directed against a single point." This point, he argued, was Batoum (modern day Batumi in Georgia). Rothwell stressed that more information should be gathered about Batoum and its neighbourhood.¹⁹¹

Rothwell's memorandum was more focused than that of Baring. The information that Rothwell presented was centred upon a policy that Britain should pursue in a war with Russia. His memorandum remained important, because it showed that the IB remained connected to civilian policymakers through the early 1880s. Even as its prestige declined government and state officials remained keen to utilise the IB for developing policy. It was the influence of political and administrative culture, especially the adoption of inter-departmental practices, which expanded the IB's ability to collect and disseminate information. This made it incredibly useful to policymakers and for foreign and imperial policymaking.

¹⁹¹ *England's means of offence against Russia. Signed in 1884 July 7; 1885 Apr, 7 July 1884-April 1885, CAB 37/13/36, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK*

Conclusion: Blueprint for the Future

The trends that began from 1870 to 1885 outlined the path along which Britain's foreign intelligence and security services would evolve through the rest of this period. The influence of political and administrative culture had been predominant, upon both the reformation of the T&S Department and the establishment of the IB. Military leaders showed little enthusiasm for the work of either structure. The members of both organisations found themselves at odds with both the traditionalists and British military culture. They were outsiders and were usually treated as such. The result was that the T&S Department and the IB were pushed closer to the civilian sphere. Here they found a receptive audience. Statesmen and state officials observed the potential of the IB. As a result, it became involved in foreign and imperial policy formation.

The dual control system ensured that the T&S Department and the IB were subject to significant civilian authority. The Northbrook Committee also introduced the principle of inter-departmentalism to both establishments. The IB became rapidly connected to the wider state apparatus through the 1870s. This latter point reveals the importance of political and administrative culture to the evolution of both intelligence institutions. This influence also led to the expansion of ties between the IB and the civilian sphere. By the late 1870s, the former had formed relationships with important departments of state, including the Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices, and with key policymakers. The close links between IB officers Captain Ardagh and Colonel Home with Lord Salisbury and Prime Minister Disraeli set a precedent for the future. The impact of political and administrative culture helped to explain the apathy of the Army's leadership towards the T&S Department and the IB. From 1870 to 1885 the Army's leadership displayed little interest in the work of either agency. The attempts to connect both structures with the wider military establishment, especially the military attachés, were inaugurated by state officials, especially the Northbrook Committee, rather than by senior soldiers. A conservative military culture also hindered the further development of the T&S Department and the IB. While IB officers defended the importance of their work, it remained anathema to the

traditionalists. The connection of both intelligence organisations with the reformers also did little to endear either to the traditionalists.

The makeup of the T&S Department and the IB, both being staffed mainly by Royal Artillery and Engineer officers, gave both establishments a unique ethos. This was characterised by scientific investigation, intellectualism, and an emphasis on professional study. Yet, both institutions struggled to attract new recruits, largely due to the emphasis on field service in British military culture. The persistent apathy of senior soldiers contrasted sharply with the receptive environment of the civilian sphere. Its connection with policymakers meant that, during the 1870s, the IB became involved within foreign and imperial policymaking. It was a repository of expert knowledge, shown by the memorandums of Baring and Rothwell, which made it invaluable to policymakers. Baring's memoranda also saw the IB begin to push for policy options. This was a limited practice during this period, but it would be expanded in the years to come. In the decades that followed, the IB and its successors became increasingly involved in both foreign and imperial policy formation. This trend was enabled by the impact of political and administrative culture, which increased the IB's ability to collect information. This made it a valuable instrument for policymakers, while enabling it to operate effectively within the civilian sphere. It also reveals the unintended benefit of military indifference to Britain's foreign intelligence agencies.

These three stages formed the evolutionary process of British foreign intelligence, with the other two driven by the overriding influence of political and administrative culture. The result was that the IB quickly became incorporated into the civilian sphere, as it adopted the political and administrative culture of the British state. It rapidly became an inter-departmental structure. Its members were a unique class amongst the rest of the Army, characterised by their intellectualism and professionalism. They were adept at working alongside state officials and policymakers. A reciprocal relationship developed between the IB and the great departments of state. Although its prestige fell in the early 1880s the IB, and its successors, continued to evolve along the lines that had been

established in the 1870s. Through the late 1880s to early 1890s, state governance principles became entrenched within the IB, and its successor the Intelligence Division. These principles also became the foundations of Britain's unique intelligence culture.

Chapter 2: The Establishment of Britain's Intelligence Culture, 1886-1891

IB Director Major-General Sir Archibald Alison departed to serve as a field commander in the Anglo-Egyptian War in July 1882. He did not return to the IB, although he remained nominally in charge. His absence, along with other key officers who left with Alison, damaged the organisation's ability to undertake its work. The arrival of Major General Henry Brackenbury on 1 January 1886 proved a godsend. Under his tenure the IB was revitalised, enlarged, and then superseded by the new Intelligence Division in January 1888.

The evolutionary trajectory, established between 1870 to 1885, continued from 1886 to 1891. Political and administrative culture remained the dominant influence upon the evolution of the IB and the Intelligence Division (ID). This resulted in closer ties between both agencies and the civilian sphere. Both structures endured persistent apathy and hostility from senior soldiers. As the relationships to the great departments of state strengthened through sustained association, both intelligence establishments became more intimately connected with foreign and imperial policy formation. Again, the other parts of the process worked under the guidance of political and administrative culture.

The most striking evidence of the influence of political and administrative culture in this period was the establishment of Britain's unique intelligence culture. This culture was based upon the foundations of a 'committee-style approach' and a drive for consensus. These twin pillars were established in the late 1880s by Director Henry Brackenbury and persisted through to 1914 and beyond. The IB's inter-departmental practices were reinforced from 1886 to 1891 which facilitated information sharing across the state's apparatus, while also transporting these governance principles into the military sphere. This period also saw the IB's and the ID's initial involvement within the 'committee system' of the British state, through organisations such as the Colonial Defence Committee. The IB and the ID remained physically located near the important Whitehall departments, while its ties with state and government officials deepened. The

support of civilian officials helped Henry Brackenbury secure the Directorship of the IB, and he continued to ensure that it and the ID were well placed to provide information to policymakers. The connection with the Foreign Office was strengthened through this period. This association was responsible for the development of the IB's analytical functions in 1886. Brackenbury also developed personal connections with important state officials, including Lord Randolph Churchill. This all demonstrates the continued importance of political and administrative culture to the evolutionary process. It also continued to provoke indifference and animosity from military leaders.

Through this period Brackenbury tried to end the isolation of the IB within the Army, but he proved to be an unpopular figure with the traditionalists. Brackenbury's social background, association with Wolseley, and views on military reform made him an isolated figure within the Army's leadership and led the Duke of Cambridge to despise him. The IB and the ID continued to possess a distinct character from the rest of the Army. This was aided by Director Brackenbury's selective hiring process, which focused on employing people dedicated to intellectual and professional values. This ensured the preservation of the nascent intelligence culture past 1891. Britain's conservative military culture persisted in causing issues for both intelligence institutions, especially through the regimental system. Yet, the Army's leaders proved able to aid the development of the IB, such as when it was transferred back to the Adjutant-General's Department in 1887. The ID also began to propagate civilian governance principles into the military sphere through this period. This was done chiefly through its relationship with the Royal Navy. The persistent apathy continued to push both agencies towards the civilian sphere and further into foreign and imperial policymaking.

Military intelligence remained active in foreign and imperial policy formation and advocated for policy options with growing confidence. Brackenbury took the lead in presenting information to the Cabinet on important foreign and imperial policy issues. The government also began to direct the ID to investigate imperial defence issues through this period, while the latter aided with the process of imperial centralisation. The influence of political and administrative

culture continued to expedite the IB's and the ID's growing involvement in foreign and imperial policymaking. This all reveals the continuance of the evolutionary process.

Henry Brackenbury

When discussing the history of British intelligence from 1870 to 1914 the figure of Henry Brackenbury demands significant attention. There remains, however, only one proper biography of him written by Christopher Brice. Fascinatingly, before his military career Brackenbury had undergone legal training under Her Majesty's Notary in Quebec, Mr. Archibald Campbell, from 1852 to 1854. This professional training singled Brackenbury out from his fellow Army officers.¹⁹² This experience of a professional environment was radically different to the conservative and insular atmosphere of the Victorian Army. It helps to explain how Brackenbury, as Director of the IB and the ID, was so adept at working alongside state officials and policymakers.

Brackenbury's military service began when he entered the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich in 1854. After passing out he saw action during the Indian Mutiny, before returning to the Academy where he held several positions there. Brackenbury witnessed the Franco-Prussian War at firsthand, serving with the National Aid Society, an organisation that provided relief and aid to wounded soldiers. Throughout the early years of his military career Brackenbury was a prolific writer about military reform. This brought him to the attention of Garnet Wolseley, who selected Brackenbury as his military secretary during the Ashanti Expedition in 1873.

His service on the Ashanti expedition proved to be one of the most important moments in Brackenbury's life. He became a leading member of the

¹⁹² His biographer Christopher Brice argues that it had "a profound effect" upon Brackenbury. (Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.294)

‘Wolseley ring’ and he served under Wolseley in later expeditions. The latter praised Brackenbury’s administrative abilities. This led to both soldiers and politicians “recognising his ability and being prepared to give him further opportunity to advance his career.” While this association with Wolseley helped his career in the short-term, it explains the relative dearth of historiography on Brackenbury. He has been reduced to one of the ‘Wolseley ring’ by many scholars.¹⁹³

Through the 1880s, Brackenbury assumed a variety of posts in Britain and throughout the Empire. They included Private Secretary to Viceroy of India, Lord Lytton, in 1880 and military attaché in Paris in 1881. In 1882 he was appointed as head of the Police in Ireland, which nearly derailed Brackenbury’s career. He felt aggrieved over the lack of support for his proposals in Ireland, to try and curb the rising militant Fenian threat, from Gladstone’s government. Brackenbury made himself a *persona non grata* with the government by trying to resign from his post.¹⁹⁴ After leaving Ireland Brackenbury achieved redemption in the Sudan. He served alongside Wolseley again during the Gordon Relief Expedition from 1884 to 1885 and ended up in command of the River Column during the Expedition. One year after his return from the Sudan, Brackenbury was appointed as IB Director on 1 January 1886.

It is illuminating to examine how Brackenbury secured the post of IB Director. It is a topic that has caused some debate amongst historians. Fergusson argued that Wolseley’s influence was the key to Brackenbury’s appointment.¹⁹⁵ Brice offers an alternative view and presents a more nuanced argument. While noting Wolseley’s importance, he highlights the political contacts that Brackenbury made prior to 1886. The most important of these were with W.H. Smith and Henry Campbell-Bannerman, both of whom were Secretary of State for

¹⁹³ Ibid, p.114, p.xix

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p.140

¹⁹⁵ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.82 This view was also asserted by Wolseley’s biographers, Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice and Sir George Arthur. (Major-General Sir F. Maurice & Sir G. Arthur, *The Life of Lord Wolseley* (London: William Heinemann, 1924))

War. The former held this position between June 1885 to February 1886, the period during which Brackenbury secured his appointment to the IB. Campbell-Bannerman held the position from February to August 1886, during Brackenbury's first months at the IB.¹⁹⁶ In a letter to Wolseley, from 13 August 1885, the latter discussed how he had used his political connections to canvas Smith. Apparently, the latter stated that he "had his eye on" Brackenbury and was keen to find him employment at the War Office.¹⁹⁷ His relations with important civilian figures was the most important factor in Brackenbury obtaining the position of IB Director. This episode signifies the centrality of the connection between the IB and the civilian sphere. The latter possessed a predominant influence over the internal workings of the former.

Brackenbury was a man suited for work in the IB. His career reveals that he was gifted with an ability for administration, organisation, and strategic thinking.¹⁹⁸ He brought all these abilities to bear in his position as Director of Military Intelligence. He was comfortable operating in either the civilian or military sphere. Brackenbury was representative of the structures that he came to direct. He was, like the IB and the ID, a bridge figure able to cooperate with soldiers and civilians. Brackenbury, the IB, and the ID functioned as facilitators of information across the civil-military divide. His familiarity with working alongside state officials and policymakers proved a great boon to Brackenbury's time at the IB and the ID.

The Creation of the Intelligence Division

¹⁹⁶ As Brice succinctly states, whilst "Wolseley might have taken the lead in putting Brackenbury's name forward for the position his recommendation would have met with a positive reception." (Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.162)

¹⁹⁷ 'Brackenbury to Wolseley (13 August 1885)'. Original in the Wolseley Papers, Central Library, Hove. Quoted from Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.297

¹⁹⁸ Brice describes him as "a staff officer in the best sense of the word." (Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.xvi)

The organisation of the IB in 1886 remained the same as it had been in the 1870s. Sections A, C, D, and E were focused upon collecting information from different foreign nations. Section B dealt with colonial defence, while Section F remained the topographical section and library. Upon his assumption of the directorship, Brackenbury resolved to tackle the issue of a mobilisation plan for the British Army. This duty was not strictly assigned to the IB, but Britain lacked a General Staff to approach these issues. Therefore, he spent the next year developing a mobilisation plan. In lieu of any definite plans outlining the Army's role, Brackenbury was advised to create a plan based on two army corps for home service and two corps for possible overseas service. During the investigation he realised how dire the situation was. While not lacking for infantry and cavalry, there was a shocking lack of support services for the proposed two army corps.¹⁹⁹ Brackenbury highlighted these defects to the government. This work proved to be extremely time-consuming and he requested additional help to deal with mobilisation issues. This request was approved. In November 1887 Colonel John Ardagh was assigned to a new post within the IB, taking direct responsibility of mobilisation issues. The Mobilisation and Home Defence Section was created with Colonel Ardagh as its head. Barely three months later, in February 1888, Brackenbury decided that this Section should be removed from the IB. It was thus transferred along with its personnel to the Adjutant-General's Department.²⁰⁰

The support of Garnet Wolseley, then Adjutant-General (1882-1890), proved critical for Brackenbury and the IB. With Wolseley's assistance, Brackenbury obtained an increased budget for the IB at the start of his directorship. Subsequently, he was able to secure an extra £600 of funding from the Treasury. This was to provide increased funding for the expenses of IB officers who undertook foreign travels to collect information. On 1 June 1887 the IB was transferred back to the Adjutant-General's Department. This move secured an increase in the IB's prestige. At the same time Brackenbury's title was changed. He became the Director of Military Intelligence. Significantly, he was ordered to

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, p.169

²⁰⁰ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.84

report directly to the Commander-in-Chief rather than having to go through the Adjutant-General.²⁰¹ He decided next to tackle the problem of attached officers and, in October 1887, successfully lobbied the War Office for an increase in the permanent strength of the IB. Seven staff captains were added to the permanent staff to serve long terms, between three and six years.²⁰² This meant that the IB could rely less on transient attached officers only there for up to a year.

Considering these changes, it was decided to transform the IB into the Intelligence Division in January 1888. Brackenbury was promoted to Lieutenant-General. While there was no major structural change with the establishment of the ID, the geographical focus of the Sections was reorganised. Section A remained responsible for France and Belgium, but Italy, Spain, and Portugal were added to its portfolio. Section B was given responsibility for the Boer Republics in South Africa. Central and Southern America were moved from Sections C to A. This allowed the former Section to focus upon the northern European nations (Germany, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian nations), plus Switzerland and the USA. Spain and Portugal were removed from Section D's purview, allowing it to concentrate upon Russia, India, and the nations of Asia. Italy, Norway, and Sweden were transferred from Section E so its priorities were on Africa, the Balkans, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire.²⁰³ These adjustments gave each section a more rational geographical focus. Yet, there remained a mismatched assortment of nations as there were still not enough officers to allow for a logical division.

By April 1889 the ID comprised thirty-nine staff, a slight reduction from the late 1870s. Fourteen were officers employed for long terms.²⁰⁴ This was nearly double the number than had worked in the IB the previous decade. Henry Brackenbury's tenure as Director of Military Intelligence (DMI) concluded on 1 April

²⁰¹ Ibid, p.85

²⁰² Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.165

²⁰³ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.248

²⁰⁴ Ibid

1891. During his five years in charge, Brackenbury oversaw a major expansion in the prestige of the IB and the foundation of the ID. This was not his only achievement. His gifts for networking and grasp of bureaucratic politics ensured that military intelligence was integrated further into the civilian sphere. Relationships with state officials and senior statesmen were extended and strengthened. In sum, Brackenbury's tenure as the head of military intelligence laid the foundations for Britain's unique intelligence culture.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

Through the final decades of the nineteenth century, British statesmen and state officials continued to expand and centralise the business of governance. The trends that had started in the previous decades, with the extension of the franchise, continued to place the "classic Liberal State of the Mid-Victorian period, based as it was on localism and moralism...in crisis."²⁰⁵ The expansion of the state's apparatus meant there was a similar expansion of state practices and administrative culture. These practices and culture had a direct effect upon the evolution of British intelligence.

Describing the key features of Britain's intelligence culture Michael Goodman identified two key characteristics. These were "the committee style approach" and "the drive for consensus." He argues that the genesis of these features can be traced to 1909, with the formation of the Secret Intelligence Bureau.²⁰⁶ Philip H.J. Davies concurs with Goodman's assessment stressing the importance of collegiality within the British intelligence community. Yet, he argues that the true origin of this intelligence culture lies in 1936, with the

²⁰⁵ Higgs, *The Information State in England*, p.99

²⁰⁶ M.S. Goodman, 'The British Way in Intelligence' in *The British Way in Cold Warfare: Intelligence, Diplomacy and the Bomb, 1945-1975* (London & New York: Continuum, 2009) p.128, p.130

establishment of the Joint Intelligence Organisation.²⁰⁷ An examination of Brackenbury's tenure as DMI reveals that the true genesis was earlier. The roots of Britain's intelligence culture can be traced to the 1870s with the formation of the IB, but the true origins of this culture were in the late 1880s with Brackenbury's arrival at that organisation. Obviously, a 'committee style approach' and a 'drive for consensus' had different meanings in the 1880s than they do currently. There was no real intelligence community to speak of from 1870 to 1914. Yet, through this period, the IB, the ID, and their successors became intimately involved within the 'committee system' of the British state. At the same time, they achieved a level of consensus by combining the information that they gathered, through their inter-departmental functions, into unified assessments. These tenets were expanded upon as the intelligence community grew through the twentieth century. Brackenbury borrowed governance principles to lay the foundations of Britain's distinctive intelligence culture. Although it has evolved since then, the groundwork of this culture persists to this day.

Upon becoming IB Director Brackenbury decided to obtain a complete picture of how that institution operated and what it was required to do. This informed his subsequent reform program. The method that he chose to undertake this examination was through a 'Ways and Means Committee'. The Committee consisted of only two members: Brackenbury and Ralph Thompson, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the War Office.²⁰⁸ Not only did the former partner his efforts with state officials but he adopted one of the key models of British governance, the 'committee system'. It is fascinating that a member of the Army, with its different environment and culture, would choose to adopt a civilian governance model. It signals how comfortable Brackenbury was in operating within a civilian environment, a legacy of his professional training in Canada. Considering the

²⁰⁷ P.H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States. A Comparative Perspective. Volume 2: Evolution of the UK Intelligence Community* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012) p.63, p.13

²⁰⁸ Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, pp.165-6

previous evolution of the T&S Department and the IB, it is also not surprising that military intelligence adopted Whitehall's administrative culture.

Through this period, the IB and the ID also became affixed to another governance concept: the desire for connectivity and consensus. Goodman asserts that, within the British system of governance and particularly regarding intelligence assessments, there is a belief "that policy makers should only be provided with one, universally-agreed assessment."²⁰⁹ In a letter to DMI John Ardagh (1896-1901), from 7 April 1896, Brackenbury stressed that, "your power of obtaining military information depends directly upon your friendly relations with other Departments of the State - Foreign, Colonial & India Offices - and these friendly relations depend upon the help you give them."²¹⁰ This quote captures Brackenbury's philosophy during his years at the IB and the ID. It also reveals how he subscribed to the principle of cooperation. He implemented a rigorous system of inter-departmental cooperation.

Brackenbury implemented this system as soon as he became IB Director in January 1886. The 'Indexes to Information on Foreign Countries' list the information that was sent by the IB, from January to September 1886, to various people and departments, both civilian and military, and the information that the IB received. Through these indexes the frequent contact between the IB and the Whitehall departments can be viewed.

On 26 January 1886, Brackenbury wrote to Sir Robert Herbert, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, "asking for his help in supplying Colonial information for Section B," which was responsible for obtaining information relating to the defence of Britain's Colonies. Assistant Under-Secretary of State Robert Henry Meade replied that, the Colonial Office would "send information in

²⁰⁹ Goodman, 'The British Way in Intelligence', p.136

²¹⁰ 'H. Brackenbury to J.C. Ardagh, 7 April 1896', *Miscellaneous Correspondence, Mainly Private*, Sir J.C. Ardagh, PRO 30/40/2, Domestic Records of the Public Record Office, Gifts, Deposits, Notes and Transcripts, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.3

future for legitimate use of” the IB. On 25 June 1886 Foreign Secretary Lord Rosebery’s Private Secretary communicated that Rosebery had stated that, it would “be of great advantage & assistance if [the IB] will in future communicate to the F.O. any such papers that may be prepared here.”²¹¹

The indexes illustrate how the IB retained its inter-departmental character into 1886. A quarter of the IB’s communications, from January to early September 1886, were sent either to civilian departments of state or involved matters concerning them. The IB continued to facilitate the passage of information across the state apparatus. These statistics demonstrate how under Brackenbury’s leadership the IB further developed its inter-departmental character. The links to state and government officials were strengthened as well. Crucially, both these trends occurred within the first six months of Brackenbury’s tenure as IB Director.

The IB helped to introduce the principle of inter-departmentalism to the military sphere. On 24 February 1886 the IB sent a minute to the Quartermaster-General. The former suggested that officers from the Quartermaster-General’s Department, “should visit this Branch periodically (every week) to note any special information of interest to” the Quartermaster-General. This illuminates the extent to which the IB operated more as a tool of the civilian, rather than the military, machinery of government. The administrative culture of Whitehall and British political culture rapidly permeated into the workings of the IB. The indexes provide evidence of how Brackenbury hoped to utilise further the ‘committee system’. On 21 July 1886 the IB sent a letter to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War containing several requests. The most important was “to consider [representation] of I.B. on [Colonial Defence] Committee.”²¹²

²¹¹ *Indexes to information on Foreign Countries, Volume 2*, 10 May 1875-30 September 1886, WO 106/12, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.80, p.92

²¹² *Ibid*, p.83, p.94

The Colonial Defence Committee had been revived by Salisbury's first government in 1885. This decision was stimulated by a fear over war with Russia and the threat that would pose to Britain's imperial possessions. The Colonial Defence Committee (CDC) was a perfect representation of the trend of cooperation and consensus within the British system of governance. It did not possess a staff for planning or research. Instead, it "was a forum of discussion and a channel of communication and advice."²¹³ Brackenbury realised that inclusion on important state committees would help to secure support for the IB's work, while also increasing its effectiveness. This explained his desire to see his agency represented on the CDC. Representation here would ensure that the IB's work filtered up the channels of power. It was another sign that Brackenbury endorsed the principle of the importance of consensus. Within the CDC the IB's opinion would be combined with those of other departments, both military and civilian, to create a final recommendation.

This evidence denotes that Brackenbury's tenure as IB Director saw the proper establishment of Britain's unique intelligence culture. The 'committee style approach' and the 'drive for consensus' were central tenets of Brackenbury's directorship of the IB and the ID, just as they were in the British system of governance. These principles endured beyond both Brackenbury's tenure and the lifespan of both intelligence establishments. It is important to note that culture is never static, rather it is constantly adaptive. The intelligence culture created in the late 1880s has not remained fixed. It has undergone changes up to the present date and will undergo more. Yet, 1886 witnessed the emergence of the foundations of an identifiable intelligence culture. These foundations persist to the present day. The credo of a 'committee style approach' and the 'drive for consensus' remains central to Britain's modern intelligence community, just as they did for the IB, and the ID.

²¹³ F.A. Johnson, *Defence by Committee: The British Committee of Imperial Defence 1885-1959* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960) p.18, p.20

Britain is not alone in possessing an intelligence culture that was shaped by political culture. Peter Jackson has demonstrated the degree to which French intelligence culture during the same period was informed by that nation's political culture. He states that, "The structures and practices of French intelligence reflected the fragmented political culture of the Third Republic and the adversarial practical logic that it produced." Jackson highlights how attempts, in the early 1900s, to inculcate interdepartmental coordination between codebreakers at the Quai d'Orsay's Cabinet Noir and the Sûreté Générale were partly destroyed by inter-ministerial rivalry.²¹⁴ The fragmentation of French political culture resulted, therefore, in a French intelligence culture that remains defined by isolationism and a lack of collegiality. While the result was different, this illustrates how political culture in both Britain and France was critical in the formation of each nations' intelligence culture from 1870 to 1914.

The impact of political and administrative culture drove the IB and the ID closer to the civilian sphere. The provision of information to civilian policymakers became a priority for both establishments from 1886 to 1891. On 27 February 1886 Brackenbury, arguing for an increase in the IB's staff, insisted that, "if office to be worthy of [the War Office] & capable of supplying information to Government, staff must be increased." This denotes how the organisation had moved from supplying information purely to senior soldiers. It was now also focused upon assisting the government. Brackenbury took on an enlarged role of advising senior politicians. In July 1886 Salisbury's second government came to power, with W.H. Smith resuming his position as Secretary of State for War. On 30 July Brackenbury wrote to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War. He stated that he was "preparing a memo: for incoming Sec. of State...its value depends on it being ready when S of S takes office."²¹⁵ This illustrates how the IB Director was assuming the role of briefing government ministers. Brackenbury was acting as one of the chief

²¹⁴ Jackson, 'Political Culture and Intelligence Culture: France before the Great War', p.63, p.60

²¹⁵ *Indexes to information on Foreign Countries, Volume 2*, WO 106/12, NAUK, p.84, p.98

advisers to the Secretary of State for War. Although it was physically distant the IB remained an important cog within the machinery of the War Office.

1886 to 1891 saw a reinforcement of the bond between the Foreign Office and Britain's foreign intelligence institutions.²¹⁶ This link began to change the nature of these organisations' work. The development of this relationship can be attributed partly to mercenary reasons. From the IB's perspective, the Foreign Office "possessed in the shape of the reports of the diplomatic service by far the most continuous and comprehensive of all the sources of information about foreign countries." Access to this source helped the former's efforts. For the Foreign Office, while they possessed access to all this information, there were "no regular arrangements for comparing and collating its own conclusions with the analyses and appreciations of other ministries, particularly the Service ministries." F.H. Hinsley argued that the Foreign Office showed little interest in developing this,²¹⁷ but this was not entirely true. Its association with the IB presented the chance for this function to be fulfilled.

By working together, the IB and the Foreign Office realised the benefits that their connection offered. In a letter to Lord Lansdowne of 17 October 1892 Brackenbury observed that although:

There was, at first, some little [jealousy] and suspicion both in the Foreign, Colonial and War offices of this (the quality of the Intelligence Branch reports). But when they grew to see how useful we could be, and how much trouble we often saved them, it all ceased. I made them

²¹⁶ Interestingly, Ray Jones argues that the "Foreign Office never regarded itself in the nineteenth century as having anything in common with the other Government departments." His argument may be accurate regarding other civilian departments of state, but the Foreign Office found common cause with the IB and the ID. (R. Jones, *The nineteenth-century Foreign Office: An administrative history*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971) p.41)

²¹⁷ F.H. Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations Volume One* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1986) p.5

understand we wanted to work for them and with them, and we all became fast friends.²¹⁸

This illuminates how the connection between the IB and the Foreign Office, along with the Colonial Office, grew through the 1880s to 1890s. The former benefited greatly from this association. Brackenbury was apparently able to use some of the Foreign Office's secret service money to send officers abroad on intelligence-gathering missions.²¹⁹ On 7 April 1896 Brackenbury wrote to his successor DMI John Ardagh. He stated that:

My experience is that everything in the I.D. depends upon you having the complete friendship and hearty cooperation of the Foreign Office. So long as you have that, as I had, you can command the use of all their staff at home and abroad, and they will never let you want for money.²²⁰

This statement reveals how Brackenbury treasured cooperation with the Foreign Office. More importantly this relationship transformed the nature of the IB's work.

In his memoirs, Charles Callwell described the chief duties of the ID while he worked there. These were:

- (1) Collection of information by means of special reports, newspapers, periodicals, volumes reaching the daily growing War Office Library which was under charge of the [Division], and enquiries addressed to individuals known to, or likely to, possess knowledge
- (2) Methodical registration of the information after it had come to hand, so that it would be at once available if required

²¹⁸ 'Brackenbury to Lansdowne (17 October 1892)'. Original in Brackenbury letter books, RAM, Woolwich. Quoted from Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.182

²¹⁹ Major-General Sir C.E. Callwell, *Stray Recollections* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1923) p.327

²²⁰ 'H. Brackenbury to J.C. Ardagh, 7 April 1896', *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, PRO 30/40/2, NAUK, pp.1-2

- (3) Collation of the information, or some of it, in the form of printed reports
- (4) Distribution of such of the information as might prove useful, to other departments of the War Office, to the army at large, to the military educational establishments, and so forth.²²¹

The most important functions of the ID, therefore, were listed as collection, classification, and distribution. The modern day ‘intelligence cycle’ consists of several phases: ‘direction’; ‘collection’; ‘processing’; ‘analysis’; and ‘dissemination’. The ‘dissemination’ of intelligence to policymakers leads them to make decisions based on this information. These conclusions then lead to the need for fresh intelligence, restarting the cycle once again.²²²

The phases of ‘collection’ and ‘dissemination’, termed ‘distribution’ by Callwell, were present in the ID’s functions. The ‘direction’ given to it and the IB was the collection of information on the military capabilities of foreign nations. The function of ‘classification’ resembled that of ‘processing’. The crucial phase that was missing was ‘analysis’. This is one of the most crucial parts of the whole ‘intelligence cycle’. It is in this stage that the “organised information is transformed into intelligence,” which can then be disseminated to policymakers.²²³ Failures in intelligence analysis are blamed often for policy mishaps.²²⁴ In these formative years of Britain’s modern intelligence machinery analysis was not viewed as an important task. Through the growing association with the Foreign Office, intelligence analysis emerged as an important function for Britain’s foreign intelligence establishments.

²²¹ Callwell, *Stray Recollections*, p.312

²²² M. Pythian, ‘Beyond the Intelligence Cycle?’ in M. Pythian (ed.), *Understanding the Intelligence Cycle* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013) pp.10-13

²²³ Ibid, p.12

²²⁴ The 9/11 Commission Report, for instance, declared that poor intelligence analysis was an important factor in the failure to prevent the 9/11 attacks. The Report “stressed the importance of intelligence analysis that can draw on all relevant sources of information.” (T. Keen & L.H. Hamilton, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004) p.416)

In October 1886, a Pierre Georgevitch arrived at the British Consulate in Egypt. He claimed to have useful information about Russian intentions in the Balkans. His arrival was reported to the Foreign Office. The Consulate staff believed that he “might very likely prove of great service to [the British government], and that he had better go to London.”²²⁵ Georgevitch arrived in London in November claiming to have intimate knowledge of Russian plans to occupy Bulgaria. He asserted too that there were plans to seize the Turkish fort Kavak de Anadol on the Turkish Straits by a coup-de-main operation, to prevent British warships from passing through the Straits and interfering.²²⁶ Georgevitch’s information came at a critical moment for British policymakers, as a Russian backed coup in Bulgaria caused intense concern.²²⁷

While this intelligence was of immense interest, the Foreign Office wanted to check its validity. For this task it turned to the IB. On 8 November Brackenbury created a memorandum on Georgevitch’s claims. He was not impressed. He stated that, “I attach no importance to the enclosed statement of “Russian designs in the Balkan Peninsula, and plans in the event of war with England.” And I think the informant be sent about his business.” He argued that the plans presented for the seizure of the fort were “absurd.”²²⁸ Other IB officers criticised the proposed Russian scheme, along with the general plan to occupy Bulgaria.²²⁹ While the process was back to front compared to the modern intelligence cycle, with the intelligence organisation evaluating information gathered by policymakers, this was recognisably the ‘analysis’ phase in action. After investigation, the IB decided

²²⁵ ‘Gerald Portal to Sir Julian Pauncefote (25 October 1886)’, *Correspondence about Russian military intentions; foreign policy payments to P Georgevitch*, 1886-7, HD 3/70, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, pp.2-3, p.1

²²⁶ ‘Statement of Pierre Georgevitch (5 November 1886)’, *Ibid*, pp.1-3

²²⁷ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.146

²²⁸ ‘Memo by Brackenbury (8 Nov 1886)’, *Correspondence about Russian military intentions; foreign policy payments to P Georgevitch*, HD 3/70, NAUK, p.1

²²⁹ ‘Note from Captain J.J. Leveson (8 November 1886)’ and ‘Note from Captain J. Wolfe Murray (8 November 1886)’, *Ibid*. Leveson was the Head of Section F, the topographical section, while Murray was the Head of Section D, which collected and compiled information on Russia. Therefore, both men possessed detailed knowledge of both Russian military capabilities and of the fort in question.

that Georgevitch's information did not constitute reliable intelligence. The Foreign Office paid heed to this counsel, telling the British Consulate in Egypt to give Georgevitch £50 "but no promise of employment."²³⁰

Although analysis was not yet formerly outlined as a task, this event marked a new development for the IB. It was another step that it took towards becoming a truly modern intelligence structure. This development was prompted by the relationship with the Foreign Office. In the years to come the IB, and the ID, provided further analysis of information supplied by the latter. Although it was not listed as an important duty by Callwell, 'analysis' was becoming a key function of Britain's intelligence institutions. This is a clear demonstration of how ties with the civilian sphere, and involvement in policy formation, influenced the IB's evolution.

Brackenbury's relationship with the government had been fraught during his time in Ireland. While at the IB and the ID, however, he enjoyed a mostly cooperative relationship with government and state officials. His ties with the civilian leadership had been critical in securing his appointment to the IB. These bonds were strengthened through his time as DMI. This was clearly shown during the Hartington Commission from 1888 to 1890. Lord Randolph Churchill was an important member of the Commission. A former Chancellor Churchill was committed to reducing civilian influence over military administration. He sought to utilise his membership on the Commission to forward this agenda. His major proposal was to replace the War Office with a Ministry of Defence. This office would contain a Minister of Defence, who would be an MP and a high-ranking soldier or sailor, who would be the single professional military adviser to the government and to Parliament.²³¹ It was highly likely that Brackenbury assisted Churchill in drawing up this scheme. Charles Callwell, who worked at the ID, recalled how the latter often visited the former at the ID as the Commission's work progressed. Callwell stated that Churchill was "colloquing with

²³⁰ 'Julian Pauncefote to Sir Evelyn Baring (12 November 1886)', Ibid, pp.1-2

²³¹ Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.141

[Brackenbury], who was, I gathered from himself, somewhat attracted by Lord Randolph's pet scheme of a Minister of Defence."²³² This evidences the existence of a strong working relationship between Brackenbury and senior civilian figures.

The connection between Brackenbury and Churchill was akin to that between the IB's Colonel Home and Prime Minister Disraeli in the late 1870s. The collaboration, however, between Brackenbury and Churchill represented something different. It was a partnership between the ID and the civilian sphere in the pursuit of administrative reform. This episode evinces the continued rapid integration of the ID into the civilian sphere. The IB's ambit had never been extended to this area. Yet, under Brackenbury, the ID's scope was expanding to encompass subjects beyond the realm of intelligence.

A quirk of British governance aided Brackenbury in his task to make the DMI a principal advisor to the government. Before a committee on the fortification of Britain's ports, chaired by the Secretary of State for War, on 10 March 1887 Brackenbury was asked, "it is I believe, your duty as head of the Intelligence Department to consider the organization of all our forces of all descriptions for the purpose of the defence of the country?" He replied that "I believe that is my duty. I believe that the duties of the head of the Intelligence Department have never been very accurately defined, but I have certainly considered that as part of my duty."²³³ This lack of a clearly defined remit afforded Brackenbury an opportunity to develop the role of IB Director, and then DMI, into a principal advisor for the government.

²³² Callwell, *Stray Recollections*, p.327

²³³ 'Report of a Consultative Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for War, to consider with him the Plans Proposed for the Fortification and Armament of our Military and Mercantile Ports, and the Relative Importance and Approximate Cost of the Works and Armaments Necessary for the Adequate Defence of these Stations; together with Minutes of Evidence, &c. (1887)', *Papers 1887*, 1887, WO 33/47, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.12

A lack of definition has been a hallmark of British governance.²³⁴ While this practice presented its own series of problems, it did allow for a measure of adaptability and fluidity in the business of governance. An example of this ambiguity was in how the DMI was “authorized to correspond semi-officially with all Departments of the State.”²³⁵ There was no definition of what he was supposed to correspond about. Again, this provided Brackenbury with the flexibility to expand his, and the ID’s, brief. This resulted in him becoming involved in administrative reform during the Hartington Commission. Since the duties of the IB Director or DMI were never clearly defined, the occupier of that position was presented with a good deal of latitude in how they sought to exercise their power. In the hands of an opportunist such as Brackenbury it provided immense scope. Government ministers and state officials showed little reticence about how he expanded his role in this manner.

The relationships that Brackenbury developed with senior civilian figures continued after he left the ID. After his tenure as DMI concluded Brackenbury enlisted several senior politicians to write to the Secretary of State for India recommending him for employment. These figures included Edward Stanhope, Secretary of State for the Colonies Lord Knutsford and, crucially, Prime Minister Salisbury. That the Prime Minister obliged this request was a demonstration of the “mark of [Brackenbury’s] standing by this point” with political elites.²³⁶ These recommendations worked. Brackenbury became Military Member of the Council of the Viceroy of India in 1891, after his tenure as DMI concluded. This reveals his continued high standing amongst the civilian leadership.

²³⁴ David Vincent correctly argues that, while other nations showed a preference for codification of laws and state practices, “it was the glory of the British constitution to leave as much as possible unwritten.” (D. Vincent, *The Culture of Secrecy: Britain 1832-1998* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) p.126)

²³⁵ ‘Memorandum on the relations between the Intelligence Departments of the War Office, Admiralty, and India’, *Papers 1890*, 1890, WO 33/50, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

²³⁶ Brice, *The Thinking Man’s Soldier*, p.298

Brackenbury was held in high regard until his death on 20 April 1914. In 1916, the Earl of Derby, who had been Financial Secretary at the War Office when Brackenbury was Director-General of Ordnance from 1899 to 1904, described him in the House of Lords as, “one of the most brilliant officers that have ever been in His Majesty’s Army.”²³⁷ Derby was not a particularly close friend of Brackenbury’s.²³⁸ His praise speaks volumes about the regard that the latter was held in by those who had worked alongside him. His close working and personal relationships with state officials and government ministers exposed Brackenbury to the practices of state governance. This, subsequently, led to him borrowing, deliberately or unconsciously, key principles of state governance for the workings of the IB and the ID. This brought both structures further into policy formation, and even administrative reform, within the civilian sphere.

The foundation of Britain’s intelligence culture, in 1886, was the clearest example of the influence of political and administrative culture throughout the period from 1870 to 1914. This intelligence culture was transferred to the ID and, subsequently, to its successors. It evinces the permanent impact of political and administrative culture upon the evolutionary process. The result of this was the expansion of ties between the IB and the ID and the civilian sphere. As both organisations adopted further state practices and political and administrative culture, they were faced by continued apathy and hostility from senior soldiers.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

From 1886 until the turn of the twentieth century, the British Army found itself in positions of both strength and weakness. Unlike in nations such as France and Germany, Britain’s Army “had long faded away as a political or social issue.” National pride in the military reached a peak in the late Victorian era.²³⁹ Grave

²³⁷ *Hansard (Fifth Series)*, House of Lords Debate, 23 May 1916, Vol.22, col.113

²³⁸ Brice, *The Thinking Man’s Soldier*, p.xv

²³⁹ Barnett, *Britain and Her Army*, p.330, p.313

concerns, however, remained over the internal state of Britain's military establishment. Despite the Cardwell reforms the Army was lacking severely in personnel and equipment. Clashes continued between figures within the military hierarchy, while the Army's culture was felt to be pre-industrial by critics. Critically, by 1886 there was no ultimate decision on what the Army's role was in national or imperial defence. Wolseley had been campaigning for a decision on this matter since the 1870s. It took until late 1888 for this question to be answered. Pressure exerted by both Wolseley and Brackenbury, conflicts between civilians and soldiers over control of military affairs, and an invasion scare in 1888 all helped to force Salisbury's government to provide an answer.²⁴⁰ This was the 'Stanhope Memorandum', named after Secretary of State for War Edward Stanhope.

The Army's priorities were listed as thus: 1. The effective support of the civil power in the United Kingdom; 2. To provide reinforcements for India; 3. To provide garrisons for all home and overseas fortresses and coaling stations; 4. To provide and mobilise two army corps for home defence; 5. To deploy one army corps to fight in a European war.²⁴¹ The order of priorities caused some consternation. Senior figures within the Indian Army disapproved that India was not the overriding priority.²⁴² While it did not satisfy everyone the Stanhope Memorandum ensured that the Army, "gained more direction in the last third of the nineteenth century than at any previous period in British military history."²⁴³

²⁴⁰ I.F.W. Beckett, 'The Stanhope Memorandum of 1888: a Reinterpretation', *Historical Research* 57/136 (November 1984) p.241

²⁴¹ H.E. Raugh, *The Victorians at War, 1815-1914: An Encyclopedia of British Military History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004) p.311

²⁴² Ian Beckett argues persuasively that, the Memorandum's "ordering of priorities similarly reflected both contemporary fears in terms of aid to the civil power and the prevailing strategic orthodoxy of the majority of Stanhope's professional advisers." Wolseley was a close adviser to Stanhope. His strategic view, for a war against Russia, saw the Indian Army remaining primarily on the defensive, while the Home Army took offensive action in the Baltic and Black Sea areas. This explained the lower priority rating of Indian defence. (Beckett, 'The Stanhope Memorandum of 1888', p.245, pp.246-7)

²⁴³ H. Bailes, 'Technology and Imperialism: A Case Study of the Victorian Army in Africa', *Victorian Studies* 24/1 (1980) p.86

The Stanhope Memorandum, however, could not force the military leadership to become enthusiastic supporters of the IB and the ID.

In 1886, the IB remained isolated from the Army's leadership. In July, the IB sent a minute to the Adjutant-General. The IB argued that the latter should forward its dispatches from Britain's military attachés before they were sent to other departments. Brackenbury sought too to inculcate firm channels of communication between the IB and the Quartermaster-General.²⁴⁴ This reveals how isolated the IB had become within the Army's hierarchy. While he tried to reverse this process Brackenbury, through his background and opinions, compounded the issue.

Brackenbury had spent most of his service in the Home Army and possessed a close connection with Wolseley. Yet, Brackenbury was somewhat of an isolated figure within military circles. He was of a lower social standing than most of his fellow officers. His writing career, while propagating his views on military reform, provided additional income. He needed this to try and match his contemporaries' lifestyles. Christopher Brice relates how Brackenbury adopted mannerisms, such as a 'haw haw' laugh and a lisp, typical of Victorian officers. He argues that these gave Brackenbury, "a certain security and acceptability that his professionalism would not have secured alone." It also hid his humbler background.²⁴⁵ Brackenbury keenly felt his isolation within military circles. In 1883 he lamented to Wolseley that:

Never yet have I been offered even the humblest employment on the staff in England - never once have I been asked to serve on a committee or commission, or

²⁴⁴ *Indexes to information on Foreign Countries, Volume 2*, WO 106/12, NAUK, p.94, p.83

²⁴⁵ Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.xvii, p.xxiii

in any way whatever to help in the work of organisation and administration of the army.²⁴⁶

Brackenbury's background, opinions, and dedication to professionalism isolated him from many of his contemporaries. Before his appointment to the IB, a frustrated Brackenbury was contemplating ending his military career and seeking employment in civilian life.²⁴⁷

While he was shunned from the Army's leadership at large Brackenbury was able to rely on his link to Wolseley, especially in the early years of his military career. Both men shared many of the same goals concerning military reform. Gleichen related how, "Brackenbury was a faithful adherent of Lord Wolseley...and had many a time given him the most valuable counsel in the matter of reforming the British Army."²⁴⁸ To Wolseley Brackenbury was "not one of the cleverest, but *the* cleverest man in the British Army."²⁴⁹ The former's patronage was an important factor in the latter securing the position of IB Director. Already something of a *persona non grata* within military circles, Brackenbury's relationship with the Army's leaders soured further during his time at the IB and the ID.

Brackenbury's devotion to military reform helped to frame his relationship to senior soldiers. While he earned Wolseley's respect, the Duke of Cambridge, already unenthusiastic about the IB, felt severe animosity towards Brackenbury. The Duke remained Commander-in-Chief throughout the latter's tenure at the IB and the ID. When Edward Gleichen told the Duke of his employment at the IB the Duke replied, "So you are under Brackenbury? A dangerous man, my dear Gleichen,

²⁴⁶ 'Brackenbury to Wolseley (4 February 1883)'. Original in the Wolseley Papers, Central Library, Hove. Quoted from Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.xxii

²⁴⁷ The Right Hon. Sir H. Brackenbury, *Some Memories of My Spare Time* (Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1909) p.350

²⁴⁸ Major-General Lord Edward Gleichen, *A Guardsman's Memories: A Book of Recollections* (Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1932) p.140

²⁴⁹ Maurice & Arthur, *The Life of Lord Wolseley*, p.224 (emphasis in original)

a very dangerous man!”²⁵⁰ This was due undoubtedly to Brackenbury’s promotion of military reform. This included his belief that the post of Commander-in-Chief should be abolished. His relationship with the Duke was symptomatic of the isolation that Brackenbury felt from many of his military contemporaries.

Brackenbury further antagonised the Duke during the Hartington Commission of 1888. In May 1888 Prime Minister Salisbury established this commission to examine the potential invasion of Britain by a foreign power. Salisbury was horrified that Parliamentary debates had revealed a significant difference in opinion between the War Office and the Admiralty over the subject of invasion. He wanted the Hartington Commission to further investigate the issue.²⁵¹ Its remit was:

to inquire into the Civil and Professional Administration of the Naval and Military Departments, and [their] relation...to each other and to the Treasury and to report what changes in the existing system would tend to efficiency and economy in the Public Service.²⁵²

The Commission’s chairman was Lord Hartington, Secretary of State for War from 1882 to 1885. The other Commissioners were: Lord Randolph Churchill, Chancellor from August to December 1886 and vocal advocate of War Office and Military reform; Lord Revelstoke, Director of the Bank of England from 1879 to 1891; W.H. Smith, Secretary of State for War from June 1885 to January 1886 and August 1886 to January 1887; Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Secretary of State for War from February to July 1886 and August 1892 to June 1895, Sir Richard Temple,

²⁵⁰ Gleichen, *A Guardsman’s Memories*, p.142

²⁵¹ H. Kochanski, ‘Planning for War in the Final Years of *Pax Britannica*, 1889-1903’ in D. French & B.H. Reid (eds.), *The British General Staff: Reform and Innovation c.1890-1939* (London & Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2002) p.11

²⁵² ‘Preliminary Report of the Royal Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Civil and Professional Administration of the Naval and Military Departments’, *Preliminary and Further Reports (with Appendices) of the Royal Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Civil and Professional Administration of the Naval and Military Departments and the Relation of those Departments to each other and to the Treasury*, 1889, HO 73/36/4, Records created or inherited by the Home Office, Ministry of Home Security, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.iii

Conservative MP and former Governor of Bombay 1877 to 1880; Vice-Admiral Sir F.W. Richards; T.H. Ismay, founder of the White Star Line; and DMI Brackenbury.²⁵³ The Commission published the first part of its report in July 1889 and the second part in February 1890.

The Commission recommended two major measures. Firstly, to establish a Naval and Military Council consisting of the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for War, the First Naval Lord, and their principal professional advisers to discuss the estimates for each service. Secondly, it recommended that the position of Commander-in-Chief should be abolished and replaced by a Chief of Staff.²⁵⁴ The latter was to have a myriad of roles including co-ordinating military intelligence. Their primary role was to be the principal adviser to the Secretary of State for War on all military matters.²⁵⁵ These recommendations were “greeted with outrage in many quarters,” and “the Cabinet felt the recommendations were too drastic.”²⁵⁶ Therefore, this program of reform went no further. Interestingly, Brice contends that Brackenbury played a large role in the formulation of the Commission’s final report.²⁵⁷ His contention is proven by the Commission’s focus

²⁵³ Maurice & Arthur, *The Life of Lord Wolseley*, p.241

²⁵⁴ ‘Preliminary Report of the Royal Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Civil and Professional Administration of the Naval and Military Departments’, *Preliminary and Further Reports (with Appendices) of the Royal Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Civil and Professional Administration of the Naval and Military Departments and the Relation of those Departments to each other and to the Treasury*, HO 73/36/4, NAUK, p.viii. ‘Further Report’, *Ibid*, pp.xxii-xxiii

²⁵⁵ His duties were to be: “to advise the Secretary of State on all matters of general military policy, and all questions as to the strength, distribution and mobilization of [the Army]...To collect and co-ordinate all military information...To prepare and revise...a general scheme for the military defence of the Empire, and to examine the estimates with a view to insure that they are framed in harmony with that scheme...To prepare plans of action in certain contingencies...To communicate directly with the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty...on all matters involving inter-departmental policy; to examine all correspondence with other Departments of State, and to conduct all correspondence with General Officers Commanding on questions of military policy...To lay before for the Secretary of State an annual report stating clearly all the military requirements of the Empire.” (*Ibid*, pp.xxii-xxiii)

²⁵⁶ Kochanski, ‘Planning for War in the Final Years of *Pax Britannica*, 1889-1903’, *The British General Staff*, p.12

²⁵⁷ Brice, *The Thinking Man’s Soldier*, pp.186-187

on the creation of the post of Chief of Staff. This was a measure for which Brackenbury had long advocated.

By replacing the Commander-in-Chief with a Chief of Staff, Brackenbury hoped that this would pave the way for a General Staff to be established in Britain. Predictably, this proposal did not please the Duke of Cambridge. In December 1888 he expressed his disapproval to Brackenbury. This left the latter in a difficult position. While he believed in the creation of a Chief of Staff, he did not want to disagree publicly with his superior. To deal with this situation Brackenbury turned to Secretary of State for War Stanhope. The latter advised him that he was free to disagree publicly with the Duke. His position on the Commission gave him the freedom to express his honest opinions.²⁵⁸ It appears that Brackenbury followed Stanhope's advice. He co-signed the Commission's final report which recommended the establishment of a Chief of Staff. That Brackenbury sought guidance from a government minister, as opposed to a senior officer, and that he then followed that advice illustrates how intimately connected Brackenbury was with key figures within the civilian sphere. The Hartington Commission revealed how intricately connected the ID had become with the business of state governance. The DMI was an important figure within the state's apparatus, included in key deliberations over administrative reform. His close connection with government ministers was not replicated with the Army's leadership. Brackenbury and the Duke of Cambridge appeared as opposites. The tension between the two did nothing to endear the Commander-in-Chief, or other senior military figures, to Britain's intelligence organisations. The civilian sphere continued to provide a more receptive environment for the members of the ID.

While many of the Army's leaders shared the Duke's opinions, the men of the IB and the ID resembled their chief. Brackenbury was very selective when it came to appointments to the intelligence staff. He tried to choose men who possessed significant intellectual abilities and a dedicated work ethic, especially prizing those who had been educated at the Staff College. Many of those who

²⁵⁸ Ibid, pp.190-2

worked under Brackenbury, or who he recommended for employment in the ID after his tenure as DMI concluded, went on to reach senior ranks within the British Army.²⁵⁹ He mimicked Wolseley and created his own 'ring' of hand-picked men.²⁶⁰ These men greatly respected Brackenbury. Edward Gleichen reminisced how the ID's officers "were zealous, and worked hard under the masterful supervision of Brackenbury, whom we admired and respected."²⁶¹ The intimacy of the intelligence officers and their respect for Brackenbury, ensured that the intelligence culture he established survived past his tenure as DMI. Yet, it ensured that these officers remained a relatively isolated group on the fringes of the Army's hierarchy.

The work of the IB's officers was hampered by the regimental system of the British Army. Many of those working at the IB were attached officers. This meant that, as well as foreign intelligence work, they were expected to carry out their regimental duties. Edward Gleichen related how, as an officer in the Grenadier Guards, every fourth night he had to perform guard duty outside the Bank of England after working all day in the IB. Brackenbury was furious upon discovering this.²⁶² It was this situation that partly drove him to seek an increase in the IB's permanent staff, achieved in 1887. The fact that officers were forced to divide their time was another manifestation of the continued negative impact of Britain's military culture.

To become an officer in the British Army in this period, even after the Cardwell reforms, was "to obtain admission to an exclusive private club, the regimental mess,"²⁶³ and the regiment remained all-important. Officers were

²⁵⁹ These included: Sir Henry Wilson and Sir William Robertson, both of whom became Field Marshals, Sir James Wolfe Murray, Chief of the Imperial General Staff from 1914 to 1915, and a host of others who reached the rank of Major-General. (Ibid, p.176)

²⁶⁰ Ibid, p.300

²⁶¹ Gleichen, *A Guardsman's Memories*, p.143

²⁶² Ibid, p.77

²⁶³ Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.14

expected to show loyalty to this system and to carry out their regimental duties no matter what. In his extensive study of the regimental system, David French argues that “critics of the regular officer corps in the late nineteenth century were wrong to dismiss them as aristocratic amateurs.” He asserts that a major fault of the system was not that it produced officers who did not care about their profession. Instead, the issue was that it gave officers skills for small-scale warfare but not for the undertaking of major conflicts and operations.²⁶⁴

French’s hypothesis is nuanced and compelling, but the evidence from Gleichen’s memoir illustrates the constrictions that the regimental system imposed. The arrangement was detrimental to intellectually driven soldiers, such as those who worked at the IB. Regimental duties restricted the ability of officers to work upon higher military schemes and intelligence work. This is another layer that can be added to the discussion of the regimental system’s impact upon the professionalisation of the British Army. The enforcement of this old tradition hampered the IB’s effectiveness. It signals the negative influence that military culture could have on the evolution of the IB and its successors.

While it often shunned or hindered the evolution of the IB the Army could sometimes assist the former. The prime example, in these years, was the transfer of the IB back to the Adjutant-General’s Department, which brought the former more prestige. The Adjutant-General’s Department was larger than the Quartermaster-General’s. Also, the Adjutant-General was viewed as the deputy to the Commander-in-Chief.²⁶⁵ This relocation was undoubtedly aided by the fact that Wolseley was Adjutant-General at the time. The IB and the ID were aided in these years, unlike from 1873 to 1885, by having a powerful ally within the Army’s leadership. The officers of both institutions conformed to Wolseley’s, and the reformers’, opinions and provided a powerful tool for the further professionalisation of the Army. Brackenbury’s selective hiring practices were evidence of this. While the Duke of Cambridge would never change his views, the

²⁶⁴ French, *Military Identities*, p.178

²⁶⁵ Brice, *The Thinking Man’s Soldier*, p.165

elevation of Wolseley within the Army's hierarchy presented hope to Britain's intelligence officers. Their efforts were appreciated by at least some of the military's leaders.

Although it was increased in scale the ID continued to suffer the apathy of senior soldiers. Along with the figure of Brackenbury and the intellectual predilections of its officers, there was another reason for this. This was how the ID propagated the principles of civilian governance into the military sphere. The clearest example of this is the relationship between the ID and the Royal Navy.

There had always been an inter-service rivalry between the Army and the Royal Navy. Inter-service rivalry is defined as "the competition between military services...for prestige, funding, and influence," particularly in the centres of political power.²⁶⁶ This was precisely what drove the antagonism between the two services in late Victorian Britain. It was a struggle in which the Royal Navy held the upper hand.²⁶⁷ An example of this came in 1889 with the signing of the Naval Defence Act by Prime Minister Salisbury. This asserted the 'Two-Power Standard', which called for the Royal Navy to be as strong as the next two largest navies in the world.²⁶⁸ There was never any such proclamation regarding the British Army in this period.²⁶⁹

While it was leading the Army in prestige and funding, it took until 1887 for the Admiralty to establish the Naval Intelligence Department. Charles Beresford

²⁶⁶ *The Oxford Essential Dictionary of the U.S. Military* (2002)

<https://www.oxfordreference.com/abstract/10.1093/acref/9780199891580.001.0001/acref-9780199891580-e-4075?rskey=Djs2dm> [Accessed 07/06/19]

²⁶⁷ Hamer accurately argued that, in this period, "it was politically impossible to obtain from Parliament funds for a big navy and a big army and since the priority of the navy was never challenged, Britain's land defence problem was reduced to a regrettable alternative." (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, pp.86-7)

²⁶⁸ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.149

²⁶⁹ In May 1898 Salisbury did speak of, "the need to make financial sacrifices to keep the army and the navy up to the task of maintaining British power." There was, however, no equivalent of the 'Two-Power Standard'. (Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.261)

(a prominent MP, Royal Navy Captain, and advocate for increased naval spending) had championed the formation of a naval intelligence institution in October 1886. Beresford's plan was for the creation of an intelligence department of two sections. One was to "gather all information relative to foreign navies, inventions, trials, and foreign maritime matters." The other section would "organize war preparations, including naval mobilization and the making out of plans for naval campaigns."²⁷⁰ Beresford's model was accepted by the Admiralty. The Naval Intelligence Department (NID) was established in 1887, superseding the previous Foreign Intelligence Committee established in 1882.

On 15 May 1890 DMI Brackenbury presented a memorandum on the relationship between the ID and the NID. He admitted that there were certain points upon which the work of the two structures unavoidably overlapped.²⁷¹ While stating that this was not a problem, Brackenbury urged that "the responsibility not only for compiling reports, but also for the collection of information, should be officially defined" between both intelligence establishments. He also alleged that while the ID endeavoured to help the NID, the latter was not so quick to reciprocate. Brackenbury recommended that official instructions should be laid down ordering both organisations to share information. This was another sign of how the ID promoted political and administrative culture into the military sphere. Brackenbury did note that the ID and the NID had cooperated on plans of attack. He wanted, however, to enforce the superiority of the former over the process of planning for war. He further argued that the DMI should have greater knowledge of naval wartime plans. This, he argued, would allow for the War Office to properly coordinate Britain's military forces for a potential war.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ *Formation of Naval Intelligence Department. Re-organisation of Foreign Intelligence Committee, 1886-1888*, ADM 116/3106, Records of the Admiralty, Naval Forces, Royal Marines, Coastguard, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.12

²⁷¹ These were "(1.) Coast defences of foreign Powers. (2.) Preparation for attack of any foreign Power by a joint naval and military expedition." ('Memorandum on the relations between the Intelligence Departments of the War Office, Admiralty, and India', *Papers 1890*, WO 33/50, NAUK, p.2)

²⁷² *Ibid*, p.2, pp.2-3, p.3

This memorandum highlights elements of the inter-service tension between the Army and the Royal Navy. Yet, once again the ID acted as a bridge between two different worlds. By acting as an inter-departmental agency it was able to facilitate information sharing and cooperation across inter-service boundaries. It was perfectly placed for aligning military and naval wartime planning. This was because the ID had adopted the administrative culture of Whitehall and the principles of governance behind it, mainly an emphasis on cooperation and consensus. Although he faced difficulties in dealing with the NID Brackenbury retained his belief in the need for rigorous collaboration. Brackenbury sent a letter to DMI John Ardagh, on 7 April 1896, five years after he had left the ID. He urged the latter to “Keep close touch” with the NID.²⁷³ The ID was a true conduit of information. It also became focused around civilian governance principles. This explained the indifference and animosity that the foreign intelligence institutions faced from military leaders. The ID was an alien structure compared to the rest of the Army. Based around state governmental concepts, the ID was always going to jar with the conservative opinions of the Army’s leadership and with the traditions of British military culture.

Despite the rise of a high-profile reformer like Wolseley the IB and the ID continued to find little support from military leaders. The personality of Brackenbury, the intellectual and professional nature of their members, and how these structures espoused principles of civilian governance into the military sphere marked both organisations out from the rest of the Army’s hierarchy. The members of both institutions faced an uphill struggle to demonstrate their worth to the Army’s leadership through the 1880s to early 1890s. By comparison, the civilian sphere continued to provide a receptive audience.

Involvement in Policymaking

²⁷³ ‘H. Brackenbury to J.C. Ardagh, 7 April 1896’, *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, PRO 30/40/2, NAUK, p.2

The 1870s had forced a readjustment in thinking about the security of Britain's global position. The years from 1886 until the turn of the century sparked an ever-increasing anxiety amongst the nation's foreign policymakers. Britain found itself increasingly isolated within the international realm, highlighting the nation's growing vulnerability. In 1886 Gladstone's third government fell and Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister again. He would hold this position until 1902, with only the three-year gap of Gladstone's and Lord Rosebery's Liberal governments from 1892 to 1895. Otte rightly notes that this "began Lord Salisbury's long ascendancy over foreign policy...a landmark in the development of the 'Foreign Office mind'."²⁷⁴ As the stakes of foreign and imperial policymaking were raised the IB and the ID became intimately involved in the formation of both.

The IB and the ID remained situated at Queen Anne's Gate through these years, remaining close to the Foreign, India, and Colonial Offices. Both structures, however, were physically distant from their parent department the War Office. This was appreciated by some of those working in both agencies, such as Edward Gleichen.²⁷⁵ This situation was to cause problems for the ID in the late 1890s to early 1900s. Yet, for now, their physical location afforded both it and the IB an opportunity to become more intimately involved with the civilian sphere and in foreign and imperial policy formation. The leadership of Henry Brackenbury helped to seize this opportunity.

The IB had quickly become involved in foreign policymaking in the 1870s. This was furthered through the 1880s. In fact, Brackenbury sought a more active role for the institution within foreign policy formation. His ability to network proved immensely important in expanding the IB's involvement within policy formation. Thomas Otte argues that international history cannot be understood

²⁷⁴ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.150. Agatha Ramm also argued for the importance of Salisbury on British foreign policy in this period. She contended that Salisbury "altered permanently the geographical form of foreign policy, shifting its peak point southwards and westwards." (A. Ramm, 'Lord Salisbury and the Foreign Office' in R. Bullen (ed.), *The Foreign Office 1782-1982* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984) p.54)

²⁷⁵ Gleichen, *A Guardsman's Memories*, p.140

without reference to the personalities of decision-makers.²⁷⁶ There is undoubted truth to this reasoning. The personality of Brackenbury contributed majorly towards the IB's expanded involvement in policymaking.²⁷⁷ Yet, the influence of political and administrative culture upon the IB continued to underpin its participation within foreign and imperial policy formulation.

In a memorandum from 2 April 1887 Brackenbury argued that the “countries with which we are most liable to go to war are France and Russia, and the worst combination we have any reason to dread is an alliance of France and Russia against us.”²⁷⁸ It was through countering this threat that he pursued a more active policymaking role. Writing to Julian Pauncefoot, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1882 to 1889, on 4 September 1886 Brackenbury discussed ways to counter the Russian menace in Central Asia. He argued that if “we could regain our influence in Persia, we might laugh at Russian advances in Central Asia. A railway from the Gulf to Tehran would enable us to seize the throat of Russian communications on the Black Sea.”²⁷⁹ In a letter to the Foreign Office in August 1887 he stated that the War Office opinion was that, to safeguard India, Britain needed to draw a line in Afghanistan beyond which Russia would not be allowed to advance. Prime Minister Salisbury was not convinced. His chief objection was that “military advisability and diplomatic practicability did not coincide.”²⁸⁰ Brackenbury failed in influencing policy on this occasion, but he set

²⁷⁶ T.G. Otte, ‘Introduction: Personalities and Impersonal Forces in History’, T.G. Otte & C.A. Pagedas (eds.) *Personalities, War and Diplomacy: Essays in International History* (London & Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1997) p.9

²⁷⁷ In a similar vein, Stephen Roskill noted in his biography of Maurice Hankey (Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence 1912-1938) how Hankey won “the confidence of Monarchs, Ministers and heads of the fighting services,” affording him a premier position within the workings of the British state. (S. Roskill, *Hankey: Man of Secrets Volume I 1877-1918* (London: Collins, 1970) p.19

²⁷⁸ ‘Telegraphic Communications with Stations Abroad from the point of view of Imperial Defence (2 April 1887)’, *Papers 1887*, WO 33/47, NAUK, p.1

²⁷⁹ ‘Brackenbury to Pauncefoot, Covering letter for memorandum on Railway from Tehran to Persian Gulf (4 September 1886)’. Original in The National Archives -*Proceedings in Central Asia*. vol. 111, September 1886, FO 65/1291, Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK. Quoted from R.L. Greaves, *Persia and the Defence of India 1884-1892: A Study on the Foreign Policy of the Third Marquis of Salisbury* (London: The Athlone Press, 1959) p.37

²⁸⁰ Greaves, *Persia and the Defence of India*, p.39. To Greaves this was not an isolated incident. She argued that “Britain’s soldiers have, throughout the course of their country’s contact with

a precedent for active involvement in foreign policymaking that his successors would follow.

While the IB had become involved in imperial policymaking during the 1870s, its involvement through the late 1880s to early 1890s was even more pronounced. In August 1886 it produced a detailed analysis of a scheme, by the Russian General Kuropatkin, for the invasion of India. The twenty-two-page report was a comprehensive investigation of the available evidence.²⁸¹ In August 1889, on orders from Salisbury's government, DMI Brackenbury and Major-General Oliver Newmarch, Military Secretary in the India Office, met to determine:

the force which the Government of India should be able to put into the field as a field force after providing for garrisons and defence of frontier posts, and showing how far this can be done from the resources now at their command.²⁸²

While Captain Baring had ruminated upon the defence of India in 1876, Brackenbury had been officially instructed to examine the defence policy of the Indian colonial state. He and Newmarch decided that "the present army of India is sufficient for all the requirements of the present time." Both advocated a cautious policy along the border, aligned with Baring's previous recommendations.

Persia, demonstrated a lively interest in the Iranian area and have often advocated policies beyond the range of those the Foreign Office consented to undertake." (Ibid, p.35)

²⁸¹ *Analysis of General Kuropatkin's Scheme for the Invasion of India*, August 1886, WO 106/6208, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

²⁸² 'Memorandum by Lieutenant-General Brackenbury, Director of Military Intelligence, War Office, and Major-General Newmarch, Military Secretary, India Office (19 August 1889)', *OVERSEAS: India (Code 0(Z)): Capability of existing garrisons in India to meet possible Russian invasion of Afghanistan; question of reinforcements; memorandum by Lieut. General Brackenbury, Director of Military Intelligence and Major General Newmarch, Military Secretary, India Office, 1889-1893*, WO 32/6349, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

There was only to be a military advance into Afghanistan if a Russian invasion of that nation occurred.²⁸³

The fact that the DMI was being officially instructed by the government to pronounce upon Indian defence policy is significant. It demonstrates how involved the DMI and the ID were in the development of imperial policy. The latter was well equipped to deliberate upon Indian defence requirements. It remained a useful font of knowledge for the government to rely on, rather than having to trust, in their eyes, the biased information emanating from India.

The ID continued to act in this capacity into the 1890s. On 15 May 1890 Brackenbury generated a memorandum describing the relationship between the ID and the Indian IB. He detailed how both agencies conjointly collected and collated information. He stated that there was no problem with this arrangement and urged that the information sharing system should be expanded. Yet, he was not fully satisfied. He contended that, “the printed papers of the Indian Intelligence Department were giving to the Government of India an exaggerated estimate of Russian strength in Central Asia and of Russian readiness for war.” He argued that the ID was the proper body to provide an accurate assessment of the intentions of foreign nations.²⁸⁴ Brackenbury was a formidable political operator and knew how to make a convincing case. He asserted that:

I believe that a department viewing the military situation of Russia and of Her Majesty's Empire as a whole, and in close connection with the Foreign Office, is in a better position to place a true value on the readiness of Russia for war, and the best method of meeting that Power, than is a department occupied with

²⁸³ Ibid, p.16

²⁸⁴ ‘Memorandum on the relations between the Intelligence Departments of the War Office, Admiralty, and India’, *Papers 1890*, WO 33/50, NAUK, p.2, p.4

only one portion of Russian territory, and necessarily considering Indian interests only.²⁸⁵

This was a clear effort by Brackenbury to stamp the ID's authority over Indian army intelligence. In his conception the role of the Indian IB was to feed information to the ID. The latter would then provide the best advice for the government to formulate foreign and imperial policy. This incident exhibits an attempt to force a level of centralisation over imperial institutions, by consolidating authority within the British state. It was also interesting how Brackenbury referenced the links between the ID and the Foreign Office in support of his argument. This is another sign of how important this relationship was to the ID.

The ID's continued involvement in policy formulation, and growing intimacy with state and government officials, helped to further isolate it from military leaders. In July 1888 a Cabinet memorandum on the possibility of French Invasion of the British Isles, prepared from information provided by the ID, was sent to Brackenbury. He asked Secretary of State for War Stanhope for permission to show it to Adjutant General Wolseley. Stanhope responded that he did not have permission to allow this.²⁸⁶ This signifies the special relationship that existed between the DMI and the Cabinet. It was a relationship that few other soldiers were allowed into, even those occupying other senior positions. A true two-way relationship had developed between the ID and policymakers. Information flowed in both directions as the former became an important part of policy formation. This highlights how the ID was shifting further into the civilian sphere.

Since becoming Prime Minister in 1886, Salisbury had sought to "break out of the isolated position in Europe that he had inherited from Gladstone." He sought to achieve this goal by cooperating with the Triple Alliance, which

²⁸⁵ Ibid, p.4

²⁸⁶ Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.183

comprised Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.²⁸⁷ To thwart potential Russian or French aggression Britain attempted to forge a good relationship with Germany.²⁸⁸ While Britain's foreign policymakers sought to strengthen this international relationship, the ID sought to take advantage of the situation. Captain James Grierson of the ID used his close contacts within the German General Staff to access intelligence collected by the Germans on Russia.²⁸⁹ Kenneth Bourne argued that effective Anglo-German cooperation reached its climax between 1889 to 1890.²⁹⁰ This evidence, however, shows that the date stated by Bourne was too early. Grierson did not arrive in the ID until 1890. Therefore, his intelligence exchanges with German officers must have occurred from this year on. This reveals that Anglo-German cooperation occurred beyond the end date contended by Bourne. Grierson's intelligence exchanges also denote how the ID utilised Britain's international relations to aid its intelligence collection efforts. Its ties with the civilian sphere, through its involvement in foreign policymaking, provided a greater benefit to the ID than any of its links with senior soldiers. This, therefore, strengthened its connection with the civilian sphere.

Through the late 1880s to early 1890s, the government had ordered Britain's intelligence agencies to undertake a wide range of specific tasks. Yet, Brackenbury did not always wait for the government to issue instructions. Sometimes he took the initiative and sent material to the Cabinet without previous directives. He outlined this practice in a letter to Lord Lansdowne on 17 October 1892. He stated that:

When I knew that any subject was engaging the attention of government, I used to prepare a paper showing the state of the question from one point of view, and send it

²⁸⁷ C.J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists: British Foreign Policy 1878-1902 volume one* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) pp.164-165

²⁸⁸ Otte correctly states that, "the ties with Berlin were the central relationship around which much of British diplomacy revolved." (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.185)

²⁸⁹ D.S. MacDiarmid, *The Life of Lieutenant General Sir James Moncrieff Grierson* (London: Constable & Company Ltd, 1923) p.100

²⁹⁰ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.150

either to all the cabinet ministers, or as to such only as I thought would be interested in it.²⁹¹

This letter reveals again how the IB and the ID had become important parts of state policymaking. It also illustrates the intimate relationship between the members of these structures and government ministers. Finally, it showed how the focus of both organisations had shifted away from the military sphere. The needs of civilian policymakers, over those of senior soldiers, had started to take precedence. This was another result of the apathy of the military leadership.

Brackenbury followed this procedure during the Anglo-Portuguese crisis of 1890. The crisis resulted from disputes between the two nations over territorial rights in south-eastern Africa, especially in modern-day Zimbabwe. On his own initiative, Brackenbury sent a paper to the Cabinet on the military capabilities of Portugal and on the defensive measures of that country and its Empire. This impressed Prime Minister Salisbury who asked for a second report on what offensive action could be undertaken by Britain against Portugal and its Empire.²⁹² The crisis was resolved by treaty in 1891. Brackenbury's actions reveal not only his opportunism but also the role that he envisaged the ID fulfilling. He wanted it to be one of the principal advisory agencies for the government on strategical matters. This went far beyond what was initially imagined for the IB in the 1870s. This enlargement of the ID's role was not resisted by any government or state official. Instead, many relished the advantages to be gained from it. This quickened the pace of the assimilation of the ID within the civilian sphere, while expanding its role within foreign and imperial policymaking.

Foreign and imperial policy formation remained areas in which intelligence officers could make meaningful contributions. Their advice was valued by civilian policymakers and they, in turn, allotted the IB and the ID a more active role in

²⁹¹ 'Brackenbury to Lansdowne (17 October 1892)'. Original in Brackenbury letter books, Royal Artillery Museum, Woolwich. Quoted from Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, pp.182-83

²⁹² Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.183

policymaking. Their remit was expanded beyond the original narrow boundaries assigned to the IB in the 1870s. This ensured the continuation of the evolutionary trajectory into the 1890s.

Conclusion: The Ascendancy of Political and Administrative Culture

In the five years that he was in charge Henry Brackenbury made a significant impact upon the IB and the ID. He oversaw a large expansion in the size of the former's staff and then helped to establish the latter. By his departure in 1891 the ID was well positioned as an important part of the state apparatus. Brackenbury typified the organisations that he led. While he was a soldier, he was adept at operating within the civilian sphere. He, the IB, and the ID were bridges, enabling the transfer of information within the civilian and military spheres and across the boundary between the two.

Under Brackenbury's leadership, political and administrative culture continued to exercise a preponderant influence upon the evolution of the IB and the ID from 1886 to 1891. The most striking example of this was in the foundation of Britain's intelligence culture in this period. This culture was based upon principles predominant within the practice of state governance. These were a 'committee style approach' and a 'drive for consensus'. This is illustrated by the growing involvement of both intelligence establishments within the 'committee system', such as their role within the CDC. It is also exemplified by the focus that Brackenbury placed upon ensuring cooperative relations with important government offices. The inter-departmental character of the IB and the ID was reinforced through this period. Both acted as conduits ensuring the transfer of information across the state apparatus. The workings of both institutions were firmly modelled after political and administrative culture. This reveals how rapidly both had adopted political, and Whitehall's administrative, culture. State governance principles formed the foundation for the operation of military intelligence, illustrating the continued predominant impact of political and administrative culture upon the evolutionary process.

The links with important state departments, especially the Foreign Office, were strengthened. Cooperation between the Foreign Office and the IB changed the nature of the latter's work, introducing 'analysis' as an important function from late 1886 onwards. All this furthered the incorporation of the IB and the ID into the civilian sphere. Within just over a decade the IB had expanded its remit from purely military intelligence, encompassing subjects such as administrative reform. It was also a key advisory body to the government. The influence of political and administrative culture ensured that the IB and the ID were of considerable use to state and government officials, through their inter-departmental functions. This resulted in closer ties with the civilian sphere and an expanded role in policymaking.

The continuation of these trends resulted in persistent apathy from the Army's leadership. From 1886 to 1891 the traditionalists remained in charge. They remained hostile to the intellectualism and professionalism of the members of the IB and ID, while also loathing how both structures brought principles of civilian governance into the military sphere. The Duke of Cambridge's dislike of Brackenbury was symbolic of the attitude of the Army's leadership towards Britain's intelligence machinery. Even the presence of Garnet Wolseley as Adjutant-General could not preclude the general animosity. British military culture had not changed either. The impact of the regimental system proved detrimental to the efforts of intelligence officers. The rapidity of the amalgamation of the IB and the ID into the civilian sphere was counterpoised by their isolation within the Army's hierarchy. Both agencies retained a different ethos, defined by intellectualism and professionalism, that singled them out from the rest of the Army. This was entrenched by Brackenbury's selective hiring practices. Both organisations also propagated civilian governance principles into the military sphere. This is evidenced by the ID's cooperation and information exchanges with the NID, facilitated by the former's inter-departmental functions. This served to increase the hostility of senior soldiers towards the IB and the ID. They along with their members became outsiders within the Army. This illuminates how the influence of political and administrative culture continued to propel the

indifference of senior soldiers. The wall of disinterest and hostility prevented the IB and the ID from rising in importance to Britain's military leaders.

In the face of this latent opposition, civilian policymakers and state officials remained a receptive audience for the information of the IB and the ID. Both agencies also became ever more involved in foreign and imperial policymaking. From 1886 to 1891 Brackenbury sought to increase the involvement of both institutions within policy formation. He took the initiative and sent material to the Cabinet, such as in 1890 over the disputes with Portugal, and even advocated for the assumption of policy options, as he did regarding Persia in September 1886. This set a pattern that would be followed by his successors. The importance of these intelligence establishments to policymakers increased throughout this period. This is clear from the frequency with which the Prime Minister commissioned the intelligence staff to undertake work on imperial defence issues for the government. It is also evident in the close connection between DMI Brackenbury and Lord Randolph Churchill during the Hartington Commission.

This all reveals how the evolutionary process continued unabated from 1886 to 1891. It drove the development of the IB and the ID, under the overriding influence of political and administrative culture. The latter retained its character and culture into the 1890s. Even after Brackenbury's departure it continued to evolve along the lines dictated by the evolutionary process. The defining characteristic of the next period, 1891 to 1899, was how the ID took on an increasingly expanded role within foreign and imperial policymaking.

Chapter 3: The Entrenchment of the Evolutionary Process, 1891-1899

As the 1890s began, the ID occupied a prominent position within the British foreign and defence policy establishment. Brackenbury's time as DMI ended in April 1891. He returned to India to assume the position of a Member of the Council of the Viceroy of India. His successors as DMI were Major-Generals Edward Chapman (1891-1896) and John Ardagh (1896-1901). These two men furthered the practices and culture of the ID formalised by Brackenbury. Through the 1890s the influence of political and administrative culture remained predominant over the former's evolution. This reinforced its ties with state and government officials but led to renewed hostility from the Army's leadership, which started to intensify through this period. This animosity helped to push it closer towards the civilian sphere. As military intelligence strengthened its ties to policymakers, it became more involved within both imperial and foreign policymaking. The ID's involvement in these realms was the most striking feature of the 1890s. It denoted its significant incorporation into the civilian sphere, and the dominant impact of political and administrative culture over the evolutionary phase.

Under DMIs Chapman and Ardagh the ID remained involved within the 'committee system'. It became particularly important to the work of the CDC from 1891 to 1899. Its inter-departmental functions were reinforced through this period, as it continued to facilitate the passage of information across the state's apparatus especially to the important departments of state. It also continued to allow for the transfer of information between the civilian and military spheres. Its inter-departmental character continued under the tenure of DMI Ardagh. This reveals the continued dominating influence of political and administrative culture upon the ID's evolution.

The 1890s saw the strengthening of the relationships with the important government offices. The connection with the Foreign Office retained its prominence and continued to expedite the development of the ID's analytical functions. Brief trouble, however, did develop between the ID and the Foreign

Office in 1893. Yet, commonalities in institutional culture, between the two organisations, along with a mutually beneficial link ensured the persistence of close ties. This period witnessed the beginning of the ID's isolation within the War Office. As its ties strengthened with the other state offices, the former experienced a growing separation from its parent department of state. DMI Ardagh continued to work towards securing connections with policymakers and state officials. He benefited from a positive working relationship with Secretary of State for War Lord Lansdowne. This, however, could not reverse the isolation of the ID within the War Office. Ardagh also shared a close working relationship with Sir Thomas Sanderson, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which served to reinforce the link with the Foreign Office. In fact, Ardagh shared a general acceptability to most state and government officials. This is shown by his involvement with the British delegation at the First Hague Conference in 1899. This reveals the close ties between the ID and the civilian sphere but also proved problematic for the former's work. The persistent close connections with the civilian sphere continued to enable the expansion of the ID's role within policymaking. Yet, it contributed to the increased hostility from the Army's leaders.

The years 1891 to 1899 witnessed increased hostility from senior soldiers. This was partly the result of the personage of Edward Chapman, who suffered from the effects of service tension between the Home and Indian Armies. This had a significant effect upon the ID increasing its isolation within the Home Army. Its character remained defined by a focus on intellectualism and professionalism, and this continued to clash with Britain's conservative military culture. The ID also continued to promote cooperation with the Royal Navy. This reveals how this agency continued to propagate civilian governance principles into the military sphere. DMI Ardagh enjoyed far better relations with military leaders than his predecessors had. This offered some hope for a thaw in the relationship, but this did not occur. The increasing rancour continued to push the ID ever closer to the civilian sphere and into foreign and imperial policymaking.

From 1891 to 1899, the ID became an active player in these realms of policy formation. DMI Chapman tried to force revisions of British Mediterranean policy in 1892. He argued that Britain needed to forge an international partnership with Germany to secure the nation's 'vital interests', to borrow William Mulligan's phrase. The ID's imperial work grew throughout the 1890s and DMI Chapman was responsible for helping to inculcate a growing imperial outlook, while he also sought to influence imperial policy. He worked to influence Indian defence policy and press its importance within political and military circles. Chapman also aided the policy of securing greater integration and centralisation across the Empire, through his relationship with the Indian IB and his involvement in Indian defence policy. The ID was also utilised by the government as an instrument to strengthen Britain's international partnerships during the early 1890s, especially with Italy. DMI Ardagh proved to be an even more forceful voice within foreign policymaking. In 1896 he challenged the foundations of Britain's policy of isolation from serious international partnerships. The ID's imperial policy work continued to increase exponentially during Ardagh's tenure, reaching its zenith in the late 1890s. This all evinces the increased involvement of the ID within foreign and imperial policymaking through this period. It was again the influence of political and administrative culture that enabled this expansion. The ID's inter-departmental functions facilitated cooperation and its information gathering abilities, which, in turn, made it a structure uniquely qualified to intervene in foreign and imperial policy formation. Once again, this all illustrates the persistence of the evolutionary process through these years.

The ID and DMI Edward Chapman (1891-1896)

Edward Chapman was born in 1840 in India and entered the Indian Army in 1858, being commissioned into the Bengal Artillery. He served in the 1868 Abyssinian Expedition, the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880), and the Burmese Expedition (1885-1886). He was decorated for his service in Afghanistan. In 1885 Chapman was appointed Quartermaster-General in India and held this position

until 1889.²⁹³ During the Second Anglo-Afghan War he acted as Chief of Staff to Lord Roberts, the British commander during the War, providing valuable assistance to the later during the campaign in Afghanistan. Like Wolseley Roberts too had his own 'ring' of officers and Chapman was a key figure in it. The two men nearly fell out in 1885, over a perceived snub by Roberts to Chapman, but they repaired their relationship.²⁹⁴ Being a member of Roberts's circle undoubtedly aided Chapman in rising to the post of Quartermaster-General.

His prior service made Chapman unique among all the heads of Britain's foreign intelligence organisations from 1870 to 1914. While others had served in India, Chapman was the only one who had spent his entire military career there. His appointment as DMI was the first appointment that he had held outside of the Indian Army. His Indian service meant that Chapman brought a unique perspective to the ID, which created a greater imperial focus within the latter.

Chapman was in poor health by 1891. It was believed that service in Britain would be more beneficial for him which partly explains his appointment as DMI. The perceived threat that Russia posed to the British Empire increased through the 1890s. The signing of the Franco-Russian Alliance in 1894 compounded these fears. With Russia presenting the greatest menace, British policymakers needed more information at their fingertips about Russian capabilities and intentions. Since the ID was best placed to provide this information, having someone in charge with extensive knowledge of Central Asian and Russian affairs was logical. Chapman proved the right candidate at the right time.²⁹⁵ While his Indian service

²⁹³ 'Who's Who, 1914', (<https://archive.org/stream/whoswho1914001352mbp#page/n415/mode/2up/search/Chapman>) [Accessed 17/02/20]

²⁹⁴ R. Atwood, *The Life of Field Marshal Lord Roberts* (London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015) p.108, p.115

²⁹⁵ Parritt, *The Intelligencers*, p.159

helped him secure the position of DMI, it created problems with other senior soldiers.

From 1891 through 1896 the ID retained the same internal organisation that it had under Brackenbury. Five sections were devoted to the collection of foreign intelligence, while another section focused on topographical work and contained the library. There have been no biographies written of Chapman. His time as DMI is often given little coverage in the historiography. The opinions that are given of his leadership of the ID have been critical.²⁹⁶ Brice is particularly harsh. He claims that Chapman, “confided in Brackenbury that he had little idea of what was going on in his department and asked for his help.” This is a misleading statement and one that misquotes the evidence.²⁹⁷ The letter that Brice references, dated 21 October 1892, was sent by Chapman to Brackenbury. It contains no such admission by Chapman. In a different letter, from 2 December 1892, Chapman admitted to Brackenbury of his problems with the Mobilisation Division, which remained a separate entity, but there was no admission that Chapman knew little of what was occurring in the ID.

Chapman’s achievements at the ID certainly do not compare to Brackenbury’s. Even the intelligence staff viewed the former unfavourably compared to his predecessor. Edward Gleichen stated that:

We were all very fond of him personally; but why he had been pitchforked by Lord Roberts into the very difficult position of D.M.I. at home - to deal with foreign political

²⁹⁶ Fergusson claims that what carried the ID through Chapman’s tenure was “the momentum established by Brackenbury.” (Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence, 1870-1914*, p.96) Fergusson devotes only about sixteen pages to Chapman’s tenure as DMI, out of three hundred pages in his work. Ian Beckett offers a fairer critique. He argues that Chapman, was “confined by the prevailing orthodoxy of the War Office and had little chance to put over his point of view.” (Beckett, ‘The Stanhope Memorandum of 1888: a Reinterpretation’, p.246) This is a more objective view but remains too narrow.

²⁹⁷ Brice, *The Thinking Man’s Soldier*, p.196. Fergusson also misquotes the same letter to censure Chapman. (Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.107)

and other European matters of which he was necessarily entirely ignorant - we none of us could ever make out.²⁹⁸

Yet, Chapman was to play an important role in expanding the ID's imperial outlook. This is signaled by its involvement in imperial policymaking through the 1890s to 1900s and will be illustrated later.

The ID and DMI John Charles Ardagh (1896-1899)

John Charles Ardagh succeeded Chapman as DMI on 1 April 1896. He was born in 1840 in Ireland and entered the Royal Military Academy in 1858, abandoning a career in the clergy for one in the Army. He was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers in 1859. Possessed of a fierce intellect Ardagh proved to be a gifted engineer aiding in the construction of military works in Canada and Britain, including his invention of an equilibrium drawbridge.²⁹⁹ He obtained permission to travel to France during the Franco-Prussian War, witnessing the entry of Prussian troops into Paris at the War's conclusion. During his time in France Ardagh inspected the defences around Paris, Belfort, and Strasbourg.³⁰⁰ He entered the Staff College in 1873.

Ardagh entered the Staff College while the institution was experiencing significant improvement. In his study of the British Army and the Staff College, Brian Bond emphasised that while problems remained, such as the lack of precision in its role, the Staff College, from 1870 to 1890, underwent important

²⁹⁸ Gleichen, *A Guardsman's Memories*, p.177

²⁹⁹ Ardagh's wife the Countess of Malmesbury, with some obvious bias, attested to this in her biography of her husband. She stated that Ardagh was "a soldier-diplomat, an international lawyer, a financier, a mathematician, an architect, an astronomer and an artist...his natural versatility enabled him to turn to any subject, no matter how abstruse and technical." (S. Ardagh, Countess of Malmesbury, *The Life of Major-General Sir John Ardagh* (London: John Murray, 1909) p.vi)

³⁰⁰ Colonel R.H. Vetch, 'Ardagh, Sir John Charles', Sir S. Lee (ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography Second Supplement Vol. I Abbey-Eyre* (<https://archive.org/details/pt1dictionaryofn02leesuoft/page/x/mode/2up/search/ardagh>) [Accessed 17/02/20] pp.50-51

improvements. These were that “the number of students at the College was increased and there was generally a keener competition for entry,” and “the syllabus was gradually made more practical.”³⁰¹ Ardagh benefited from the implementation of these improvements. He passed out of the Staff College in late 1874 and in April 1875 joined the IB. Under the direction of the Foreign Office, Prime Minister Disraeli, and Lord Salisbury Ardagh had travelled across the Balkans through the 1870s, collecting intelligence and undertaking boundary delimitations.

His next appointment was as an instructor at the School of Military Engineering at Chatham from February to June 1882. He was then dispatched to Egypt to take command of the intelligence department in the country, serving throughout the Anglo-Egyptian War of 1882. In November 1887 Ardagh returned to employment in the IB at DMI Brackenbury’s request.³⁰² The former’s proven intellectual abilities recommended him to the latter. Ardagh was charged to head the Mobilisation Sub-Division. In 1888 he was appointed the Private Secretary to the Viceroy of India Lord Lansdowne.³⁰³ The latter held the positions of Secretary of State for War and Foreign Secretary during Ardagh’s tenure as DMI. The previous association between the two served Ardagh well.

We do not know precisely why Ardagh was chosen to be DMI. An examination of his prior career, however, allows for a logical explanation. Ardagh had demonstrated himself as a courageous and efficient officer both in the field and in various extraneous duties. He had served across the Empire and was possessed of superior intellectual skills. Wolseley had become Commander-in-Chief the year before Ardagh became DMI. He too liked and respected Ardagh and assured him in

³⁰¹ Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College*, p.116

³⁰² Vetch, *Dictionary of National Biography*, pp.51-52. Brackenbury’s biographer Christopher Brice argues that Ardagh can be viewed as something of a protégé of Brackenbury’s. (Brice, *The Thinking Man’s Soldier*, pp.302-303)

³⁰³ Vetch, *Dictionary of National Biography*, p.52

1892 that he would succeed to the post of DMI when it was next open. Crucially as well, Ardagh's political connections were almost certainly decisive.³⁰⁴

There were striking similarities between the careers of John Ardagh and Henry Brackenbury. Both men had served in the field with distinction, had observed foreign armies, and had served in imperial postings. Both were also intellectual soldiers and were indicative of the type of officer who served within military intelligence during the nineteenth century. The other key similarity was their close connections with senior political figures. This ensured that the ID continued to grow in importance to government and state officials, allowing for an expansion in its remit, size, and prestige.

Under Ardagh the ID retained the same internal organisation. There was a slight increase in personnel, from thirty-nine to forty-five officers, by the end of the 1890s. Eighteen of these officers were employed for long tours. The ID remained under the direction of the Commander-in-Chief through the 1890s.³⁰⁵ The duties of the DMI were outlined in an Order in Council from 21 November 1895. He was charged to deal:

With the preparation of information relative to the military defence of the Empire and the strategical consideration of all schemes of defence; the collection and distribution of information relating to the military geography, resources, and armed forces of foreign countries, and of the British colonies and possessions; the compilation of maps; and the translation of foreign documents. He conducts correspondence with other departments of the State on defence questions, and is

³⁰⁴ The Countess of Malmesbury highlighted the excellent personal relations that Ardagh possessed with, "the superiors under whose orders he was about to work, and with his colleagues presiding over other departments in Pall Mall." (Malmesbury, *The Life of Major-General Sir John Ardagh*, p.276)

³⁰⁵ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.249

authorised to correspond semi-officially with them on all subjects connected with his duties.³⁰⁶

The collection of military information remained the primary purpose of the ID. This division of duties demonstrated how it acted as a quasi-General Staff organisation through the 1890s. It was preparing strategical defence schemes, a duty that was carried out by the General Staffs of other European nations. Interestingly, the communications between the DMI and the branches of government were officially sanctioned by the 1890s. While this communication was technically limited around defence issues, it signals how intimately involved the DMI had become with the civilian sphere. This ensured the continued influence of political and administrative culture upon the evolution of the ID.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

The mid-Victorians had sought to limit state intervention in peoples' lives. Yet, by the turn of the twentieth century, "practically everyone acknowledged not only that the powers of the State were broadening and deepening, but that the principle of [state] intervention was a readily acceptable fact of life."³⁰⁷ The 1890s represented the continued transition from the limited mid-Victorian state to the expanded Edwardian version. Not only was the state growing but ideas about governance were adapting to the new circumstances. There was a rise in the popularity of new theories and ideas, challenging the older principles of British state governance. The cumulative effect of these theories and ideas, as Angus Hawkins correctly argues, suggested "a more active role for 'the state', to erode local autonomy, to legitimate mandatory rather than permissive legislation, and to assert the responsibility of government, rather than private voluntary

³⁰⁶ 'Memorandum showing the duties of the various departments of the War Office, and the responsibility of its principal officers to the Secretary of State, under the Order in Council, dated 21st November, 1895', 'Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, 1903, D1300/5/6, Staffordshire Records Office (SRO), Stafford, UK, p.275

³⁰⁷ Harling, *Liberty and Authority in Victorian Britain*, p.48

association, for the morality of the public sphere.”³⁰⁸ As the role of the state continued to grow, so too did its information gathering, processing, and compiling mechanisms. The ID was an important part of these mechanisms. The growth in state bureaucracy aided its ability to gather, analyse, and collate information. This also ensured that the ID remained heavily influenced by political and administrative culture as it evolved.

Brackenbury had managed to secure a place for the DMI upon the CDC in the late 1880s. Its main role was to provide broad principles of imperial defence that could be implemented by the local colonial authorities. In another example of the desire for an integrated and centralised Empire, the CDC “strove for a degree of uniformity in imperial defence.”³⁰⁹ There were limitations, however, upon it. It had a relatively limited scope focused upon colonial defence. It was also “essentially little more than a departmental committee, and of a department not yet highly placed in the pecking order of British officialdom.” Yet, this did not totally diminish the work of the CDC. The Colonial Office found it an extremely useful organisation.³¹⁰

During his tenure as DMI Chapman remained heavily involved in the CDC’s work. The latter continued to provide an excellent stage for furthering civilian-military cooperation. The ID remained intimately involved in the ‘committee system’. This system provided an important outlet for it to engage in policymaking. Its increased involvement in this realm ensured that Britain’s burgeoning intelligence machinery continued to adopt state governance principles for their operation.

³⁰⁸ Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, pp.341-42, p.342

³⁰⁹ Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, p.20

³¹⁰ D.C. Gordon, ‘The Colonial Defence Committee and Imperial Collaboration: 1885-1904’, *Political Science Quarterly* 77/4 (December 1962) p.532

The ID continued to evolve as an inter-departmental structure through the 1890s. DMI Chapman's letter book, held in the National Archives, contains the correspondence that he sent through the first half of his tenure from 7 April 1891 to 31 October 1893. This letter book reveals how strong the principle of inter-departmentalism remained within the ID's culture. Chapman's correspondence demonstrates the continued significant level of communication between the ID and the Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices. 21% of the letters and memos contained in the letter book were either sent to or received from these departments. This communication revolved often around the sharing of information. In August 1891 Captain Francis Younghusband was on an expedition through the Pamir Mountains in Central Asia, mostly modern-day Tajikistan. During this expedition he encountered Russian troops who ordered him to vacate the area, as they claimed that it was Russian territory. This was known as the Pamir Incident and further strained Anglo-Russian tensions. To aid the Foreign Office, on 30 October 1891 Chapman sent the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a note on the question of the Pamirs. Chapman suggested that it should be shared with Britain's ambassador in Russia.³¹¹ On 29 October 1892 the ID and the Colonial Office cooperated extensively over the Sierra Leone boundary.³¹² The former remained a conduit for information and a fully inter-departmental structure.

The channels of information flowed in both directions. Chapman wrote to Adjutant-General Redvers Buller on 5 August 1893. He stated that, the Foreign Office had "information that makes them think it possible that the Russian Black Sea Fleet may attempt to pass the Dardanelles, and join the squadron that is to come from Armenia."³¹³ In another letter to Buller, on 11 October, Chapman passed on papers provided by the Colonial Office on disturbances that were

³¹¹ 'Chapman to Sir P. Currie (30 October 1891)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman, Director of Military Intelligence*, 7 April 1891-31 October 1893, WO 106/16, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.10

³¹² 'Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (29 October 1892)', *Ibid*, p.154

³¹³ 'Chapman to General Sir R. Buller (5 August 1893)', *Ibid*, p.419

occurring in Mashonaland, northern Zimbabwe today.³¹⁴ The ID clearly continued to act as a bridge between the civilian and military spheres. It was a channel for information, and it persevered in promoting principles of civilian governance into the latter sphere.

These exchanges were an example of how the ID followed the practices established by its predecessors. DMI Chapman was emphatic about the importance of inter-departmental communication. He wrote to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Philip Currie, on 9 June 1892. Chapman asserted that, “Of late [years?] the [ID] has developed, owing to communication with” the Foreign and Colonial Offices.³¹⁵ This is clear evidence of how close the ID had become to the great departments of state. It also reveals how entrenched the principle of inter-departmentalism had become.

DMI Ardagh reinforced the practice through the remainder of the 1890s. This is clear from the two volumes of DMI Ardagh’s Memoranda Book, held at the National Archives. They are a collection of all the memoranda that Ardagh produced and disseminated during his whole tenure as DMI. The volumes illustrate to which individuals and departments Ardagh’s various memoranda were sent to. It shows how, in practice, the ID facilitated the communication of information across the civilian and military spheres.

For instance, on 15 October 1896 Ardagh sent a memorandum he had prepared, entitled ‘The Eastern Question in 1896’, to Secretary of State for War Lansdowne, Commander-in-Chief Wolseley, the Director of Naval Intelligence (Head of the NID), Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Sir Thomas Sanderson, and the Lord President of the Council the Duke of

³¹⁴ ‘Chapman to General Sir R. Buller (11 October 1893)’, *Ibid*, p.473

³¹⁵ ‘Chapman to Sir P. Currie (9 June 1892)’, *Ibid*, p.62

Devonshire.³¹⁶ Another of Ardagh's memoranda, from 28 November 1898, was entitled 'Count Kapnist's Scheme for a Railway between Mediterranean and Persian Gulf - Tripoli to Koweit'. This was communicated to the Foreign Office, Secretary of State for War Lansdowne, the Indian IB, and the Secretary of the Political and Secret Department at the India Office, Sir William Lee-Warner.³¹⁷ This explicitly demonstrates the character of the ID in the 1890s. It was an organisation which continued to promote the exchange of information across the state's apparatus. Inter-departmentalism proved an enduring concept.

Throughout the 1890s, the civilian sphere remained eager to access the ID's information. The connection with the Foreign Office remained particularly strong. A further collection held in the British Library (reference DMO/14) contains a notable level of correspondence between DMI Chapman and senior officials at the Foreign Office. This correspondence stretches from September 1892 to August 1895, covering the bulk of the former's tenure at the ID. In September 1892 the Foreign Office opened the records held at the British Embassy in Peking, China to the ID's members, so that they could search for any information of use to them.³¹⁸ Writing to Brackenbury, on 15 June 1893, Chapman revealed how he had been "called in to a conference by Ld. Rosebery who was working with M. de Staal."³¹⁹ Rosebery was Foreign Secretary at the time while de Staal was the Russian ambassador to Britain. The two men were discussing continued tension between Russia and Britain over the Pamir Mountains. The inclusion of Chapman in this important parlay emphasised the increasing role of the DMI within government and policymaking circles, towards the end of the nineteenth century. This all

³¹⁶ 'The Eastern Question in 1896 (15 October 1896)', *Sir John Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. I (1896-1901)*, 1896-1901, PRO 30/40/14, Domestic Records of the Public Record Office, Gifts, Deposits, Notes and Transcripts, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

³¹⁷ 'Count Kapnist's Scheme for a Railway between Mediterranean and Persian Gulf - Tripoli to Koweit (28 November 1898)', *Sir John Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. II (1896-1901)*, Ibid

³¹⁸ 'Chapman to Major-General Barker (30 September 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, pp.107-8

³¹⁹ 'Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (15 June 1893)', Ibid, p.375

demonstrates the close working relationship between the ID and the Foreign Office.

Writing to Brackenbury, on 21 October 1892, Chapman detailed the work that the ID had undertaken over affairs in Egypt and Uganda. He boasted that “I think the Dept. has been really useful to the [Foreign Office].”³²⁰ This reveals how Chapman continued to develop the connection with the Foreign Office. This relationship saw the burgeoning of the ID’s analytical functions. On 7 October 1892 Chapman wrote to the Foreign Office providing analysis of information, forwarded by the latter, regarding alleged French naval plans.³²¹ Again, policymaking in the Foreign Office continued to affect the ID’s evolution.

While the ID continued to cooperate with the Foreign Office, Chapman also sought to enlist the support of the latter to strengthen the former’s position. In August 1892 Chapman sought to have Section F, the topographical department, of the ID enlarged and turned to the Foreign Office. Writing to Sir Philip Currie, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on 9 June, Chapman asked that, “If you feel able to say that Sect. F is useful to the [Foreign Office] and has at times turned out work that is of value, it would greatly strengthen my hands.”³²² Writing to Adjutant-General Buller, on 22 August, about the proposed increase Chapman pleaded that:

If you do not mind enquiring from Sir Philip Currie or from Mr Meade [Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies], I feel sure they will bear out the statement that the work we are able to do for them, is increasingly important. In putting the case before the

³²⁰ ‘Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (21 October 1892)’, *Ibid*, p.142

³²¹ ‘Chapman to Sir P. Currie (7 October 1892)’, *Ibid*, p.122

³²² ‘Chapman to Sir P. Currie (9 June 1892)’, *Ibid*, pp.61-62

Treasury their testimony might be held to justify the extra demand.³²³

This exchange is fascinating, because it shows how the ID turned to state and government officials for support rather than senior military figures. This illustrates how far it had been integrated into the civilian sphere. There is no record of whether the Foreign Office weighed in on the matter, but the proposal to increase Section F was adopted.³²⁴ This suggests that it did support Chapman. This all exhibits the existence of a special link between the ID and the Foreign Office, one that was growing in importance.

There is further evidence of this special relationship. Writing to Foreign Secretary Rosebery, on 1 August 1893, Chapman relayed his conversations with the First Lord of the Admiralty Lord Spencer and First Sea Lord Sir A. Hoskins. All three had agreed that there needed to be increases to the Mediterranean Fleet and to the garrison of Malta. Chapman then asked Rosebery that, “If you approve I would submit the proposal to Mr. Campbell-Bannerman [Secretary of State for War] in the usual way through the [Adjutant-General].”³²⁵ In another letter to the Foreign Office, on 10 August, Chapman stated that “I am anxious that Lord Rosebery should see 2 secret memoranda, I have sent to the [Adjutant-General] recently...I feel it important that I should have his support, in both matters.”³²⁶ These communications illustrate the increased role of the Foreign Office in the workings of the ID. The Foreign Secretary was gaining a role in the oversight of the latter’s operations, joining the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State for War.

³²³ ‘Chapman to General Sir R. Buller (22 August 1892)’, *Ibid*, p.77

³²⁴ ‘Chapman to Sir R. Thompson (31 July 1893)’, *Ibid*, pp.414-15

³²⁵ ‘Chapman to Lord Rosebery (1 Aug. 1893)’, *Ibid*, p.416

³²⁶ ‘Chapman to the Honourable F. Villiers (10 August 1893), *Ibid*, p.421

While it worked to aid the efforts of the Foreign Office, the ID also sought to utilise this connection to its advantage. Writing to Sir H.M. Durand, Foreign Secretary in India, on 28 October 1892 Chapman stated that:

I have recently put forward very strongly to the [Foreign Office] the necessity of improving our system of gaining intelligence in Russia more especially in the [Central Asian] provinces - My representations have resulted in this that the Embassy in [St Petersburg] recognize that the system on which we can gain information at the present time is altogether unsatisfactory.³²⁷

The relationship between the ID and the Foreign Office was symbiotic. The latter was willing to listen to the former's representations, unlike senior soldiers. Chapman continued to press this argument into 1893. On 28 March he told Currie that, with the Foreign Secretary's permission, Captain Grierson of the ID, "should make a tour in Russia enabling him to visit all the consuls & communicate to them the nature of Intelligence that may be useful."³²⁸ This venture went ahead but it resulted in serious friction between the ID and the Foreign Office.

While the Foreign Office had assented to Captain Grierson's visit, trouble was soon brewing. Through the late nineteenth century Britain's foreign policy elite remained "a small and self-contained establishment," which made for social exclusivity.³²⁹ This bred a desire to avoid outside interference in diplomatic matters by those who were considered to have inferior knowledge of diplomatic and international issues. Allied to this institutional bias, the diplomatic staffs of Britain's embassies and consular offices did not always appreciate ID officers who came on intelligence gathering missions. There was a fear that these assignments

³²⁷ 'Chapman to Sir H.M. Durand (28 October 1892)', Ibid, p.158

³²⁸ 'Chapman to Sir P. Currie (28 March 1893)', Ibid, p.331

³²⁹ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.7

could lead to serious diplomatic embarrassment if their efforts were uncovered.³³⁰ These strands coalesced during Grierson's mission.

Britain's ambassador to Russia, Sir Robert Morier, wrote angrily to the Foreign Office complaining about Grierson's high-handed nature. The latter allegedly demanded that consular reports be sent to the ID as well as to the Foreign Office. Adding more fuel to the fire was the discovery that two British officers were travelling through the Russian Empire without official passports. While the Embassy did not know about this the ID did. Chapman apologised to the Foreign Office. He related that, "there never was the slightest intention of calling for reports from consuls...it was proposed that Capt Grierson should visit the consuls, & communicate to them the value of the Intelligence that may be useful." He also apologised for failing to inform the Foreign Office and the Embassy of the two other officers.³³¹

The ID represented a kind of brotherhood through the 1890s. Edward Gleichen presented this in his memoirs. He described the ID as "a compact little body, working under the eye of that brilliant organiser and talented soldier, Major-General Henry Brackenbury."³³² This trend was continued by Chapman, Ardagh, and the succeeding intelligence heads. While these trends, along with general military-civilian tensions, in each department could cause friction, they provided the foundation for a fruitful relationship to develop between the ID and the Foreign Office. To borrow a phrase from sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, both institutions were operating within the 'field' of the British state. Both sought to secure and increase their autonomy and prestige, competing with other military

³³⁰ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.107

³³¹ 'Chapman to Sir P. Currie (14 June 1893)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, pp.371-72, p.372

³³² Gleichen, *A Guardsman's Memories*, p.140

and civilian departments. A close working relationship afforded both the ID and the Foreign Office the opportunity to compete more efficiently in this 'field'.

While the relationship with the Foreign Office was strengthening, the ID was becoming conversely more isolated from its parent department the War Office. Brackenbury's good working relationship with Secretary of State for War Stanhope did not survive the transition of DMIs. Chapman wrote to Lord Roberts, on 25 August 1892, to complain about the ambivalence of Gladstone's government to military reform. He stated that "I am glad that Mr Stanhope has gone as in his time it was impossible to hope for such large questions being considered."³³³ Chapman complained later in the year to Brackenbury, on 8 September, about the inertia within the War Office.³³⁴ He was also quite damning about Stanhope's successor as Secretary of State for War, Henry Campbell-Bannerman.³³⁵

As the ID grew closer to the other important state offices, it drifted conversely further from its two parent structures the War Office and the Army. This demonstrates that, although the ID received greater support and recognition from the civilian departments, this was not a universal trend. State and government officials could be just as blind to the ID's utility as their military counterparts. Ironically, but perhaps understandably, it was the state officials with a longer history of interacting with soldiers who were often the most apathetic to Britain's foreign intelligence organisations.

The trends that had begun in the ID under Brackenbury, and developed under Chapman, were amalgamated during DMI Ardagh's tenure. Under his directorship the ID's links with the civilian sphere were strengthened. Most of the memoranda produced by the ID under Ardagh were sent to the Foreign, Colonial,

³³³ 'Chapman to Lord Roberts (25 August 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.82

³³⁴ 'Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (8 September 1892)', *Ibid*, p.86

³³⁵ 'Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (24 November 1892)', *Ibid*, p.211

and India Offices, or they at least received copies. Many copies were also sent to Prime Minister Salisbury. Clearly Ardagh had heeded Brackenbury's advice and was determined to keep other major Whitehall departments informed of the ID's efforts and analysis. It demonstrates how the latter retained its function as an important advisory body to policymakers and state officials, especially within the realms of foreign and imperial policy.

Ardagh shared a particular commonality of view with Secretary of State for War Lansdowne. Writing to the former, on 24 September 1896, Lansdowne stated that he shared Ardagh's opinion over the perilous situation at Constantinople due to Britain's lack of allies. He stated that, "It would not be amiss if you were to put into shape for the cabinet your ideas as to [profile?] naval & military policy in the Mediterranean in view of the now developing situation at Constantinople."³³⁶ This illustrates that Ardagh was operating within the highest levels of state governance. Where Brackenbury had created papers for the Cabinet on his own initiative, Ardagh was tasked with this responsibility by a Cabinet Minister.

Many of Ardagh's memoranda were sent to the Foreign Office, specifically to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Thomas Sanderson (1894-1906). In another example of the fluidity that has characterised British governance, the Permanent Under-Secretary's position had never been fully defined since its creation along with the Foreign Office in 1782. This allowed scope for the occupant of the position, much as with the DMI, to define their own roles. In the years after the creation of the position the Permanent Under-Secretary became the "Foreign Secretary's chief foreign policy adviser."³³⁷ While other men

³³⁶ 'Lord Lansdowne to Ardagh (24 September 1896)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, PRO 30/40/2, NAUK, pp.2-3, p.6

³³⁷ Keith Neilson and Thomas Otte argued that a confluence of internal and external factors helped shape the office. These included: the personalities of the occupants, the growing professionalisation of ministerial bureaucracy in the nineteenth century, the increasing competitiveness of international politics, and the growth in complexity of communications technology. (K. Neilson & T. Otte, *The Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1854-1946* (New York: Routledge, 2009) p.2)

had reached the position through personal connections, Sanderson's appointment was largely down to the recognition of Lord Salisbury.

Prime Minister Salisbury retained his former position as Foreign Secretary until 1900. Salisbury appreciated Sanderson's ability, enabling the latter to rise to the role of Permanent Under-Secretary. As two men who had reached their respective positions as much through their own merit as through patronage, Ardagh and Sanderson shared commonalities in their background and views. This undoubtedly helped to facilitate communication between the two and, therefore, their respective institutions. One important similarity that the two men shared was their membership of the historic Athenaeum Club.

The early to mid-Victorian era has been described as an era of 'club government'.³³⁸ The social clubs were "inherently social institutions in which membership around a common interest or group is usually paid for by subscription." The Athenaeum was, and remains, one of London's elite social clubs.³³⁹ While this thesis is concerned with the period after the height of 'club government', the major clubs, such as the Athenaeum, retained their importance. Club membership "was an unequivocal sign of social status." This would have been extremely important to both Ardagh and Sanderson, neither of whom was from a wealthy family. The Athenaeum Club was founded in 1824 and is situated in the heart of London in Pall Mall. Its membership was strict requiring "specific eminence in or patronage of the arts, science, politics, or religion."³⁴⁰ Ardagh and Sanderson were both members while they served as DMI and Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs respectively. Chapman was also a member of the Club. There can be no doubt that both Ardagh and Sanderson would have

³³⁸ Norman Gash contended that, between the two Reform Acts of 1832 and 1867, the political club was the center of political party organisation, it was "the characteristic feature of early Victorian politics." (N. Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel: A study in the Technique of Parliamentary Representation 1830-1850* (Hassocks: The Harvester Press, 1977) p.393, p.394)

³³⁹ S.A. Thevoz, *Club Government. How the Early Victorian World was Ruled from London Clubs* (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2018) p.3

³⁴⁰ A. Milne-Smith, *London Clubland: A Cultural History of Gender and Class in Late Victorian Britain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) p.6, p.25, p.45

met and socialised in the Athenaeum at least occasionally. This helps to explain the positive working relationship between the two. Their correspondence will be examined in the section on involvement in policymaking. This is evidence of the ‘village market’ model of British governance in this period, with its focus on a mix of formal and informal connections.

Ardagh’s agreeability to state and government officials was demonstrated during the First Hague Conference between 18 May to 29 July 1899. During this event disarmament, the international law of war, the principles of international arbitration, and the extension of the 1864 Geneva Convention were all considered.³⁴¹ The co-representatives of the British delegation were Ambassador to the United States Sir Julian Pauncefote, and Minister to the Netherlands Sir Henry Howard. Ardagh was appointed the technical advisor to the delegation on 13 May 1899.³⁴² Several important governmental figures supported his selection including Prime Minister Salisbury.³⁴³ Pauncefote and Howard found Ardagh’s counsel of the utmost help during the Convention. Salisbury sent his personal thanks to the latter for his work.³⁴⁴

While he proved a boon to the British delegation, the absence of the DMI from his primary duties was a dangerous practice. Commander-in-Chief Wolseley cautioned that Ardagh could not be spared from the ID at the time, as tensions continued to ratchet up in South Africa, but to no avail.³⁴⁵ This was not the only

³⁴¹ As Maartje Abbenhuis rightly states, that “the delegations were willing to negotiate these issues, most of which were key to their states’ sovereignty and security, is remarkable. Even more remarkably, the conference did not end in a stalemate or ignominy.” (M. Abbenhuis, ‘Unbridle Promise? The Hague’s peace conferences and their legacies’ in M. Abbenhuis, C.E. Barber & A.R. Higgins (eds.), *War, Peace and International Order? The Legacies of the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907* (London: Routledge, 2017) p.1)

³⁴² ‘Foreign Office to Ardagh (13 May 1899)’, *Miscellaneous Correspondence, Private and Official*, PRO 30/40/3, Domestic Records of the Public Record Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

³⁴³ ‘The Hon. Eric Barrington to Sir Charles Welby (17 March 1899)’ in ‘Extracts relating to Sir J. Ardagh’s employment at the Peace Conference’, *Miscellaneous Papers*, PRO 30/40/4, NAUK, p.1

³⁴⁴ ‘Sir J. Pauncefote and Sir H. Howard to the Marquess of Salisbury (31 July 1899)’, ‘Foreign Office to War Office (9 Aug 1899)’, *Ibid*, p.3, pp.3-4

³⁴⁵ ‘Lord Wolseley to Permanent Under-Secretary (21 March 1899)’, *Ibid*, p.1

time that Ardagh was called away from his duties. His “universal ‘acceptability’”³⁴⁶ proved to be both a benefit and a detriment.

The Conference at the Hague signifies that, by Ardagh’s tenure, the DMI possessed a significant level of prestige and respect within government circles. The ID’s work, however, was not fully recognised by state and government officials. They were willing to stack the DMI’s workload with extra duties outside his normal purview.³⁴⁷ Yet, by the end of the nineteenth century the ID was rooted firmly within the civilian sphere. It had become an important tool in the practice of state governance.

The tenets of state governance had taken deep root within a relatively short space of time. The ID built upon the foundations of the IB and continued to further the governance practices of cooperation and consensus. British political and administrative culture were rapidly absorbed by Britain’s foreign intelligence institutions. It displays the predominance of political and administrative culture upon the evolutionary process. Even as it expanded in size and remit the ID retained its inter-departmental character. This period also witnessed its continued incorporation into the civilian sphere. Departmental links were reinforced, while state and government officials continued to turn to the ID for assistance. This was facilitated by the latter’s inter-departmental functions denoting the importance of political and administrative culture. Yet, as it held fast to governance principles, senior soldiers remained steadfast in their opposition.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

³⁴⁶ Gudgin, *Military Intelligence: The British Story*, p.31

³⁴⁷ Ardagh once told Sir James Edmonds that he kept up to date with current affairs by, “persistent dining out in London.” His extraordinary workload provided little time for him to devote energy to this task outside of these bounds. (Edmonds, *Memoirs of Sir James Edmonds*, p.227)

An important change in military leadership occurred in November 1895. The Duke of Cambridge was replaced as Commander-in-Chief by his old adversary Sir Garnet Wolseley. The latter's reputation had been tarnished somewhat by his failure to relieve the siege of Khartoum from 1884 to 1885, but he remained one of Britain's preeminent soldiers. Wolseley was dismayed to find that the authority of the Commander-in-Chief had been much diminished upon his elevation to the post. His attempts to exert more authority led to clashes with Secretary of State for War Lansdowne.³⁴⁸

Wolseley had once been a committed reformer. His ardour for reform, however, had dampened by the 1890s. A change in senior leadership thus failed to break the conservative nature of British military culture, which continued to impede the efforts of the ID. Added to this the breakdown in civil-military relations in the 1890s offered a distinct challenge. This inhibited the attempts of the ID to act as a bridge between the civilian and military spheres.

With his extended service in the Indian Army, Edward Chapman faced a unique problem as intelligence head: tension between the Home and Indian Armies. Soldiers in the Home Army often looked down upon their Indian Army counterparts. Chapman, in his relations with other members of the Army's hierarchy, would suffer because of this tension. Lord Roberts was apparently instrumental in securing Chapman's appointment as DMI. He wanted someone who would promote Indian interests to the British government.³⁴⁹ Chapman did endorse Roberts's opinions on the defence of India from Russian aggression:

I am still of opinion that in order to meet Russia in Afghanistan, and to fulfil our obligations towards that

³⁴⁸ Hamer provided a thorough explanation of the core of the Wolseley-Lansdowne dispute. He rightly argued that the dispute revolved around, "the meaning of the terms 'limited responsibility' and 'general supervision'." Wolseley was outraged that he was "held responsible for the efficiency of the military departments without having full authority over them." (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.170)

³⁴⁹ Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.196. Gleichen also proclaimed the role of Roberts in securing Chapman's appointment. (Gleichen, *A Guardsman's Memories*, p.177)

country, we must be prepared to assume the offensive, and must place our reliance upon a field army rather than upon anything else.³⁵⁰

Pointing to minutes prepared by Roberts, Chapman argued that they “clearly show that an increase to the European Establishment of the Indian Army is absolutely necessary.” He claimed that the reinforcement of India was “a duty which may not be neglected.”³⁵¹ Chapman thus retained sympathies for the Indian Army and his former superior Roberts. This opinion was not popular with many senior Home Army soldiers. For instance, Adjutant-General Buller argued against a focus on Indian defence.³⁵² This shows the differences in strategical thought that often lay between the Home and Indian armies. This dispute illuminates how inter-Army tensions could influence the evolution of the ID. Chapman was an outsider and his views were not always accepted by the Home Army’s leadership. This, in turn, meant that the ID found its influence slightly diminished. This dip was only slight and should not be overexaggerated. Yet, it reveals the continued power of British military culture to disrupt the development of foreign intelligence. This was not an isolated example either.

DMI Chapman encountered problems with other senior soldiers revealing an under-appreciation, or worse an active hostility, towards the ID. Firstly, Chapman ran into problems with the military attaché in Paris, Colonel R.H.J. Talbot. In July 1892, after the French Army’s manoeuvres the previous year, Talbot suggested to Chapman that intelligence officers attending future manoeuvres should send their reports through the attaché. This would give the latter a chance to comment upon them. Chapman replied courteously, on 25 July, but pointed out that:

³⁵⁰ ‘Memorandum from DMI Chapman to Adjutant-General (12 January 1892)’, *Capability of existing garrisons in India to meet possible Russian invasion of Afghanistan*, WO 32/6349, NAUK, p.2

³⁵¹ Ibid, p.3, p.4

³⁵² ‘Letter from Adjutant-General R. Buller to Permanent Under-Secretary (17 January 1892)’, Ibid, p.1

Your reports are made to the Ambassador, and although they come here, and are eventually at my disposal, I don't think I should be doing my work properly, if I did not try to supplement them in every way that is possible.³⁵³

Referencing what had occurred the previous year he stated that the:

whole point, last year, was to get out reliable notes, at the time the Press were publishing accounts of what had happened; if I had not done so, the world would have said I had learnt nothing until the [Foreign Office] or the newspapers had told me everything.³⁵⁴

While in the future he promised to keep Talbot informed, Chapman asserted that:

I must reserve to myself the right to publish or not any information we get hold of, and to choose my time for publishing, as often a thing falls flat if it is a day or two after the Press.³⁵⁵

The system of linking the ID with the attachés, recommended by the Northbrook Committee in 1871, had not been fully implemented, or had not engendered a significant level of cooperation between the two sides. Not only did this demonstrate further conflict between Chapman and other military figures, but it shows again the ID's relative isolation from other parts of the Army. As Chapman related it was the Foreign Office which was the conduit of much intelligence as opposed to any military department.

³⁵³ 'Chapman to Col. R.H.J. Talbot (25 July 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, pp.70-71

³⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p.71

³⁵⁵ *Ibid*

In a letter to Brackenbury, on 8 September 1892, Chapman complained that:

in regard to India, I apply to the [Adjutant-General] for permission to forward Admiralty decisions to the [India Office] I am nearly always met by an objection. It takes a long time to convince them that we are not usurping authority.³⁵⁶

This is a striking demonstration of the latent hostility held towards the ID by senior soldiers. According to Chapman there was an issue with military information being communicated to a civilian department of state. It illustrates how the ID's inter-departmental character, and its function as a conduit of information across the civil-military divide, continued to provoke renewed apathy and hostility from military leaders. Lead by an outsider the ID became even more isolated from the Army.

Problems between Chapman and the Adjutant-General continued through the 1890s. The Mobilisation Division had previously been an important constituent of the ID, until its separation in February 1888. A few years later the relationship between the two organisations had deteriorated. By 1892 Coleridge Grove was Head of the Mobilisation Division. Writing to Brackenbury, on 2 December 1892, Chapman vented further his frustrations. He complained that, since Brackenbury had left the ID, "the whole question of [mobilisation] has been taken over by [the Adjutant-General] - I have purposefully refrained from giving any encouragement to the thought that we were jealous of what they were doing."³⁵⁷ Chapman continued that:

I am very sorry that Grove has thought fit to keep everything as secret from this office...I have never been consulted regarding the scheme of [mobilisation] for

³⁵⁶ 'Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (8 September 1892)', Ibid, p.5

³⁵⁷ 'Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (2 December 1892)', Ibid, pp.223-24

Home Defence, & have never heard of anything
important until it was actually carried out.³⁵⁸

This passage highlights the strain that existed between Chapman and Buller, alongside the members of the latter's department. It evidences the isolation of the ID and its chief. It also reveals a divergence in strategic opinion between the DMI and the Adjutant-General. Chapman preferred to channel funds to equipping field armies for service at home and abroad rather than spending money on fortifications to defend the British Isles, favoured by other senior soldiers and the War Office.³⁵⁹ The fact that Chapman was effectively muzzled in strategical debates undoubtedly exacerbated the tension between him and Buller. It again shows the separation of the ID.

Perhaps the most striking example of the troubled relationship between the ID and the Army's leaders came in early 1892. The military attaché at St. Petersburg needed to be replaced in January of that year. Chapman proposed a potential candidate in Major Wolfe Murray. The latter had worked at the ID as the Head of Section D with responsibility for gathering information on Russia. While he was qualified for the posting there was one glaring issue. He was, by Victorian army officer standards, a relatively poor man. Therefore, he could not afford a posting that required a substantial private income due to its social aspects. Chapman wrote to the Foreign Office, on 31 January 1892, asking if they would provide Murray with an additional income to allow him to take the posting.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁸ Ibid, p.224

³⁵⁹ John Gooch argues, however, that Chapman, "was never consulted over schemes of mobilization for home defence [and] had little chance to put over this view." (J. Gooch, *The Plans of War: The General Staff and British Military Strategy, c.1900-1916* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974) p.14)

³⁶⁰ 'Chapman to Mr. F. Villiers (13 January 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, pp.22-23

Chapman also wrote to the Military Secretary, who was responsible for personnel management in the Home Army, recommending Major Murray for the posting.³⁶¹

Despite the ID's preference, the Commander-in-Chief the Duke of Cambridge selected a Colonel Gerard to occupy the posting in Russia, as he believed that the position "seemed to require a man of higher rank and social standing."³⁶² Gerard held the post of military attaché for a year before handing in his resignation in February 1893. Chapman promoted Captain W.H. Waters as successor, again seeking the support of key military and civilian figures.³⁶³ It appeared, however, that the Duke would again choose another candidate based purely on seniority, even when the man could not speak Russian.³⁶⁴ Yet, this time the ID's arguments prevailed and Waters was assigned to the posting.

This story illustrates how senior military personnel ignored the ID's advice. Even with Brackenbury's departure the Duke of Cambridge was not converted to utility of an intelligence agency. This episode also illuminates the position that the ID held within the state's apparatus. In promoting Murray and Waters Chapman turned to figures in both the Army and the government. Again, its position as a bridge between the civilian and military sphere incurred the displeasure of the Army's leaders.

The effort of the ID to get one of their own appointed to the position of military attaché in Russia demonstrated how the establishment remained at the forefront of the drive for professionalisation within the Army. Brackenbury had sought to fill the intelligence staff with officers of significant intellectual abilities. DMI Chapman was concerned with the same issue. In his letter book there is a fair

³⁶¹ 'Chapman to Lieutenant-General Sir G. Harman (13 January 1892)', *Ibid*, pp.23-24

³⁶² 'Colonel J.C. Dalton to Mr C.W.E. Eliot (22 February 1892)', *Ibid*, p.36

³⁶³ These included the Adjutant-General and Foreign Secretary Lord Rosebery.

³⁶⁴ 'Chapman to General Sir R. Buller (11 February 1893)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.295

amount of correspondence regarding vacancies in the ID. On 8 February 1892 an intelligence officer advised a Captain Reade that, “A good knowledge of German is essential for this place more than any other language.”³⁶⁵ In a similar vein, Chapman wrote to John Broderick, Financial Secretary at the War Office, on 30 March 1892 about a man named Western. Chapman wrote that “Western’s name is already noted very favourably in this office - His Staff College report is good and he is a superior linguist.” While there were no vacancies in the ID at the time, he reassured Broderick that “I will however remember Western.”³⁶⁶ This shows that Britain’s foreign intelligence institutions continued to prioritise the employment of soldiers with promising intellectual abilities.

As he sought to increase Section F of the ID Chapman stated to Buller, on 22 August 1892, that the “point of the thing is that we want correct work, and without responsible Officers we can hardly expect to get it.”³⁶⁷ The ID viewed itself as an intellectual elite within the Army. It was a concept that engendered further hostility and apathy from senior soldiers.

The professional and intellectual character of the ID, and its predecessors and successors, was replicated in France’s intelligence structures from 1870 to 1914. Bauer states that, in France, “Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, intelligence had begun to move from the personal to the professional.” As an example of this she highlights how, in early 1910, Captain Charles Lux was assigned chief of the intelligence bureau at Belfort near the Franco-German border. Belfort was close to a German Zeppelin factory in Friedrischafen and the French Army was eager to gain intelligence about German aviation efforts. Lux was an expert in military ballooning. Bauer asserts that his assignment to the Belfort bureau “was a sign of the professionalism of the intelligence industry.” Crucially, as well, Lux was an Army engineer, having graduated from the

³⁶⁵ ‘Colonel J.C. Dalton to Captain Reade (8 February 1892)’, Ibid, p.33

³⁶⁶ ‘Chapman to The Hon. W. John Broderick (30 March 1892)’, Ibid, p.48

³⁶⁷ ‘Chapman to General Sir R. Buller (22 Aug. 1892)’, Ibid, p.77 (emphasis in original)

prestigious engineering school the École Polytechnique.³⁶⁸ This demonstrates an important similarity between the intelligence officers of Britain and France in this period. Army engineers formed key components of both nations' intelligence machinery. Another similarity was with the Statistical Section, the espionage and counter-espionage section of the Deuxième Bureau. Piers Paul Read argues that "the need for secrecy led to an isolation of its personnel from the rest of the army, and created among [the Statistical Section] an elitist *esprit de corps*."³⁶⁹ This illustrates another significant similarity between British and French intelligence from 1870 to 1914. Intelligence agencies in both nations possessed distinct characteristics which marked them out from the rest of their respective Armies.

There remained, however, a stigma attached to working in the ID. Writing to Major-General Maitland, on 2 March 1893, Chapman stated that, "I have a great many of the [Royal Engineers] employed in my office & if ever it is regarded as a disadvantage to serve here, instead of elsewhere, I shall much regret it."³⁷⁰ The lure of serving in the field, prioritised within British military culture, continued to pose a serious detriment to the position and work of the ID.

Its relative isolation presented other challenges. The ID was often not informed of when Army officers were undertaking trips abroad. Chapman complained to Major-General Maitland, on 6 October 1893, that, "We have, just lately lost two good chances of getting information through our not receiving soon enough the notification of officer's leave."³⁷¹ Chapman wrote to Lieutenant-General R. Grant, the same day, in a similar vein and pleaded that:

³⁶⁸ Bauer, 'Marianne is Watching' (Ph.D. Thesis), p.106, p.263, p.264

³⁶⁹ P.P. Read, *The Dreyfus Affair. The Story of the Most Infamous Miscarriage of Justice in French History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013) p.53 (emphasis in original)

³⁷⁰ 'Chapman to Major-General Maitland (2 March 1893)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, pp.312-13

³⁷¹ 'Chapman to Major-General Maitland (6 October 1893)', *Ibid*, p.463

I should be very much obliged if you could kindly arrange to have the notifications of officers' leave sent us sooner. We lose many a chance of employing good men, to get us information, through our not receiving the notifications in time to make use of them.³⁷²

Unless specifically asked to do so, officers would not go out of their way to help the ID.

Through the 1890s, the ID continued to work towards improving inter-service relations. The problem of inter-service cooperation was one that bedevilled successive governments in the late Victorian era. Hamer succinctly summarised the issue. The Royal Navy did not “consult the army in its schemes nor did the military consider the navy in its plans. Each service was content to go its own way. Nor did the Cabinet serve to co-ordinate these schemes on a higher level.” Hamer blamed this trend on the “departmental nature of the British government,” which encouraged departments and institutions to develop autonomously.³⁷³ While it was departmental in nature, he fails to mention that the British system of state governance laid stress on the importance of communication, consensus, and inter-departmentalism. The ID offered a solution to the problem of inter-service cooperation. It would be a major tool in the attempt to secure cooperation between the two services.

In a memorandum, from 29 November 1893, Chapman stated that, the “Director of Naval Intelligence is in complete agreement with me as to the necessity of establishing some system under which we may gain reliable information from France.”³⁷⁴ This demonstrates the concurrent issues that affected both structures. It also reveals the communication that existed between

³⁷² ‘Chapman to Lieutenant-General R. Grant (6 October 1893)’, Ibid, p.464

³⁷³ Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.72

³⁷⁴ ‘Secret: The obtaining of reliable information from France, Major-General E. Chapman (29th November 1893)’, *Correspondence with the DMI (War Office) about France*, 1893, HD 3/91, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.4

the ID and the NID. Chapman's correspondence, from 1891 to 1893, revealed a close working relationship between the DMI and the Director of Naval Intelligence (DNI). For instance, on 12 October 1892 he sent a memorandum received from the Indian IB to the DNI.³⁷⁵ Simultaneously, Chapman asked other state officials to supply information in their possession to the NID. On 7 October 1892, Chapman asked Sir Thomas Sanderson at the Foreign Office to pass along information, relating to the French Atlantic naval squadron, to the NID.³⁷⁶

Alongside information sharing Chapman and Bridge jointly analysed information together, including that received from the Indian IB.³⁷⁷ The DMI and the DNI also continued to devise strategy together into 1893.³⁷⁸ This shows how the ID transcended the military-naval divide, functioned as an inter-departmental body, and continued to espouse civilian governance principles into the military sphere. The relationship between the ID and the NID was the first step on the path to a unified defensive policy. This would reach its fruition in the years before the First World War.

DMI John Ardagh also kept close contact with the NID. There was a compatibility of strategic views between Ardagh and DNI Sir Lewis Beaumont. On 13 October 1896, the two discussed the Turkish Straits and the situation in the Mediterranean. Beaumont declared that "the necessity for a fair margin of strength in our Mediterranean forces over and above the minimum I am in complete agreement & cannot but rejoice that it should have been so well stated." He also declared his concurrence with Ardagh's views over Britain's

³⁷⁵ 'Chapman to Admiral Bridge (12 October 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.127

³⁷⁶ 'Chapman to Sir T. Sanderson (Foreign Office) (7 October 1892)', *Ibid*, p.122

³⁷⁷ 'Chapman to Colonel E.R. Elles (8 December 1892)', *Ibid*, pp.234-35

³⁷⁸ 'Chapman to the Hon. F. Villiers (29 July 1893)', *Ibid*, p.413

situation in Egypt.³⁷⁹ This letter highlights the continued collaboration between the ID and the NID through the late 1890s.

October 1896 was a time of close cooperation between Ardagh and Beaumont. In this month there was another review of Britain's position at the Turkish Straits. 1895 to 1896 had seen several high-profile foreign policy failures for Britain's foreign policymakers. Britain's position at Constantinople was fragile weakening its ability to defend the Straits from Russian aggression.³⁸⁰ On 2 October 1896 Beaumont wrote to Ardagh stating that, "I have carefully read your paper and agree with you throughout - I think the way you have dealt with the idea of forcing the Dardanelles is conclusive."³⁸¹ The collaboration between the two persisted through the late 1890s. Through August to October 1898 Ardagh discussed the vulnerability of Gibraltar to new Spanish works in a series of memoranda. Ardagh asserted that he had "spoken to his naval colleague on the subject, and finds that his views, given unofficially, are in substantial accord with" Ardagh's own views.³⁸² This 'naval colleague' was DNI Beaumont. This evinces the continuance of close cooperation between the ID and the NID. The former continued to promote the concept of inter-departmentalism into the military sphere.

Unlike his predecessors, DMI Ardagh did not suffer from the same troubled relationship with the Army's leadership, at least for the first half of his tenure. Many of his memoranda were sent to the Commander-in-Chief and other senior military figures. This demonstrates a good level of connectivity between the ID

³⁷⁹ 'DNI Sir Lewis Beaumont to Ardagh (13 Oct 1896)', *Ibid*, pp.2-3, p.4

³⁸⁰ These included: Prime Minister Salisbury's failure to enlist the cooperation of the other Powers in stopping the Armenian massacres; a failure of talks between Russia and Britain; and Russia gaining predominant influence in Bulgaria. (Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.159)

³⁸¹ 'DNI Sir Lewis Beaumont to Ardagh (2 Oct 1896)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, PRO 30/40/2, NAUK, p.1 (emphasis in original)

³⁸² 'Spanish works in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar (5 memos & letters) ((1) 18 Aug. 1898 (2) 24 Aug. 1898 (3) 17 Sept. 1898 (4) 19 Oct. 1898 (5) 22 Oct. 1898)', *Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. II*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK, pp.3-4

and other parts of the Army's hierarchy. Although not officially a member of the 'Wolseley ring', Ardagh was held in high esteem by Wolseley.³⁸³ The latter's ascension to the post of Commander-in-Chief on 1 November 1895, shortly before Ardagh's appointment as DMI, likely helped to ease relations with other senior military figures. Wolseley had showed concern for the IB while he had been Adjutant-General in the 1880s.³⁸⁴ This held out the possibility that the ID would rise in importance within the Army. Yet, this bonhomie did not last. As events sped towards the outbreak of the Second Boer War in late 1899, Ardagh's relations with Wolseley proved to be fraught. As the next chapter will show, the same issues relating to Britain's military leaders and culture continued to affect the ID's evolution under Ardagh's leadership.

DMI Chapman's outsider status did nothing to ease the relationship between the ID and the Army's leadership. Senior military figures continued to view Britain's foreign intelligence organisations with apathy and animosity. The ID struggled to make its voice heard and have its opinions respected. Yet, under Chapman it continued to act as a bastion of professionalism within the Army. British military culture, however, remained a deterrent to service as an intelligence officer. Chapman persevered in creating a strong working relationship with the NID. The cooperation between the two agencies flourished through the 1890s. The ID continued to espouse principles of civilian governance into the military sphere through this collaboration. DMI Ardagh continued this trend of cooperation. He was also able to establish a better working relationship with senior military figures. This was, however, not to last. Senior soldiers did not yet fully appreciate the services of the ID.

Involvement in Policymaking

³⁸³ Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier*, p.172

³⁸⁴ Maurice & Arthur, *The Life of Lord Wolseley*, p.223

In his study of the 'Foreign Office mind', Thomas Otte claims that the 1890s "turned out to be a period of flux, setting in motion the transformation of British foreign policy."³⁸⁵ This decade witnessed a multitude of crises and events that stirred the worries of Britain's foreign policymakers. These included: continuing Russian threats in Central Asia and at Constantinople; concerns over the disintegration of China; colonial disputes; and threats to Britain's hold over Egypt. By far the most worrying development was the formation of the Franco-Russian Alliance on 4 January 1894. This coalition grew out of a combination of strategic, military, diplomatic, economic, and social factors.³⁸⁶ France and Russia had long been viewed as Britain's natural enemies. The combination of these two powers presented an alarming challenge to Britain's global position.

Britain's relations with Germany through the 1890s saw a blend of both cooperation and antagonism. Despite the threat of the Franco-Russian Alliance, British foreign policymakers "remained singularly unwilling to commit themselves to Germany."³⁸⁷ Faced with potential hostility from three great powers, Britain's policymakers conducted foreign policy from a position of relative weakness through much of this period. Without allies they were often forced to compromise during colonial and international negotiations.³⁸⁸ The need for the ID's advice in foreign and imperial policy discussions grew through the 1890s.

DMI Chapman tried, like Brackenbury, to influence foreign policymaking. On 22 December 1891 he created a memorandum on the proposed strength of the British Army. He stressed that there needed to be a large component ready for service on the European continent. For Chapman this expeditionary force would likely be directed against France. To support his argument he argued that, in "the

³⁸⁵ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.193

³⁸⁶ W.Z. Silverman, 'Of Traiteurs and Tsars: Potel et Chabot and the Franco-Russian Alliance', *Historical Reflections* 44/3 (December 2018) p.96

³⁸⁷ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.150

³⁸⁸ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.228. A combination of German, French, and Russian pressure forced Britain to accept unfavourable compromises over Siam in 1893, the Egyptian-Congo border in 1894, and in China in 1895. (Ibid, pp.228-229)

event of hostilities between this country and France, the alliance of Germany, with its more than respectable fleet, might be purchased by the existence of a British field army.” He claimed that this force “without so much as quitting our shores, would contain a very much larger French force on the French coast...and would enable Germany to strike a decided blow.”³⁸⁹

The subtext of this memorandum was that the government needed to strive for closer ties with Germany. This would provide an ally to help secure British interests. There were senior state figures who were receptive to this idea. For instance, Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies (1895-1903), sought to create an Anglo-German alliance in the late 1890s. Chapman, however, was unable to persuade the government to adopt his logic. This demonstrates again the limits of the DMI’s influence. Chapman, as with his predecessor, was not all powerful in foreign policy formation. Yet, it is fascinating to witness the DMI try and influence foreign policy and that he felt able to do so. It also reveals the continued expanded involvement of the ID within policymaking, despite its limited influence.

Chapman held strong views over foreign policy. In a letter to Lord Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief in India, from 8 September 1892, he outlined his foreign policy opinions. Looking ahead to 1893 Chapman warned Roberts that:

I do not think that Russia will ever be in a more prepared condition than she will be in the Spring of 1893, not that she wishes for war, but that she may be compelled to choose it in order to get rid of her internal troubles. France on the other hand intends to go to war, whenever the weakness of Germany gives her an opportunity and

³⁸⁹ ‘Memorandum by DMI Chapman (22 December 1891)’, *Capability of existing garrisons in India to meet possible Russian invasion of Afghanistan*, WO 32/6349, NAUK, p.1

she will not let us alone if her alliance with Russia continues.³⁹⁰

This signifies that Chapman shared the opinions of other state and government officials over the, highly questionable and ultimately wrong, threat of the Franco-Russian Alliance. His letter highlighted too the specific concern he felt for the situation in the Mediterranean. He told Roberts that:

so powerful is the French Fleet in the present day, I doubt if we may move a man, in the Mediterranean...The Black Sea is virtually closed to us, and in attempting to force an entrance of the Dardanelles, we should run the risk of losing ships at the commencement of a war: whereas we need everyone we possess to hold our own against France.³⁹¹

Chapman had already presented his opinion on the situation in the Mediterranean to senior government ministers earlier that year.

In a joint memorandum with DNI Bridge, from 18 March 1892, Chapman painted a depressing picture of the situation in the Mediterranean for Britain due to the Franco-Russian Alliance. The memorandum dealt with the question of Russia seizing the Turkish Straits via a 'coup de main' operation. Their major conclusion was that "Great Britain, unsupported, cannot prevent the *coup de main* without endangering her general naval position." The primary reason for this, they argued, was because the presence of the French Mediterranean fleet made any attempt to block Russia at the Straits far too risky. The British fleet could not hope to combat both nations' navies with any reasonable chance of success.³⁹²

³⁹⁰ 'Chapman to Lord Roberts (8 September 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.86

³⁹¹ Ibid

³⁹² 'Joint Report by the Directors of Naval and Military Intelligence (18 March 1892)'. Original in NAUK, CAB 37/31/10. Quoted from C.J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists: British Foreign Policy*

This memorandum is another demonstration of the close cooperation between the ID and the NID in the 1890s. It exhibited many of the same concerns that Chapman voiced to Roberts later in the year. It was an attempt to try and force serious re-evaluations of British foreign policy in the Mediterranean. Yet, Prime Minister Salisbury did not accept these conclusions in their entirety.³⁹³ For a start, he did not believe the question to be urgent. He claimed that:

as far as it is possible to judge, a Russian descent is not imminent at present. They are not prepared for a general war, their fleet is not complete, their military armament is very imperfect, and their finance is in disorder.³⁹⁴

He was prepared to admit that, if the memorandum's conclusions were correct, two important questions had to be addressed by British policymakers. The first was:

whether any advantage arises from keeping a fleet in the Mediterranean at all. The main object of our policy is declared to be entirely out of our reach, and that even a movement to attain it would be full of danger.³⁹⁵

The second question was that:

our foreign policy requires to be speedily and avowedly revised. At present, it is supposed that the fall of Constantinople will be a great defeat for England. That

1878-1902 volume two: the documents (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) p.90 (emphasis in original)

³⁹³ Writing to Brackenbury Chapman claimed that Salisbury "did not like it at all." ('Chapman to Lieutenant-General Henry Brackenbury (8 September 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.86)

³⁹⁴ 'Memorandum by Salisbury 4 June in comment on Joint Report of D.M.I. and D.N.I., 18 March 1892'. Original in NAUK, CAB 37/31/10. Quoted from Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists volume two*, p.85

³⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p.87

defeat appears to be not a matter of speculation, but of absolute certainty.³⁹⁶

Salisbury asserted that, if this was the case, then the government needed to state publicly that it was no longer prepared to defend Constantinople, to preserve Britain's international reputation.³⁹⁷

The question of Constantinople's defence was an issue that vexed Britain's foreign policymakers in the late nineteenth century. Salisbury declared that the "protection of Constantinople from Russian conquest has been the turning point of the policy of Great Britain for at least forty years...*It is our principal, if not our only, interest in the Mediterranean Sea.*"³⁹⁸ Salisbury's rejection of Chapman's and Bridge's memorandum provides evidence in favour of the continued importance of Constantinople to British foreign policy. While Chapman and Bridge may have disagreed with this focus, it is likely that their memorandum was intended to try and force an increase in military and naval spending.

It is clear that, by the 1890s, the ID did not possess overriding influence over the formulation of British policy. Yet, the DMI possessed the ability to force re-evaluations of British foreign policy. This illustrates the expanded involvement of the ID within policymaking and how it helped to shape official debates, even if intelligence officers could not determine the outcome. The memorandum by

³⁹⁶ Ibid

³⁹⁷ Ibid

³⁹⁸ K.M. Wilson, *Empire and Continent: Studies in British Foreign Policy from the 1880s to the First World War* (London and New York: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1987) p.2 (emphasis in original). The question has prompted debate amongst scholars. It centers on the importance of the defence of Constantinople and the Turkish Straits to British policymakers in the 1890s. On one side, A.J.P. Taylor contended that, in the 1890s, "the British lost interest in the Straits as their position in Egypt became stronger." (A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954) p.368) This position is supported by John Gooch. He argues that, after Salisbury took office in 1886, there was "the assumption that Cairo might replace Constantinople as the bulwark against Russia." (Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.238) Keith Wilson posited a counter argument to this hypothesis. He asserted that "Constantinople was, and remained, the key not only to Egypt but to the Mediterranean as a whole" for Britain. Its defence remained the primary concern of Britain's Mediterranean policy. (Wilson, *Empire and Continent*, p.1)

Chapman and Bridge was published at the same time as some scholars posit a shift in British priorities in the Mediterranean. This is highly significant. It represents a major departure from the practices of the IB in the 1870s and early 1880s. By the 1890s the DMI possessed significant influence in the realm of foreign policymaking. Prompted by DMI Chapman foreign policymakers had to carefully reconsider the foundations of Britain's foreign policy. Chapman's attempts to influence foreign policy paved the way for his successor to make an even more forceful effort.

Alongside foreign policy, the ID remained involved in imperial policymaking through the 1890s. Prior to becoming DMI Chapman had spent his military service in India. Throughout his correspondence from 1891 to 1893 he displayed an interest and a concern for the security of India. In a letter to Sir Philip Currie, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Chapman spoke of the need for reliable intelligence to be delivered to the Indian government.³⁹⁹ He continued to concern himself with Indian defence. While India was his area of expertise, it was in Africa that pressing imperial problems arose during Chapman's tenure as DMI.⁴⁰⁰ The rising involvement with this continent signals the continued growth of the ID's imperial concerns. The 'Scramble for Africa' reached its zenith in these years, as the European empires sought to secure their influence over the continent.⁴⁰¹ Britain sought to safeguard its position in Egypt, eastern, western, and southern Africa. While they tried to ensure peaceful expansion, various conflagrations took place as the European empires sprawled across the continent. To this end, the ID expanded their efforts in Africa becoming more interconnected with imperial policymaking. This involvement propelled the ID further into the business of state governance.

³⁹⁹ 'Chapman to Sir P. Currie (26 September 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.98

⁴⁰⁰ Writing to Brackenbury, on 29 September 1892, Chapman related that, "there is altogether a great deal of work in connection with Africa." ('Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (29 September 1892)', *Ibid*, p.106)

⁴⁰¹ The 'Scramble' in the 1890s was defined by the races to claim paramountcy on the Nile, the Niger, and in South Africa. Thomas Pakenham states that this represented the final phase of the 'Scramble'. (T. Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa 1876-1912* (London: Abacus, 1992) p.488)

The intelligence relationship between Britain and India continued through the 1890s. An examination of Chapman's correspondence reveals the currents of this relationship. The ID received information and reports from the Indian IB and often passed these along to other state and military officials. For example, Chapman sent a memorandum from the Indian IB to DNI Bridge on 12 October 1892.⁴⁰² The most illuminating correspondence are Chapman's letters to Colonel Elles, Head of the Indian IB. This direct communication is an indication of the strong intelligence relationship between Britain and India. Chapman and Elles shared information directly. For instance, on 21 October 1892, the former relayed to the latter information that the ID had received about Russian intentions in the Pamirs mountains.⁴⁰³ Chapman valued this direct communication.⁴⁰⁴ This dialogue denotes the extensive growth of the ID's imperial connections. These were connections that were strengthened by the personage of Chapman. Having spent his entire military career there, Chapman had developed a strong attachment to India. He continued to correspond with important military figures in India throughout his tenure as DMI, especially Lord Roberts Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from November 1885 to April 1893.

The IB had begun to develop an imperial outlook in the 1870s. This had been continued by the ID through the 1880s, but it was under Chapman that this trend accelerated. From his position as DMI Chapman "urged a widening of Britain's strategic horizons."⁴⁰⁵ Chapman was mostly an advocate of the 'mischievous activity' school for defending India. This was a policy that prioritised using border tribes, Persia, and Afghanistan as "outworks in Indian defence." It

⁴⁰² 'Chapman to Admiral Bridge (12 October 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.127

⁴⁰³ 'Chapman to Colonel E.R. Elles (21 October 1892)', *Ibid*, pp.145-47

⁴⁰⁴ He told Brackenbury that, "I think we gain a great deal by having the Indian I.D. working so closely with us, and Elles' letters, to me, are very helpful." ('Chapman to Lieutenant-General H. Brackenbury (15 June 1893)', *Ibid*, p.376)

⁴⁰⁵ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.106. This admission by Fergusson somewhat undermines his criticisms of Chapman.

argued for an active defence beyond India's borders.⁴⁰⁶ In a memorandum, produced on 24 November 1891, Chapman claimed that:

It is a fixed principle that the Army in India should be maintained always on the war establishment, so as to be able to undertake offensive operations without waiting for reinforcements from home. It is right to maintain this principle.⁴⁰⁷

This illustrates his commitment to 'mischievous activity'. Chapman sought to help inculcate this school of thought within the British metropole. It is important to note, however, that he was not a zealot on the matter. Instead, he advocated a focused application of the school's principle. This is shown in a memorandum, on 6 April 1895, entitled a 'Memorandum on the Value of the Hindu Kush Frontier', part of the geographical border of the Indian colonial state. In this, rather than trying to push further across the Hindu Kush, Chapman argued that the Indian Army's focus should be on pushing towards Kabul and Kandahar to counter any Russian advance into Afghanistan.⁴⁰⁸ This exemplifies how Chapman wanted a specific and directed application of the principles of 'mischievous activity'.

In seeking to focus attention upon the needs of India, Chapman aided the growth of a general imperial outlook within the ID. This, in turn, enabled it to play a larger role in imperial policymaking and to exert further its influence. It also allowed it to contribute to another growing trend, the British metropole's exertion of supremacy over its imperial peripheries. The late nineteenth century was dominated by the inexorable spread of the European empires.⁴⁰⁹ For British

⁴⁰⁶ Greaves, *Persia and the Defence of India*, p.195

⁴⁰⁷ 'Memorandum by DMI Chapman (24 November 1891)', *Capability of existing garrisons in India to meet possible Russian invasion of Afghanistan*, WO 32/6349, NAUK, p.1

⁴⁰⁸ 'Memorandum on the Value of the Hindu Kush Frontier (6 April 1895)', 1895, DMO/14/41, The British Library (BL), London, UK

⁴⁰⁹ Hyam argues that all the "European powers were in the grip of the same worries about being left behind in the scramble for finite resources. None of them really wanted the costs of territorial control, but their mutual fears drive formal frontiers forward." (Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, p.202)

imperial policymakers, there was an anxiety about securing the territory they already had.⁴¹⁰ While part of gaining this prized security came from seizing more territory, it also came from creating a more centralised and integrated empire.⁴¹¹ The IB and the ID under Brackenbury's direction had taken some tentative steps in this direction. Chapman continued to steer Britain's intelligence organisations on this course. This was despite his firm commitment to Indian security.

Although he valued his communication with the Indian IB, Chapman was prepared to assert the dominance of the ID over the former. He received correspondence from Elles, in September 1892, in which the latter expressed his worry about the duplication of work by the ID and the Indian IB. While willing to come to an arrangement, Chapman replied, on 23 September, asserting that "Of course we will not do work twice over, but I must bring out things that relate to any country according as it is important."⁴¹² This demonstrates how Chapman sought to ensure the supremacy of the ID. Like Brackenbury Chapman complained of excessive exaggeration by the Indian IB. On 8 December 1892 he wrote to Colonel Elles over the security of Mauritius. Believing that Elles was overestimating French threats to the Colony Chapman wrote that, "There is of course in the [NID] and here a considerable amount of matter which enables us to view calmly many questions which are likely to appear disturbing to those who come across them for the first time."⁴¹³ While he may have had the interests of India close to his heart, Chapman subscribed to the belief that the British metropole must dictate policy and not be led by its imperial periphery.

⁴¹⁰ Pakenham posits this as a reason for British participation in the Scramble for Africa. (Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*, p.xxv)

⁴¹¹ Hyam argues that, for British policymakers, "perpetuating British world power into the twentieth century, where it might coexist equally with the great land-based powers, seemed to depend on making it more of an integrated empire." (Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, p.196)

⁴¹² 'Chapman to Colonel E.R. Elles (23 September 1892)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.91

⁴¹³ 'Chapman to Colonel E.R. Elles (8 December 1892)', *Ibid*, p.234

Chapman made a concerted effort to influence Indian border policy. This is revealed in a letter he wrote, on 4 January 1893, to Colonel Elles. In this, he presented his opinion over relations between India and Afghanistan. He bluntly stated that:

I wish clearly to lay down that we must not go to war with Afghanistan, if it can be avoided, & I think there is danger in, in any way, encouraging the belief that a war with the Amir is possible.⁴¹⁴

Since the mid-1880s there had been renewed concern over Russian incursions near northern Afghanistan and Persia.⁴¹⁵ Chapman, like Brackenbury, sought to curb any excessive estimates of Russian menace by Indian soldiers or officials. On 22 November 1895, Chapman co-signed a paper by Staff Captain W.A. Macbean dealing with a potential Russian advance into Afghanistan. The latter's conclusion was that Russia was unprepared to occupy Afghanistan and threaten India. Chapman concurred with this analysis. Prefacing the paper, he stated that "I think we should not be misled in regard to the intentions of Russia, nor overestimate what it is possible for her to do."⁴¹⁶ Even with his concern for Indian security Chapman refused to be drawn into scaremongering.

Chapman's attempts to influence India's border policy can be viewed as renewed evidence of his concern for Indian security. Yet, it indicates something else. It is further evidence revealing the collaboration of the ID with state and government officials to assert the metropole's supremacy over the imperial periphery. The North-West frontier was a key area of this boundary, hence the

⁴¹⁴ 'Chapman to Colonel E.R. Elles (4 January 1893)', *Ibid*, p.274

⁴¹⁵ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, pp.157-8

⁴¹⁶ 'Analysis of Concentration tables for an assumed Russian advance on Afghanistan, issued by the Intelligence Branch, Q.M.G.'s Department in India, 1895', 1895, DMO/13/22, BL, London, UK, p.15, p.3

desires by the British metropole to control policy over it. Chapman was an agent of this process, following in Brackenbury's footsteps.

Although the relationship between the two nations fluctuated, an intelligence sharing relationship between Britain and Germany had developed in the early 1890s. There had been earlier attempts at a rapprochement with Austria-Hungary. As fissures opened amongst the 'Dreikaiserbund', a League between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia, in the 1880s, Britain sought a rapprochement with Austria-Hungary in a system of mutual support against any aggressive Russian actions. This was an issue upon which the two nations could unite. Austria-Hungary was receptive and showed a firm commitment to this partnership.⁴¹⁷ By the 1890s, however, this compact began to falter. Therefore, Britain tried to forge links with another nation of the Triple Alliance, Italy. After 1887 Prime Minister Salisbury felt that a concord with Italy, and through this to the rest of the Triple Alliance, was the key element to ensuring a level of security for Britain's Mediterranean position.⁴¹⁸ The ID was utilised as a tool in strengthening this new relationship.

On 24 July 1893, Chapman informed Major-General Sir Charles Wilson, then Director of the Ordnance Survey and a previous Director of the T&S Department, of the imminent visit of Count dal Verme to Southampton. Chapman informed Wilson that dal Verme had been the Head of the Italian Intelligence Branch, and that he was "very anxious to be introduced to you & to have an opportunity of seeing the Survey establishment at Southampton."⁴¹⁹ There is nothing to suggest a particularly close relationship between Chapman and Dal Verme. It is interesting to note the acquaintance of two intelligence figures, albeit one former, of two nations attempting to form an international partnership. It could indicate a closer intelligence relationship between Britain and Italy through the 1890s. It is also

⁴¹⁷ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.172, p.195

⁴¹⁸ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.227

⁴¹⁹ 'Chapman to Major-General Sir C. Wilson (24 July 1893)', *Out Letters - General E F Chapman*, WO 106/16, NAUK, p.405

interesting that the DMI was tasked with dealing with the requests of a foreign officer from a nation with close links to Britain.

The timing of Dal Verme's visit was important. British foreign policy had been aimed at facilitating a closer relationship with the nations of the Triple Alliance in the 1880s. Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's fall from power in 1890, however, led to a shift in British thinking. His fall left Kaiser Wilhelm II in control of German foreign policy. Wilhelm possessed a more unstable character than Bismarck. His desire to increase German power and prestige resulted in increased competition with Britain.⁴²⁰ This led to the cooling of relations between the two nations, the end of Britain's partnership with Austria-Hungary, and a paradigm shift in British policy towards Europe. The importance was no longer on Britain's "existing ties with the Triple Alliance," but instead on the nation's "position towards Italy."⁴²¹ DMI Chapman's association with Dal Verme evinced that the ID played an important role in the bolstering of Britain's foreign relations. It is important not to overstate this case. Yet, the ID was clearly being utilised by the British government to facilitate the tightening of international bonds. It prefaced the role that its successors would play in alliance politics in the 1900s.

As Ardagh became DMI in April 1896 Salisbury had recently returned to office for his final term as Prime Minister on 25 June 1895. Ardagh's tenure saw more serious re-evaluations of Britain's international position. Doubts about the utility of alignment with the Triple Alliance were already creeping in, but by 1897 this view became firmly set. In 1887 Britain had signed the Mediterranean accords with Italy and Austria-Hungary. This provided for cooperation to ensure the maintenance of the status quo in South Eastern Europe. It had signalled the beginning of Britain's partnership with Austria-Hungary and its closer ties to the Triple Alliance. Salisbury decided, however, not to renew these accords in January

⁴²⁰ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.228

⁴²¹ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.172, p.194

1897.⁴²² This decision meant that Britain was facing again the old problem of isolation, and the nation's potential enemies had not disappeared.

In a memorandum, on 15 October 1896, sent to the War and Foreign Offices and Commander-in-Chief Wolseley Ardagh outlined the dangerous international situation for Britain. He argued that with “the exception of Italy...we have no avowed friend in the councils of Europe.” As with Brackenbury and Chapman, Ardagh identified Russia and France as the two powers most hostile to Britain and its interests.⁴²³ He also proposed a potential solution. Examining Britain's international position, he lamented that “We experience the disadvantages attendant upon our “splendid isolation” in many quarters, particularly of late.” He was adamant that Britain needed allies if the nation's ‘vital interests’ were to be defended. Although the country maintained a partnership with Italy Ardagh contended that this was not enough. Yet, this compact, he argued, served a greater purpose: “Italy by herself is but a broken reed to lean upon, but as a link to bind England to a powerful confederation, she is worthy of confronting risks and entering into engagements.”⁴²⁴ This “powerful confederation” that Ardagh spoke of was the Triple Alliance.

Faced with the combined threat of France and Russia Ardagh reasoned that “any casual untoward incident might occasion a rupture, and involve us in war with these two great nations combined, and that too without an ally. Better all the risks of the triple alliance than such a calamity.”⁴²⁵ Ardagh was, however, unable to convince Salisbury's government to reverse policy. The decision had been made to break with the Triple Alliance. Yet, this memorandum remains

⁴²² For Otte, this decision signalled “the growing skepticism of the ‘Foreign Office mind’.” It forced a reexamination of “the basic tenets of British foreign policy.” (Ibid, p.219, p.220)

⁴²³ Interestingly, Matthew Seligmann argues that, by the end of the nineteenth century, the NID had begun to downplay the threat Britain faced from the Franco-Russian Alliance. (M. Seligmann, ‘Britain's Great Security Mirage: The Royal Navy and the Franco-Russian Naval Threat, 1898-1906’, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35/6 (December 2012) p.871)

⁴²⁴ ‘The Eastern Question in 1896 (15 October 1896)’, *Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. I*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK, p.7, p.27, p.26, p.27

⁴²⁵ Ibid, p.27

fascinating. It displays the culmination of the trend that started with Brackenbury's elevation to IB Director. While he and Chapman had remained more focused in their criticism, Ardagh challenged the foundations of British foreign policy and proposed an alternate course. This demonstrates the elevation in prestige and power of the DMI, as well as of the role and influence of the ID. While its influence was limited this incidence shows the ID's continued expanded involvement within foreign policymaking. International developments, especially the formation of the Franco-Russian Alliance, and DMI Ardagh's ability to network with state and government officials were significant factors in facilitating the expanded involvement of the ID within policymaking. Again, however, the conditions for this participation were set by the influence of political and administrative culture.

The flow of conversation between Ardagh and Permanent Under-Secretary Sanderson illustrates the continued growth of the ID's role within foreign policy formation. On 23 December 1896 the former forwarded a memorandum to the latter on the abandonment of Italian claims of suzerainty over Abyssinia, after the Italian defeat at the Battle of Adowa on 1 March 1896. He stated that:

In forwarding this memorandum to Sir Thomas Sanderson, Sir John Ardagh is desirous of directing his attention to the advisability of being prepared with a policy which will secure Great Britain from loss in the event of the abandonment by Italy of territory in her present hinterland.⁴²⁶

In another memorandum, on 30 July 1897, regarding the Somaliland Protectorate, Ardagh presented "his compliments to Sir Thomas Sanderson and begs to submit some observations on the agreement...for the readjustment of the boundary of the Somali Protectorate, and on cognate subjects."⁴²⁷ On 6 July 1897 Ardagh even sent

⁴²⁶ Preface to 'The Somali Protectorate in view of withdrawal of Italian claims to suzerainty over Abyssinia (23 Dec. 1896)', *Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. I*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK, p.1

⁴²⁷ Preface to 'Rectification of the boundary of the Somaliland Protectorate (30 July 1897)', *Ibid*, p.1

a copy of a memorandum on the Nile Valley privately to Sanderson, which the former had sent to the Commander-in-Chief for approval.⁴²⁸ On 11 May 1899, Sanderson wrote to Ardagh to ask for his opinion on the feasibility of the Belgian Congo State advancing a force into the Bahr-el-Ghazal region of Sudan. The latter replied that he felt that there was a distinct possibility of such an action occurring.⁴²⁹ This displays both the close communication between the ID and the Foreign Office and their continued involvement.⁴³⁰

Ardagh was repeatedly asked for advice on foreign policy matters. Even when he was absent Sanderson still turned to the ID for assistance. Major William Everett, acting intelligence head in Ardagh's absence, wrote to Ardagh enclosing a "copy of a letter which I wrote to Sanderson in reply to a private query from him as to our views respecting the neutrality of cables in time of war."⁴³¹ Before his appointment as DMI Ardagh had conducted much work for the Foreign Office through the late 1870s to early 1880s. This gave him a familiarity with working alongside Foreign Office officials. He carried this through to his time as DMI. The links between the Foreign Office and the ID remained strong through the late 1890s.

Ardagh made further attempts to influence foreign policy. On 15 April 1897, as relations deteriorated between Britain and the Boer Republic of the Transvaal, he wrote a memorandum on the situation in South Africa. It was communicated to the Foreign Office and to Sir Alfred Milner, soon to be governor of Cape Colony. He discussed the importation of arms destined for the Transvaal through Delagoa

⁴²⁸ 'Kassala and the Advance up the Nile (6 July 1897)', Ibid

⁴²⁹ 'Bahr-el-Ghazal. Possible Belgian Action (11 May 1899)', *Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. II*, Ibid, p.1, p.4

⁴³⁰ Several scholars on British intelligence in this period have noted the cordial working relationships that Ardagh was able to build up with the Foreign Office, as well as with the Colonial Office and the Admiralty. (Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.107) Parritt argued that it was "Ardagh's great achievement that he had so won the confidence of civil servants and diplomats." (Parritt, *The Intelligencers*, pp.163-64)

⁴³¹ 'Major W. Everett to Ardagh (29 June 1899)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence, Private and Official*, PRO 30/40/3, NAUK, p.1

Bay in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique. He advocated for aggressive action against Portugal to suspend this trade.⁴³² Yet, Ardagh's advice was again not actioned upon by the government.⁴³³ The DMI was still not all powerful in directing the outcome of foreign policy. This memorandum is, however, further evidence for how Ardagh and the ID were vigorously involved in foreign policymaking.

By Ardagh's tenure as DMI the ID's imperial work had reached new heights. Forty out of seventy-one memoranda created between 1896 to 1901 were concerned with issues relating to imperial defence. This represented 56% of the total. This is a staggering demonstration of how far Britain's foreign intelligence establishments had become involved in imperial policymaking. This period marked the zenith of this trend. After the turn of the twentieth century the importance of imperial policy slowly diminished. Continental affairs took precedence for the ID's successors.

Yet, for this period, imperial affairs were of paramount importance. Africa continued to absorb the bulk of the ID's attention, particularly from late 1897 to early 1898, especially around the Nile.⁴³⁴ It was believed that the nation which controlled the Nile's headwaters would also control Egypt. This belief further stoked Anglo-French rivalry through the 1890s.⁴³⁵ This issue had been smouldering since the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. The rivalry culminated with a

⁴³² 'South Africa - Recent letters from (15 April 1897)', *Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. I*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK

⁴³³ Over this issue of blockading neutral ports in Southern Africa, Kochanski argues that Prime Minister Salisbury "did not welcome military advice on what he believed to be diplomatic issues." (Kochanski, 'Planning for War in the Final Years of *Pax Britannica*, 1889-1903', *The British General Staff*, p.17)

⁴³⁴ Writing to Sir John Goldney, Chief Justice of Trinidad, Ardagh related how "I find myself at once plunged into affairs on my return, with many grave questions alive, notably our relations with France on the West Coast [of Africa]." He related also how while the "scare on the Nile has subsided for the moment...Uganda is in a very unsatisfactory condition." ('Ardagh to Sir John Goldney (19 February 1898)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, PRO 30/40/2, NAUK, p.1)

⁴³⁵ Thomas Pakenham argues that the "French public looked on Egypt with the passion of a jilted lover...To gain redress was a matter of honour, cost what it might. The British, too, had come to see their prestige as dangerously vulnerable in Egypt - and, because of the Nile threat, in the Sudan as well." (Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*, p.458)

showdown between French and British forces at Fashoda in the Sudan through September to October 1898. After a diplomatic standoff, the French retired and a firm boundary was delimited between the British and French territories along the Nile valley in March 1899.

There was also growing tension between the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State and Britain's colonial possessions, Cape Colony and Natal, in South Africa. The discovery of gold and diamonds in the Transvaal had transformed the Republic into the most prosperous part of South Africa. Britain had guaranteed Home Rule for the Republics, while retaining a small amount of suzerainty, in separate conventions in 1881 and 1884. With the acquisition of such wealth, however, the Boer Republics threatened to overturn Britain's imperial supremacy in South Africa.⁴³⁶ As the situation worsened the ID focused more of its attention upon the capabilities of the Boer Republics and the defences of the Cape Colony. Ardagh summarised all these emerging threats in a memorandum, on 15 October 1896, stating that:

The South African Republic is arming, and legislating against us...The Congo State and France are hurrying towards the Upper Nile. French and Russian influence is predominant in Abyssinia, and the connection between Egypt and Uganda, may at any moment be menaced.⁴³⁷

This illustrates how preoccupied the ID had become with imperial defence.

Ardagh proved to be as forceful in his interventions in imperial policy as he had been with foreign policy. Writing to the Foreign and India Offices, on 23

⁴³⁶ Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists volume one*, pp.214-215

⁴³⁷ 'The Eastern Question in 1896 (15 October 1896)', *Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. I*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK, p.8

December 1896, he urged the need for action as Italy surrendered its territorial claims in the aftermath of its defeat at Adowa. He emphasised:

the necessity of taking such steps as may be necessary to forestall France in acquiring as a hinterland to her East African possessions, the heritage of the country situated to the East of the Nile, and between the Southern frontiers of Abyssinia and the 6th parallel of North latitude.⁴³⁸

This was another major intercession by the DMI into imperial policymaking. On 1 January 1897 Ardagh advocated for a forward policy, rather than passive defence, to protect India's northern border against a Russian advance.⁴³⁹ He was championing a rigorous application of the principles of 'mischievous activity', which Chapman had previously cautioned against. This reveals again how active and demonstrative Ardagh was in imperial policy formation.

On 23 July 1897 Ardagh presented an appraisal of the situation along the Nile valley. He reported on how:

there are rumours of the erection of forts by Europeans at Obbo and Tarrangolo within the British sphere of influence...it is very essential to the maintenance of the communications along the Nile Valley, from Uganda northwards, that effective occupation should be established in this region.⁴⁴⁰

Yet again, he continued to press for an active imperial policy. His argument was supported by the expedition of Major Jean-Batiste Marchand, which led to the crisis at Fashoda. On 16 August 1897 Ardagh sought to bring the Foreign Office's

⁴³⁸ Preface to 'The Somali Protectorate in view of withdrawal of Italian claims to suzerainty over Abyssinia (23 Dec. 1896)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁴³⁹ 'Northern frontier of India from the Pamirs to Tibet (1 January 1897)', *Ibid*, pp.2-3

⁴⁴⁰ 'The Abyssinian mission (23 July 1897)', *Ibid*, p.4

attention to the unstable situation in British East Africa, with the jockeying of the surrounding European and African powers for territory and influence.⁴⁴¹ This all illuminates how intimately involved Ardagh and the ID were in imperial policymaking.

Ardagh took an even more active role during the ‘Scramble for Africa’ in 1898. In memoranda to the Foreign Office, on 16 November and 3 December, he discussed the town of Raheita, in modern day Eritrea. While it was too exposed to be an effective naval port or coaling station, Ardagh argued that its “geographical position...lends it an importance it would not otherwise possess for a naval power desirous of establishing a depot at the mouth of the Red Sea.” Therefore, he urged that the “acquisition of Raheita by either France or Russia should, therefore, be discouraged.” He even advised sending British warships to the area to discourage any French attempt to seize the territory.⁴⁴² This was a forthright argument for the pursuance of an active imperial policy in Africa.

In another memorandum, on 28 November 1898, Ardagh discussed the action to be taken in the event of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire or Persia. He believed that Britain’s principal action should be to secure the Red Sea coastline. He argued that “British influence should eventually extend over the whole of Syria and Mesopotamia, as well as over Babylonia, Susiana, Persis, and Carmania.”⁴⁴³ Through this memorandum Ardagh had involved himself in the business of delimitating spheres of influence for Britain. Similarly, in another memorandum to the Foreign Office, on 15 April 1899, he advised on the limits of the British sphere of influence in North Africa.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴¹ ‘The situation in Uganda (16 August 1897)’, *Ibid*, p.3

⁴⁴² ‘Designs on Raheita (16 Nov. 1898 & 3 Dec. 1898)’, *Ardagh’s Memoranda Vol. II (1896-1901)*, 1896-1901, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK, p.1, p.2. ‘Raheita Incident’, *Ibid*, p.6

⁴⁴³ ‘Count Kapnist’s Scheme for a Railway between Mediterranean and Persian Gulf - Tripoli to Koweit (28 Nov. 1898)’, *Ibid*, p.8, pp.9-10

⁴⁴⁴ ‘Spheres of Influence in North Africa (15 April 1899)’, *Ibid*

This mass of evidence reveals the synthesis of two key trends. Firstly, the ID continued to collaborate in the process of ensuring the British metropole's control over the imperial periphery. This is evidenced by Ardagh's encouragement of policy on the Indian border. Yet, the major current now was that of the DMI and the ID promoting specific imperial action. Ardagh was an advocate for imperial expansion. He pushed for territory to be incorporated into the empire; advised on where the boundaries of British spheres of influence should be set; and urged for action to be taken against foreign powers attempting to expand their empires and influence. Ardagh utilised his position as DMI to push his agenda on the government. This denotes how imperial and foreign policymaking remained the two key outlets for the ID to involve itself in state governance. It also shows how important the ID had become within the state's apparatus.

His preference for a forward imperial policy set Ardagh at odds with Prime Minister Salisbury. In 1887 he had lamented that the "national or acquisitional feeling had been aroused."⁴⁴⁵ Interestingly, however, although they had different policy preferences there is no evidence for any tension in the relationship between Salisbury and Ardagh. This signals how intimately the DMI, and therefore the ID, had become amalgamated into the civilian sphere, along with their integral role in foreign and imperial policy formation through the 1890s.

Through the 1890s the ID's involvement in imperial and foreign policymaking increased exponentially. It became an active participant in these realms and DMIs Chapman and Ardagh provided counsel and championed policy options. This was a direct result of the ID's further assimilation into the civilian sphere. This involvement in policymaking, in turn, normalised the ID's connections with state and government officials. By 1899 the ID was an important cog within the state's apparatus, and a powerful voice within imperial and foreign policy formation. The dominant influence of political and administrative culture was

⁴⁴⁵ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, p.230. While his opinion differed for Salisbury, Ardagh found much more common ground with Secretary of State for the Colonies Joseph Chamberlain. He believed that "Britain could not afford to lose face, or her position in the imperial struggle." (Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.253)

again on display. The ID's inter-departmental functions allowed it to collect more information so that it became a repository of expert advice. This made it a useful instrument to policymakers, hence its increased role in foreign and imperial policymaking.

Conclusion: Entrenchment and Expansion

The trends that had begun in the 1870s persisted through the 1890s. The ID continued to evolve under the influence of political and administrative culture, while its links to policymakers were reinforced. It remained faced with the apathy and hostility of the Army's leaders. Finally, its involvement grew in imperial and foreign policy formation. The evolutionary process remained in motion under the continued direction of political and administrative culture.

The impact of these cultural influences remained predominant over the ID's evolution from 1891 to 1899. It continued to be intimately involved in the 'committee system' while retaining its inter-departmental character, facilitating the exchange of information across the state's apparatus. This fact is signified by the correspondence and memoranda of DMIs Chapman and Ardagh. The principle of inter-departmentalism became firmly entrenched within the workings of Britain's foreign intelligence agencies within twenty years. The ID's connections with the civilian departments of state were strengthened during this period, again thanks to the impact of political and administrative culture. Both Chapman and Ardagh greatly contributed to this process, especially with relation to the Foreign Office. Chapman reinforced the significant level of communication between the two institutions. Ardagh proved to be extremely acceptable to government and state officials. This is exemplified by his connection with Sir Thomas Sanderson and his assignment to the First Hague Conference in 1899. Political and administrative culture continued to drive the ID down its unique evolutionary path.

The apathy and hostility of senior soldiers also persisted from 1891 to 1899, intensifying through the first half of the 1890s. Chapman's outsider status led to repeated conflict with senior military leaders and departments furthering the ID's isolation. The latter remained a bastion of intellectualism and professionalism further separating it from the rest of the Army. Yet, the conservative nature of British military culture continued to devalue intelligence service. Importantly, the ID remained a promoter of civilian governance principles into the military sphere, evinced by its relationship with the NID. This practice did little to endear the former to the Army's leadership, who sometimes attempted to hinder its inter-departmental functions. Thus, the influence of political and administrative culture persisted in driving animosity towards it.

From 1891 to 1899 the ID became ever more intimately involved in foreign policymaking. Both Chapman and Ardagh attempted to shape British foreign policy through their positions as DMI. Their interventions exemplify how integral and intricately involved the ID was to foreign policymaking by the 1890s. Simultaneously, it participated further in imperial policy formation. Chapman was crucial in furthering this trend, an event not identified in previous scholarship. Under Ardagh the ID's involvement in imperial policy reached its zenith as he pushed for greater territorial expansion. This expanded association within policymaking proved the defining event of this period and was again a direct result of the guidance of political and administrative culture. This all exhibits the entrenchment of the evolutionary trajectory. Yet, the Second Boer War and its prelude threatened the ID's place within the civilian sphere.

Chapter 4: The Twilight of the ID, 1899-1901

By the end of the nineteenth century the influence of political and administrative culture was predominant over the ID's evolution. The latter continued to struggle against the apathy of the military's leaders, while becoming intimately involved within foreign and imperial policymaking. Crucially, it had become firmly established within the civilian sphere. The Second Boer War threatened to disrupt this process. It demonstrates that indifference towards the ID did not exist solely within the Army. Government and state officials, particularly in the War Office, ignored the former's warnings in the prelude to the conflict. For how far it had been amalgamated into the civilian sphere, the War highlighted the fragility of the ID's position. It was clear that further modification was required to secure its place within the civilian sphere.

Yet, even with this disturbance, the ID continued to evolve under the guidance of political and administrative culture. Faced with criticism and neglect from policymakers it retained its inter-departmental character from 1899 to 1901. It continued to facilitate communication across the state's apparatus. While its isolation within the War Office was exposed, the ID's relationship to the Foreign and Colonial Offices remained strong. DMI Ardagh even advocated that the ID should be assimilated further into the civilian sphere.

This period witnessed how truly damaging the indifference of the Army's hierarchy was to the ID's evolution. The DMI lacked his military peers' authority and power to advise and promote policy. The relationship between the ID and Commander-in-Chief Wolseley deteriorated through these years. The former's fall from grace during this period illustrates how injurious the neglect, and sometimes active opposition, of the Commander-in-Chief could be, even with the ID's integration into the civilian sphere.

Although its advice was largely ignored in the prelude to the Second Boer War, the ID remained intimately involved in foreign and imperial policymaking. It continued to be an important part of these realms. Ardagh again advocated for imperial expansion and the delimitation of beneficial spheres of influence. The ID also worked towards achieving imperial centralisation. At the turn of the twentieth century, intervention in foreign and imperial policy remained the most effective method for it to effect state governance. The retention of its influence in these realms shows that, despite the perturbation of the Second Boer War, the ID remained an integral cog within the state's apparatus. Even through these years of hardship the latter remained set on the evolutionary path began in the 1870s, which remained dominated by the impact of political and administrative culture.

The Final Years of the ID

In its last two years of existence the ID retained the same internal structure that it had since the 1880s with one exception. Section H was added in December 1899 with the remit of 'Special Duties'. This included undertaking secret service work, censorship, and cipher. These were issues that had become especially necessary during the conflict in South Africa. In 1899 the ID's staff consisted of forty-five officers, eighteen of whom were serving longer tenures.⁴⁴⁶ The DMI remained subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief but was also under the authority of other senior military personnel, including the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, and the Inspector-General of Fortifications. All were a higher rank than DMI Ardagh.⁴⁴⁷ His tenure ended on 1 June 1901. Between October to November 1901 the ID was replaced by a new organisation which incorporated the Mobilisation Division as well. It was named the Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence. The Second Boer War dominated the ID's efforts and the

⁴⁴⁶ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.249

⁴⁴⁷ 'Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (Volume I)', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.209

discussions around it. While it had witnessed peaks and falls before, the War had a pronounced effect upon the ID and its evolution.

The ID and the Second Boer War

Trouble had been brewing in South Africa since the discovery of gold in the Boer Republic of the Transvaal in the 1880s. The ill-fated Jameson Raid, aimed at provoking an uprising against the Transvaal government and paving the way for British annexation of the Republic, exacerbated the situation. The other Boer Republic, the Orange Free State, allied with the Transvaal as war became inevitable. Hostilities began in October 1899 with Boer offensives into the British colonies of Natal and Cape Colony. Boer forces laid siege to Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Kimberley. The first aim of the British Army in South Africa was to relieve these besieged garrisons. The initial attempts were blunted by a shocking series of reverses during the battles of Stormberg (10 December), Magersfontein (11 December), and most seriously at Colenso (15 December). This period came to be known as 'Black Week'. It provoked "an emotional spasm - astonishment, frustration, humiliation - that shook the British at home and in the Empire."⁴⁴⁸ The British Army recovered from these setbacks, but it took a much larger effort from the whole Empire to force the Boers into ultimate surrender in 1902.

The disasters of 'Black Week' rebounded on the ID. Senior military and civilian figures in Britain laid much of the blame for these disasters at its feet. They claimed that it had not properly informed them about the capabilities and strength of the Boers. This criticism was subsequently taken up by the British public and newspapers. DMI Ardagh's wife described how, in November 1900, an article was published in 'The Times' attacking the ID for failing to give sufficient information on the Boer forces. This was apparently prompted by a speech from Commander-in-Chief Wolseley, in which he stated that "we had not known the

⁴⁴⁸ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London: Abacus, 2004) p.247

strength of the Boers.”⁴⁴⁹ Faced with this mounting criticism, Ardagh and the members of the ID were compelled to remain silent by their loyalty to the government and the Army. This meant that they were unable to divulge information still of a secret nature.⁴⁵⁰ An examination of the ID’s work reveals these accusations to have been patently false.

In response to the War’s events a Royal Commission was established and began to take evidence in October 1902. That same year, the ID provided a statement to the Commission describing the work that it had carried out before the War. This reveals what information the ID had provided to both the government and senior military figures before the outbreak of hostilities. It was summarised under five main headings: “A. The collation of information concerning the military preparations, military strength, armaments, mutual engagements, and military plans of the two Dutch Republics;” “B. The collation and distribution of the topographical information needed for military operations;” “C. Local defence schemes;” “D. The organization of a Field Intelligence Department for active operations in South Africa,” and “E. The provision of maps.”⁴⁵¹

The ID’s statement to the Commission referred to six memoranda that were sent by it to the Commander-in-Chief, who was tasked with passing them to the Secretary of State for War. These memoranda were produced on the following dates: 11 June 1896, October 1896, 15 April 1897, 21 September 1898, 3 June 1899, 8 August 1899. This shows that the ID had provided a steady supply of information each year to the government and the Army. The issue turned out to be not a lack of information, but that problems between the Commander-in-Chief

⁴⁴⁹ ‘Note by Susan H. Malmesbury (16 January 1908)’, *Official and private papers: South African War. Intelligence Division*, PRO 30/40/16, NAUK, p.1

⁴⁵⁰ An untitled document from the Papers of John Ardagh described how Ardagh stoically faced, the “task of going on steadily with the daily work of his office silent and unmoved, whilst the Press and all England were ringing with the charge that this time of trial, with its humiliations and losses, had befallen an unprepared nation and Government, because the Intelligence Department had failed in its duty.” (‘Untitled document’, *Miscellaneous Documents*, Sir John C. Ardagh, 1888-1903, PRO 30/40/13, Domestic Records of the Public Records Office, NAUK, Kew, London, pp.22-23)

⁴⁵¹ ‘Statement of the Intelligence Division (1902)’, *Ibid*, p.2

and the Secretary of State for War hampered the chain of communication. As a result, much of the information prepared by the ID did not appear to reach the latter. The ID was also in contact with the various General Officers in Command in South Africa about local defence schemes for Natal and Cape Colony. Finally, the ID prepared a detailed handbook entitled 'Military Notes on the Dutch Republics of South Africa'. This was intended for "the information of H.M.'s Government, and for the future use of Officers proceeding to South Africa, if war should take place."⁴⁵² It was the most detailed and extensive study of South Africa and the Boer forces available to the British forces. It was first printed in April 1898 and then revised in June 1899. It was one of twelve documents prepared by the ID, between 1896 to 1899, with a view to a possible war in South Africa.⁴⁵³ Numerous copies of the handbook were sent to South Africa for the use of the officers commanding the troops there. After a copy, captured by the Boers, was published in an American newspaper the ID provided further issues to Parliament in the autumn session of 1900.⁴⁵⁴

The ID handbook was an extensive piece of work providing detailed information on a wide range of subjects. These included information on the topography of the Boer Republics; the Republic's military forces, armaments and forts; the attitude of the African populations within the Republics; the distribution of the Boer forces in the field; Boer tactics and field organisation; the towns and districts of the Republics; notes on communications in South Africa; and on climate and seasons in country. The handbook also provided the texts of several important Transvaal and Orange Free State documents. These included the Military Laws of

⁴⁵² 'Military Notes on the Dutch Republics of South Africa (June 1899)', *Official and private papers: South African War. Intelligence Division*, PRO 30/40/16, NAUK, p.4

⁴⁵³ 'Statement of the Intelligence Division (1902)', *Miscellaneous Documents*, PRO 30/40/13, NAUK, p.5

⁴⁵⁴ 'Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (Volume I)', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.215

the two Republics, and the 'Closer Union Treaty and Military Convention' between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.⁴⁵⁵

The Boer capitals of Bloemfontein and Pretoria were captured in March and June 1900 respectively. Their capture provided access to Boer records collating troop numbers and ammunition and armament stockpiles. This, in turn, allowed a comparison with the figures provided by the ID before the War. This reveals that the latter had provided remarkably accurate information on the Boers' armaments and ammunition. It had correctly surmised that the Boer plan of campaign would be to take the offensive and invade Natal and Cape Colony. And finally, rather than diminish the size of the Boer forces, the ID had overestimated the number that would take the field at the outbreak of hostilities.⁴⁵⁶ The real deficiency had been in the topographical information. The ID did not possess reliable maps of much of South Africa. Its statement to the Commission highlighted that it lacked both the manpower and funding to undertake extensive surveys of the British Colonies and the Boer Republics in South Africa. It also emphasised that, "it would have been out of the question during the state of tension existing between Great Britain and the late Republics after 1895, to send officers into the country to survey it." Despite this, it was stated that "the more important lines of communication through the country were examined, and a large amount of information collated, the accuracy of which has not been impugned."⁴⁵⁷

The accuracy of the ID's information was underlined by its members during the Royal Commission's evidence hearings from 1902 to 1903. DMI Ardagh stressed the reliability of the intelligence provided about Boer armaments. Lieutenant-Colonel E.A. Altham described that within the ID, from 1896 to the outbreak of hostilities, "there was great anxiety about South Africa, and...we used every exertion we could to obtain information and to study the whole question."

⁴⁵⁵ 'Military Notes on the Dutch Republics of South Africa (June 1899)', *Official and private papers: South African War. Intelligence Division*, PRO 30/40/16, NAUK

⁴⁵⁶ 'Statement of the Intelligence Division (1902)', *Miscellaneous Documents*, PRO 30/40/13, NAUK, pp.6-11

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.14, p.12

Discussing the handbook, he submitted that it gave “a generally correct impression of the military strength and armament of the Boers.” A major theme in the testimony of the ID’s members was how isolated they were from senior civilian and military figures. For instance, Altham, referring to the memoranda from June and October 1896, described how the ID never received any comments upon either memoranda from the Commander-in-Chief or the Secretary of State for War.⁴⁵⁸

Historians have debated the performance of the ID before the Second Boer War. Fergusson praised its efforts claiming that, given “its lack of funds and its lack of power within the War Office, the Intelligence Division did its job amazingly well.”⁴⁵⁹ On the contrary, Parritt argued that, although the ID “had produced numerous warnings, [it] had not done this with a conviction that had persuaded their seniors that defensive measures were required.”⁴⁶⁰ His criticisms are unfounded, especially once a deeper examination is undertaken of the ID’s isolation within the War Office. Despite the lack of resources and men it had performed admirably in detailing the intentions, resources, and manpower of the Boer forces. That this information was ignored, or not seen, was not the fault of the ID but rather of the government and the Army’s leadership. Both would subsequently use the ID as a scapegoat. This is evidence enough of their ultimate culpability.

In the fallout of the disasters of ‘Black Week’, senior governmental and military figures tried to deflect some of the blame onto the ID. Commander-in-Chief Wolseley was not the only one guilty of this. St John Brodrick, Under-Secretary of State for War 1895 to 1898 and Secretary of State for War 1900 to 1903, failed to defend the ID from its critics to shield himself from significant blame. He later acknowledged that “if I had admitted that Sir John Ardagh told us the truth, people would naturally say: If you were told the truth, why did you

⁴⁵⁸ ‘Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (Volume I)’, *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.215, p.19, p.20, p.23

⁴⁵⁹ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.112

⁴⁶⁰ Parritt, *The Intelligencers*, p.165

not act upon it, and they would think it was my fault.”⁴⁶¹ This raises significant questions over the position of the ID within the civilian sphere, particularly about its place within its parent organisation the War Office.

The discussion of the ID's role before the Second Boer War, speaks to contemporary debates over the intelligence-policy nexus. This is centred between the models of Sherman Kent and Robert Gates, named respectively 'objective' and 'actionable' intelligence. Kent argued that there needed to be a level of separation between intelligence producers and consumers. His contention was that "Intelligence must be close enough to policy, plans, and operations to have the greatest amount of guidance, and must not be so close that it loses its objectivity and integrity of judgement." This last point gave his model the name of 'objective' intelligence.⁴⁶² Gates held several high-ranking positions within the American intelligence community, including as Head of the CIA from 1991 to 1993. His experience led him to argue that "the Intelligence Community has to be right next to the policymaker."⁴⁶³ The core of the 'actionable' intelligence model is: "analysts must be aware of the needs of policy makers and...intelligence managers have an obligation to task analysts so that they produce useful intelligence for their clientele." Both approaches have benefits and problems. The 'objective' approach ensures that intelligence is protected from becoming too politicised. It can diminish, however, the impact of important intelligence, since policymakers might lack interest, time, or knowledge to utilise it effectively. The 'actionable' approach keeps intelligence relevant, by conforming to the needs of policymakers,

⁴⁶¹ 'Note by Susan H. Malmesbury (16 January 1908)', *Official and private papers: South African War. Intelligence Division*, PRO 30/40/16, NAUK, pp.2-3

⁴⁶² S. Kent, *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966) p.180

⁴⁶³ H. Bradford Westerfield, 'Inside Ivory Bunkers: CIA Analysts Resist Managers' "Pandering" - Part II', *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 10/1 (March 1997) p.27

but raises serious questions about intelligence becoming too biased to fit policymakers' desires.⁴⁶⁴

The ID's position at the end of the nineteenth century fits into the 'Kent' paradigm. This was due to neglect and isolation rather than through a planned model. Yet, it highlights the positives and the negatives of Kent's model. The ID provided unbiased information about the capabilities and strengths of the Boer Republics, uncoloured by policymakers' desires. But its assessments failed to find a receptive audience negating its utility. A closer link between the ID and the Commander-in-Chief plus the Secretary of State for War would have raised the profile of the former's information. Adoption of the 'Gates' intelligence model would have been beneficial to the ID, without running many of the risks associated with it. Close cooperation between it and the Foreign Office had not led to an over politicisation of intelligence. The ID, along with its predecessors and successors, demonstrated itself as an agency resistant to over politicisation. This was due to two factors. Firstly, it was staffed by professional officers focused on their craft. Secondly, the official use of intelligence in statecraft remained a developing art within Britain. Some statesmen, such as Lord Salisbury, were keen intelligence consumers. Others, such as future Prime Ministers Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Herbert Asquith, did not possess the same interest in its potential. As Britain's foreign intelligence institutions continued to develop and expand, the curiosity of statesmen in the potential of intelligence grew. So too did the dangers of over politicisation. Through the 1890s, however, the ID would have benefited from the 'actionable' intelligence model. It would have provided all the benefits while avoiding any of the serious negatives.

The Royal Commission on the War in South Africa

⁴⁶⁴ J.J. Wirtz, 'The Intelligence-Policy Nexus' in L.K. Johnson & J.J. Wirtz (eds.) *Intelligence: The Secret World of Spies An Anthology* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) p.217, p.216, pp.217-218

Committee culture, inherent in the British system of governance, was adopted by the ID, and its predecessors and successors, and shaped their cumulative evolutions. The influence of the 'committee system' ensured that these establishments were distinct from their foreign counterparts. This system allowed for a higher level of civilian control over the ID than, for instance, was present in France at the same time. The influence of this committee culture can be traced back to the 1870s with the work of the Northbrook Committee. Its impact continued through the 1880s influencing Britain's developing intelligence culture, into the 1890s with the DMI a part of several important state committees such as the CDC. While not as important to the evolutionary process as the Northbrook Committee the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (1902-1903) remained a significant event. By the time it was appointed and started taking evidence, the ID had been replaced by the Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence. Yet, the Commission's report and minutes of evidence reveal the situation faced by the ID in the 1890s, along with its position within the state's apparatus.

The Second Boer War highlighted the serious shortcomings of the British Army and in the nation's ability to prepare for war. In response, a Royal Commission was established and began to take evidence in October 1902. Its purpose was to investigate both the preparations before the War and the conduct of the War itself. The Commission's members were: the Earl of Elgin (former Viceroy and Governor-General of India) as the Chairman, Lord Esher (a close confidant of the Royal Family), Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal (the High Commissioner for Canada), Sir George Taubman-Goldie (former Governor of the Royal Niger Company), Field Marshal Sir Henry Norman, retired Royal Navy Officer Admiral Sir John Hopkins, Sir Frederick Darley (Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales), Sir John Edge (judicial member of the Council of India), and Sir John Jackson (an eminent engineer).

The remit of the Commission was to:

inquire into the Military Preparations for the War in South Africa, and into the supply of Men, Ammunition, Equipment, and Transport by sea and land in connection with the Campaign, and into the Military Operations up to the occupation of Pretoria"; and to report their opinion upon these matters.⁴⁶⁵

The commissioners noted that the "instructions thus conveyed, while comprehensive and far reaching, were somewhat wanting in precision." It indicated an attempt by the government to lessen the level of censure from the Commission. The third heading, related to "the Military Operations up to the occupation of Pretoria," caused specific concern. To inject more clarity into their investigations the Commissioners decided, "to assume that the object of their appointment was to discover inefficiency or defects in the administration of the Army, where disclosed by the facts of the War in South Africa, and to indicate their causes wherever possible." They also claimed that it was "essential to examine the main features of the military system at home as well as in the field."⁴⁶⁶ Its wide remit allowed the Commission to examine the role of the ID before the War.

The Commission's report was published in 1903. Interestingly, while there was a clamour for Army and War Office reform, Chairman Elgin urged caution to his fellow commissioners. He stated that "we must not attempt a reconstruction of the War Office, or of the Army system."⁴⁶⁷ For him, the Commission's role was to examine and present the evidence of what had occurred. While it recommended some changes the Commission did not propose any wide scale reform package. That would have to wait until Lord Esher chaired his own committee later that year. The report absolved the ID from much of the blame that had been placed on it, noting how it had provided adequate warning about the capabilities of the Boer

⁴⁶⁵ 'Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Military Preparations and Other Matters Connected with the War in South Africa', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.1

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, pp.1-2, p.2

⁴⁶⁷ 'Memo for Commissioners only', 1903, 'Papers: South African War Commission: Papers and Correspondence', ESHR 15/2, The Papers of Viscount Esher, CCA, Cambridge, UK p.4

Republics to the government. While its report did not focus solely upon the ID, the Commission made several interesting comments about its place within the civilian sphere. The report also evinces the continued apathy of the Army's leaders, plus the persistent influence of political and administrative culture upon the evolution of the ID and its successor.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

In January 1900, in response to the debacle in South Africa, Prime Minister Salisbury tried to deflect criticism from the government onto the principles underpinning the British system of governance. His main target was the unwritten constitution. He claimed that he did not "believe in the perfection of the British Constitution as an instrument of war."⁴⁶⁸ While Salisbury tried to hide behind political theory to avoid criticism, the Second Boer War had revealed the shortcomings of the 'village market' model in the preparations and prosecution of a major conflict. The government appeared inept in the late 1890s. Arthur Balfour's admission that "the man in the street knew as much as the man in the Cabinet," when it came to knowledge of the Boer forces and their capabilities, did nothing to shift this perception.⁴⁶⁹ The attempt to use the ID as a shield for the government's culpability damaged the relatively strong relationship that had been developed between the former and policymakers. Yet, this connection did not break. The state offices had been the champions of the ID before the War and it continued to work on their behalf. In the end, while it caused a momentary disruption, the Second Boer War could not eliminate the predominant impact of political and administrative culture to the ID's evolution. It also did not prevent the latter's further incorporation into the civilian sphere.

⁴⁶⁸ *Hansard (Fourth Series)*, House of Lords Debate, 30 Jan 1900, vol. 78, col. 30

⁴⁶⁹ J.P Mackintosh, *The British Cabinet* (London: Stevens & Sons Limited, 1962) pp.263-264

The publishing of the Royal Commission's report led to renewed public anger at the government's conduct in the years before the War. An article in 'The Spectator', from 29 August 1903, angrily contended that:

We had been forewarned—by the Intelligence Department...but we were not forearmed, and Lord Lansdowne, in acquiescing in and supporting the deliberate postponement of the needful preparations, must be regarded as primarily responsible for a situation which, but for "an extraordinary combination of fortunate circumstances," might have cost us the Empire.⁴⁷⁰

Lansdowne became the target for much of the opprobrium. He received an enormous amount of criticism for his performance as Secretary of State for War, from 1895 to 1900, in the lead-up to the conflict. He failed to heed the ID's warnings. Commander-in-Chief Wolseley shared responsibility for this failure. He and Lansdowne did not have a good working relationship. This meant that Wolseley was not always quick to pass along the ID's information to Lansdowne, although it was part of his duties.

Yet other Cabinet ministers had received the information and realised its importance. They had tried to bring it to Lansdowne's attention. In both 1897 and 1898, the Colonial Office communicated with the War Office to highlight evidence that had been received from the ID. For instance, on 6 April 1898, the Assistant Under-Secretary for South African affairs wrote to the War Office stating that, "I am to request that Lord Lansdowne's attention may be drawn to a Memorandum on the situation, dated 12th March, compiled in the Intelligence Department."⁴⁷¹ This led to a scenario where a minister was so oblivious to information from subordinates in his own office that a minister from a separate department had to

⁴⁷⁰ *The Spectator*, 29 August 1903 (<http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/29th-august-1903/2/the-report-of-the-royal-commission-on-the-war-was>) [Accessed 09/08/19]

⁴⁷¹ 'Memo from Colonial Office to War Office, 6 April 1898', *Papers: South African War Commission: Papers and Correspondence*, ESHR 15/2, CCA, p.1

try and rectify the situation. This reflected poorly upon the Secretary of State for War, even considering the internal troubles that he faced, and on other senior officials at the War Office who could have brought his attention to the various memoranda and reports.

What is surprising is how quickly Ardagh came to Lansdowne's defence. He admitted there were failings by civilian policymakers: "the serious officers of the army have long represented the necessity of having more men, more guns and more stores, but they preached to deaf ears."⁴⁷² He declared, however, that:

I am full of indignation at the way in which the public now seek to make a scape-goat of Lord Lansdowne who in his time certainly did much to endeavour to strengthen the weak edifice which he had inherited from his predecessors.⁴⁷³

Ardagh's defence of Lansdowne speaks to the close relationship that the two men had built up during their respective tenures as Secretary of State and DMI.

Ardagh's sympathy for Lansdowne did not extend to those politicians who he believed were especially culpable for the disasters in South Africa. He reserved special criticism for the Treasury. Ardagh claimed that the "War Office is in reality but a subordinate branch of the Treasury, which holds the purse strings of the nation, and inexorably refuses to open them until forced to do so by public opinion."⁴⁷⁴ His harshest condemnation, however, was reserved for former Prime Minister Gladstone. Ardagh blamed him for not providing sufficient funding to either the Army or the Royal Navy, during his tenure as Prime Minister between 1892 to 1894.⁴⁷⁵ Despite the close connections that existed between the ID and

⁴⁷² 'Ardagh to Senator Sir James Gowan (4 Nov 1900)', *Miscellaneous Papers, Private and Official*, PRO 30/40/3, NAUK, p.157

⁴⁷³ Ibid

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid

⁴⁷⁵ 'Ardagh to his Wife (4 Oct 1899)', Ibid, p.1

the civilian sphere, Ardagh harboured significant resentment for civilian policymakers and for some of Whitehall.

From all this, it would be reasonable to expect that Ardagh's last year as DMI would have been a tense affair. One would envision shaky relations between the ID and policymakers, who had both failed to heed the ID's warnings and then attempted to use it as a scapegoat. Yet, this was not the case. A memorandum produced by the ID, on 8 March 1901, shows some of the work it had undertaken for civilian departments. It continued to do "a great deal of work for the Foreign and Colonial Offices, in connection with Conferences, Boundaries, Delimitations, Colonial Defence, Local Forces, Surveys, Maps, Technical and Military questions, and Confidential matters."⁴⁷⁶ Ardagh's memoranda book reveals that the ID remained in close communication with departments such as the India and Foreign Offices until the end of his tenure as DMI. They continued to receive information from the former. For instance, an ID memorandum upon the occupation of strategic points in China, from 22 September 1900, was sent to both offices.⁴⁷⁷ This denotes how the ID remained an inter-departmental structure from 1899 to 1901. Even the disturbance caused by the Second Boer War was not enough to disrupt this function. It signifies how entrenched the principle of inter-departmentalism was by this period.

Ardagh retained a healthy respect for the British system of state governance, especially the control that civilians held over army administration. This was despite his long-cherished belief in the necessity for the creation of a General Staff in Britain. Writing to Adjutant-General Sir Evelyn Wood, on 30 January 1901, he argued that even with the creation of a General Staff:

⁴⁷⁶ 'The Intelligence Division (continuation) (8 March 1901)', *Miscellaneous Documents*, PRO 30/40/13, NAUK, p.4

⁴⁷⁷ 'China. Advisability of Occupation of Pei-[Jang], Tongshan, Ching-wang-tao, and Shan-hai-kuan; and general observations (22 Sept. 1900)', *Sir John Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. II*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK

These functions, according to my conception of their applications to our own political constitution, in which a civilian minister for war is the undoubted head of the army, should be purely consultative, advisory, and monitory, and the head...should have no administrative or executive functions, but his advice and his opinions should be heard on not only points referred to him, but also on those which he originates.⁴⁷⁸

This statement is fascinating. It exemplifies the acceptance of the system of governance by a senior soldier, even when it had fallen short at a critical moment. Chronicling the period around the turn of the twentieth century, Strachan uses the term ‘integrated control’ to describe the amalgamation of military advice with civilian authority.⁴⁷⁹ This replaced dual control. Ardagh’s observation, in essence, advocated this fusion of expert military opinion under the ultimate jurisdiction of a civilian head.

As his time as DMI came to an end Ardagh created a memorandum, on 26 February 1901, upon the future development of the ID. He stressed that the ID, and the IB before it, had developed to oversee many of the duties undertaken by the General Staffs of European nations. He recommended that the ID “should eventually take that position [of a General Staff], and become the authoritative advisory and consultative branch of the War Office.” He argued that in “order to give proper weight to the Intelligence Division I think that it should be placed in the same category” as the other key military departments, such as those of the Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General, and Inspector-General of Fortifications. This was an attempt to increase the ID’s place within the Army’s hierarchy. He also advocated that the “work required by the Foreign, Colonial and other offices should continue as at present.” Interestingly, Ardagh recommended that the “Secret Section should - as now - be practically under the direction of the Foreign Office.” He also argued that it was important to give “due weight to the recommendations made after deliberate study by an advisory and consultative

⁴⁷⁸ ‘Ardagh to Adjutant-General (30 January 1901)’, *Ibid*, pp.5-6

⁴⁷⁹ Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, p.119

branch, whose information and warnings in the past, have not, I venture to think, received the attention they deserved.” His hope was that “in the future my successor as D.M.I. shall not be - as I have often been - a vox clamantis in deserto.”⁴⁸⁰ This meant a voice crying out in the wilderness.

This is a compelling document. It illustrates the evolutionary trajectory of the T&S Department, the IB, and the ID. It also indicates Ardagh’s judgement concerning the future configuration of the latter. It is significant that he did not advocate a completely military model for future development. He envisaged the ID, and its successors, to be products of both civilian and military influence, just as the former had been under his direction and before.

Ardagh advocated the continued connection between the ID and the important government departments, even promoting that these offices should have significant control over the ID’s work. He wanted to see the latter become the principal advisory body within the War Office. He believed that closer ties with civilian figures in the War Office would raise the ID’s power and prestige, an example of his belief in the concept of ‘integrated control’. He wanted the ID to be a crucial part of it. This all displays how, despite the recriminations caused by the conflict in South Africa, the ID’s links with the civilian sphere remained paramount. It was the axis around which Ardagh based his recommendations for the ID’s future evolution. Its successors became important parts of the ‘integrated control’ system, but they also gained more executive power. Significantly, their links to the civilian sphere persisted in importance.

Rather than disrupt the character and developments of the ID, the Second Boer War caused a focused frustration towards individual politicians and specific state departments. The ID remained inter-departmental in character and continued to act as a conduit for information. The links with the civilian sphere

⁴⁸⁰ ‘The Intelligence Division (26 Feb. 1901)’, *Sir John Ardagh’s Memoranda Vol. II*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK, p.1, p.3, p.1, p.2, p.4, p.5 (emphasis in original)

were not broken and instead became the focal point for future development. The influence of political and administrative culture remained cardinal. While the War could not impede this trend it served to heighten the negative influence of the Army's leadership upon the ID.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

The Second Boer War rocked the British Army. Correlli Barnett argued that "almost all aspects of the British military system had been found wanting in a war against 50,000 farmers."⁴⁸¹ This is too hyperbolic. The Army's mobilisation plans, devised largely by Ardagh and Brackenbury, had operated seamlessly. But the fact remained that the War had been a humiliating ordeal for both Army and nation, which strained civil-military relationships. There were recriminations on both sides of the aisle. The "politicians accused the soldiers of failing to advise them adequately," while "soldiers denounced the government for refusing to provide the funds for supplies, stores, and additions to the establishment."⁴⁸²

Into this maelstrom came another change in Army leadership. Wolseley left the post of Commander-in-Chief on 3 January 1901. His successor was his old rival Lord Roberts, the former Commander-in-Chief in India. He had led the British Army to victory over the Boer field armies but departed South Africa before the War entered its guerilla phase.⁴⁸³ Despite this, there were great expectations that Roberts would inaugurate important military reform while Commander-in-Chief.⁴⁸⁴ Yet, he found himself frustrated by the bureaucracy that surrounded his new office, just as Wolseley had. 1899 to 1901 proved to be a volatile period for the

⁴⁸¹ Barnett, *Britain and Her Army 1509-1970*, p.346

⁴⁸² Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.175

⁴⁸³ R. Atwood, 'So Single-Minded a Man and so Noble-Hearted a Soldier': Field Marshal Earl Roberts of Kandahar, Waterford and Pretoria', in I.F.W. Beckett (ed.), *Victorians at War: New Perspectives* (Society for Army Historical Research, 2007) p.71

⁴⁸⁴ Atwood, *The Life of Field Marshal Lord Roberts*, p.219

Army, as it did for the ID. This volatility only exacerbated the hostility of the former towards the latter. There was also no change in military culture either.

John Ardagh had been once a favourite of Wolseley's. The Second Boer War irretrievably damaged this relationship. In his evidence before the Royal Commission Ardagh revealed that he had been in "daily communication" with the Commander-in-Chief. Yet, Wolseley had stated publicly that neither he nor the government had been properly informed of the Boers's strengths and capabilities. Lord Lansdowne's testimony before the Royal Commission revealed the truth. He stated that Wolseley had never placed any of the ID's documents before him.⁴⁸⁵ The Royal Commission was critical of the latter's performance in the prelude to the War.⁴⁸⁶ The Commander-in-Chief was the focal point through which much of the ID's information was funnelled to policymakers. If the former's relationship with state and government officials was poor, then it seriously hampered the ID's ability to communicate information. The latter remained able, however, to convey intelligence to the Colonial Office, even with Wolseley's obstinacy. Yet, without the impediment of the Commander-in-Chief the ID's information may have resonated more clearly with the government. Wolseley's actions during 1899 were the best example of the negative effect of the indifference of the Army's hierarchy upon the ID.

Despite the problems in the relationship between the ID and the Commander-in-Chief, Ardagh did not desire either the abolition of that position or the removal of intelligence from under his supervision.⁴⁸⁷ He asserted that the ID should be the former's "principal instrument in all matters of a consultative nature." The real problem for Ardagh was that the DMI was not accorded the same degree of independent action as other senior soldiers, such as the Adjutant-

⁴⁸⁵ 'Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (Volume II)', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.521

⁴⁸⁶ 'Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Military Preparations and Other Matters Connected with the War in South Africa', *Ibid*, p.22

⁴⁸⁷ He asserted this to the Royal Commission, although he stated that he still favoured the introduction of a General Staff. ('Minutes of Evidence (Volume I)', *Ibid*, p.215)

General and Quartermaster-General.⁴⁸⁸ The DMI was also not a member of the Army Board.⁴⁸⁹ This was an organisation designed to “co-ordinate military opinion for the benefit” of the Secretary of State for War.⁴⁹⁰ It was yet another sign of the ID’s relegation from the highest levels of military authority. This evinces the continued difficulties that it faced from within the Army and how it remained undervalued.

This situation stands in stark contrast to simultaneous events in France, which was facing its own time of turmoil due to the ongoing Dreyfus Affair from 1893 to 1906. The French intelligence structure which roughly corresponded to the ID was the Deuxième Bureau. Within it was the Statistical Section tasked with intelligence and counter-intelligence work. This Section caused the Dreyfus Affair, particularly when it forged a dossier of evidence to uphold the espionage conviction against Alfred Dreyfus. All through the Affair France’s military leaders defended the Section’s reputation.⁴⁹¹ This makes a striking comparison to how Wolseley used the ID as a scapegoat. It highlights the poor relationship between intelligence and the British Army’s leadership through the nineteenth century.

The British Army continued to value field service over staff work. A perfect illustration of this was Ardagh’s career after his tenure as DMI. In 1903, contemplating retirement, he requested a promotion to the honorary rank of Lieutenant-General with its attendant pension rise. Commander-in-Chief Roberts declined this appeal. The official reasoning was that, only “Officers who have held the higher rank when actually commanding Troops in the Field are now considered

⁴⁸⁸ ‘Ardagh to Adjutant-General (30 January 1901)’, *Official and private papers: South African War. Intelligence Division*, PRO 30/40/16, NAUK, p.6

⁴⁸⁹ Kochanski, ‘Planning for War in the Final Years of *Pax Britannica*, 1889-1903’, *The British General Staff: Reform and Innovation c.1890-1939*, p.16

⁴⁹⁰ Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.162

⁴⁹¹ For instance, in late June 1898, Chief of the General Staff Raoul Le Mouton de Boisdeffre told newly appointed Minister of War Godefroy Cavaignac of his complete confidence in the dossier of evidence produced by the Statistical Section. He said this knowing that the dossier was filled with forgeries. (Read, *The Dreyfus Affair*, p.246)

eligible for equivalent honorary rank on retirement.”⁴⁹² Another change in military leadership was not sufficient again for the removal of traditional views.

Military culture continued to hinder intelligence work. The Second Boer War had drawn away many ID personnel. Although he knew the impact of their loss, Ardagh let these men go.⁴⁹³ The ID remained plagued by the Army’s focus on field service. The situation from 1899 to 1901 was reminiscent of what had happened in 1882, with the exodus of Director Alison and other IB personnel to Egypt. Yet, despite the continued negative impact of military culture, Ardagh remained determined to uphold the intellectualism and professionalism of the ID. Writing to a friend, on 20 April 1900, he stated that, “A new-comer in this pursuit is of little value until he has made himself thoroughly acquainted with the previous history of the cases he deals with.”⁴⁹⁴ His aim, therefore, was, to “make an appointment in the Intelligence Division so prized as to be the ambition of the pick of Staff College graduates.”⁴⁹⁵

The drive for professionalisation remained an important aspect of the ID’s purpose. Ardagh realised, however, that intelligence work did not appeal to every officer. On 11 February 1901 he wrote to the Military Secretary Coleridge Grove, stating that he needed to employ another officer to help oversee secret service duties. He inquired whether Grove knew of “anyone who can be relied upon to hold his tongue and be capable of devising and instigating and committing the most atrocious crimes, and yet be an honest hard working intelligent gentleman?”⁴⁹⁶ This exchange is fascinating because it upholds all the traditional

⁴⁹² ‘R.B. Lane (Military Secretary) to Ardagh (10 July 1903)’, *Miscellaneous Papers, Private and Official*, PRO 30/40/3, NAUK, p.297

⁴⁹³ He argued that “the good of the service and the interests of individual officers outweighed absolutely...his own personal convenience.” (‘Untitled document’, *Miscellaneous Documents*, PRO 30/40/13, NAUK, p.552)

⁴⁹⁴ ‘Ardagh to a friend in Ireland (20 April 1900)’, *Miscellaneous Papers, Private and Official*, PRO 30/40/3, NAUK, p.129

⁴⁹⁵ ‘Untitled document’, *Miscellaneous Documents*, PRO 30/40/13, NAUK, pp.552-553

⁴⁹⁶ ‘Ardagh to Grove (11 Feb 1901)’, *Miscellaneous Papers, Private and Official*, PRO 30/40/3, NAUK, p.163

stereotypes of the honourable British officer, who would eschew any activity that was not considered in 'good sport'.⁴⁹⁷ It is a stereotype that has been applied by scholars and commentators to Britons as a whole, especially when compared to other Europeans.⁴⁹⁸ Yet, it has been proven false by a weight of evidence, particularly in the work of David Vincent and Christopher Moran.⁴⁹⁹ Ardagh's statement to Grove gives an insight into how he understood the nature of intelligence work, as well as what he considered to be the ideal for an intelligence officer. Crucially, it was a model that was at odds with the traditions for a British Army Officer. With the existence of this dichotomy there was always going to be a clash between military culture and the work of Britain's intelligence agencies. Yet, this also exhibits how the ID remained at the forefront of the drive for professionalisation within the Army. It was an advocate for the importance of brains over character.

Through 1899 to 1901 the ID remained unable to establish itself as an integral constituent of the Army's hierarchy. Intelligence work was still viewed with a level of contempt. The DMI did not enjoy the power and prestige afforded to other senior military officers. The ID was barred from representation on important military organisations and continued to work under the restrictions imposed by British military culture. Yet, it continued to position itself as a structure dedicated to professionalism and intellectualism. Commander-in-Chief Wolseley's poor relations with policymakers hampered the flow of the ID's information. This was a potent demonstration of how harmful an influence the Army's leadership could pose upon the ID. Yet, despite this and the effects of the

⁴⁹⁷ For instance, an article in *The Cornhill Magazine*, a monthly Victorian magazine and literary journal, from February 1900 stated that, "any system of espionage is abhorrent to our spirit and traditions." ('The Cornhill Magazine (February 1900)', Arthur Griffiths, *Miscellaneous Documents*, PRO 30/40/13, NAUK, p.149)

⁴⁹⁸ In his work on French intelligence, Douglas Porch argued that "French politicians remained untouched by notions of gentlemanly fair play which induced at least discretion among Anglo-Saxon politicians over the interception of foreign diplomatic messages." (D. Porch, *The French Secret Services: From the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War* (London: MacMillan, 1996) p.40)

⁴⁹⁹ Their work has demonstrated the excessive level of secrecy that has dominated modern British governance and private life. See Vincent, *The Culture of Secrecy* and C. Moran, *Classified: Secrecy and the State in Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Second Boer War, the ID continued to play an important role in imperial and foreign policymaking.

Involvement in Policymaking

The Second Boer War served only to heighten the sense of anxiety about Britain's international position. There was concern that an anti-British bloc of Continental powers might emerge. Although this never occurred, Britain's entanglement in South Africa did not prevent the other powers "from taking advantage of Britain's South African preoccupations."⁵⁰⁰ While the War was raging another event erupted in Asia that caused more problems for Britain's foreign policymakers. This was the Boxer Rebellion in China which lasted from November 1899 to September 1901.⁵⁰¹ The major international powers came together to cooperate their response to the Rebellion and to protect their interests within China.⁵⁰²

The problem for Britain was in both the timing of the Rebellion and the objectives of Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary Salisbury. He was not keen to cooperate closely with other powers, particularly Germany, in securing British interests in China. This brought him into conflict with other members of his Cabinet, specifically Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain.⁵⁰³ As Thomas Otte concludes with Britain "tied down in the war against the Boers, and Lord Salisbury unable or unwilling to give a lead, other Powers, primarily Russia and Germany, were able to dictate the pace and direction of international diplomacy in East Asia."⁵⁰⁴ Discontent over the direction of foreign policy within the Cabinet forced

⁵⁰⁰ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.276

⁵⁰¹ For the members of the Boxer Movement, "their primary commitment was to the eradication of the Christian and...the foreign presence in China." (J.W. Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1987) p.301)

⁵⁰² These were specifically: Britain, Russia, Germany, France, Japan, Italy, Austria-Hungary, and the US.

⁵⁰³ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.278

⁵⁰⁴ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.236

Salisbury to give up control of the Foreign Office in November 1900. In July 1902, suffering from ill health and in mourning for his wife, he resigned as Prime Minister and Arthur Balfour succeeded him. This marked the end of an era of British foreign policy.

The Second Boer War had been a true imperial endeavour. Troops from across the Empire had been involved in the suppression of the Boers. As the twentieth century began, however, there remained considerable anxiety over the Empire's future. There was a realisation that "Britain had become an over-extended empire, magnificent but unnatural." Added to this was the cognisance that the Dominions were "fast evolving from colonies into nations and diverging further and further from Britain."⁵⁰⁵ Another cause for concern lay in the rise of American and German economic power, further threatening Britain's global position. There also remained the persistent danger of colonial frictions igniting between the various global colonial powers. In this atmosphere of uncertainty and apparent decline, calls were made for greater unity to be brought to the Empire.⁵⁰⁶ Even as the international realm became more unstable one constant remained. Foreign and imperial policy remained the key outlets for the ID to influence state governance through the turn of the century. The Second Boer War demonstrated the limited influence that the ID had on determining the outcome of government policy by the late 1890s. Yet, intelligence officers continued to expand their involvement within the policymaking realms through this period, shaping debates and having a presence within foreign and imperial policy.

Through 1900 the ID advised on policy questions that sat outside the strict realm of military affairs. An article in *The Forum*, from November 1900, stated how DMI Ardagh corresponded "direct with all state departments upon military questions, and generally, but in a more private, semi-official manner, upon any

⁵⁰⁵ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century* p.257, p.251

⁵⁰⁶ For instance, Prime Minister Balfour wrote to Lord Esher, on 14 January 1904, arguing that, "the Indian and the Home Army are really one army though with two organisations, and under two Governments, I welcome anything which brings them together." ('Arthur Balfour to Esher (14 Jan 1904)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.2)

other questions that” arose.⁵⁰⁷ Close connection with the civilian sphere, starting with the IB in the 1870s, led to the expansion of the ID’s remit from beyond pure military boundaries. As Ardagh’s time as DMI concluded, in April 1901, Sir Thomas Sanderson, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote to the Under-Secretary of State for War on 11 April 1901. Sanderson related how:

There are...a number of pending questions of considerable importance and complexity on which Sir John Ardagh has been advising, and in regard to which the loss of his experience and intimate knowledge of the facts and correspondence would place this Department at a serious disadvantage.⁵⁰⁸

These questions included numerous colonial issues in Africa and arbitration over South American boundaries.⁵⁰⁹ Sanderson’s letter exhibits three important details. Firstly, it displays the continued strong working relationship between Ardagh and Lansdowne, which grew firmer after the latter had moved to the Foreign Office. This again shows the significance of Ardagh’s personality in expediting the ID’s expanded role within policymaking. It also shows how other Foreign Office officials were equally concerned with preserving access to the ID’s information and analysis. It indicates how its most receptive audience remained outside of military circles. Secondly, Sanderson’s letter reveals how important the ID remained to imperial and foreign policy formation. Finally, the letter illustrates how the ID’s inter-departmental functions continued to facilitate its involvement with the civilian sphere and in policymaking. This again signals the overriding importance of the influence of political and administrative culture.

The ID remained intimately involved with imperial policy from 1899 to 1901. It also retained a litany of imperial connections. In the prelude to the Second Boer

⁵⁰⁷ ‘“The Forum” (November 1900)’, Arthur Griffiths, *Official and private papers: South African War. Intelligence Division*, PRO 30/40/16, NAUK, p.347

⁵⁰⁸ ‘Sir Thomas Sanderson to the Under-Secretary of State War Office (11 April 1901)’, *Miscellaneous Papers, Private and Official*, PRO 30/40/3, NAUK, p.1

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid

War, it had sought assistance from Natal's colonial government. There was a dire lack of maps of South Africa. To remedy this, in Summer 1897, DMI Ardagh called upon the Prime Minister of Natal, Sir Harry Escombe, to urge the continued importance of further surveying the area. Escombe "appreciated the need, and, though he said the funds were difficult to obtain, promised to do what he could to carry out the work." Upon his return to Natal, however, "his Ministry was turned out of office, and the succeeding Prime Minister did not carry out the agreement."⁵¹⁰ This episode indicates both the strengths and the weaknesses of the relationship between the ID and the colonial administrations of the Empire. The DMI held a senior enough position to communicate with leading colonial administrators. This facilitated potential agreements that could benefit intelligence gathering efforts. Yet, the DMI was not sufficiently powerful, and the Empire too decentralised, for him to compel these ministries to undertake any serious projects. The ID required the active support of the government or the Army's leadership to have any realistic chance of achieving that goal.

As the War in South Africa progressed the ID continued to advise upon foreign policy. On 23 January and 3 February 1900 Ardagh sent memoranda to Sir Thomas Sanderson, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on the issue of Britain reaching an agreement with Russia over Persia. He stated that while he desired an understanding with Russia:

I am convinced that the present moment, in consequence of our embarrassments in South Africa, is a most inopportune one in which to enter into pourparlers with Russia upon this or any other subject, as we should have to carry on the discussion with one of our hands tied, in a situation from which Russia would naturally exact all the advantage she could.⁵¹¹

⁵¹⁰ 'Statement of the Intelligence Division (1902)', *Miscellaneous Documents*, PRO 30/40/13, NAUK, p.14

⁵¹¹ 'An Understanding with Russia on Persian Matters. Sir H.D. Wolff's Proposal (23 Jan. 1900 & 3 Feb. 1900)', *Sir John Ardagh's Memoranda Vol. II*, PRO 30/40/14, NAUK, p.3

This passage is indicative of Ardagh's views on foreign policy and signifies how his vision was global. It focuses upon the delimitation of spheres of influence and underlined the fragility of Britain's international position in 1900. He was also, once again, advocating a policy contradictory to that favoured by Prime Minister Salisbury. While the latter preferred to avoid foreign partnerships Ardagh promoted seeking an agreement with Russia, even if early 1900 was an inopportune moment. This issue of policy towards Persia also affected imperial policy. There remained a close link between it and foreign policy.

The ID remained involved in imperial policy formation. In a memorandum, from 30 July 1900, Ardagh discussed telegraphic communication between Maskat (in present day Oman) and Bunder Abbas in Persia across the Gulf of Oman. He advocated the laying of a telegraphic cable that would connect the two ports.⁵¹² This denotes how he continued to promote policy. Increased imperial communications were important for the ID, as they aided in the collection and dissemination of intelligence. This memorandum demonstrates the close connection between imperial and foreign policy. Telegraphic communication across the Gulf of Oman would have improved the circulation of information across the Empire. It would help to secure British interests in Persia against potential Russian encroachment. Ardagh's recommendations for policy in Persia were not adopted until about six years after he left the ID. The signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 divided Persia into Russian and British spheres of influence as he had advocated. This reveals that the ID was not producing assessments to fit the inclinations of foreign policymakers. Instead, it was providing analysis that reflected the opinions of its members, based on their examination of the available information and current circumstances. This is another example of how the ID was following Kent's model of 'objective' intelligence.

Persia was not the only area of interest for the ID. On 26 May 1900 Ardagh continued to advise the Foreign Office upon the issue of boundaries between

⁵¹² 'Telegraph Communication to Maskat & Bunder Abbas (30 July 1900)', *Ibid*, p.5

Britain's Colonies in Africa and those of other European nations.⁵¹³ His final serious intervention in foreign and imperial policy came in a 22 September 1900 memorandum on the question of China, that was circulated to the Commander-in-Chief, Secretary of State for War, India Office, Foreign Office, and the Indian IB. He argued that "China should emerge from the present crisis with sufficient strength to maintain her independence, but not too powerful...to flout the reasonable demands of other nations." Interestingly, Ardagh shifted away from a purely military viewpoint to scrutinise economic considerations. He asserted the importance of opening China's waterways to foreign trade. To this end, he suggested that a proposal should be put forward for Britain to be entrusted with control of Shanghai.⁵¹⁴ It was unlikely that the other great powers would have perceived greater British control in China as better for all, but this memorandum evinces some interesting trends. It signals how the Second Boer War failed to dislodge the ID from its role in imperial and foreign policy formation. It also illustrates how the ID's remit had grown to encompass subjects outside of military information. Foreign and imperial policymaking afforded a persistent portal for the ID to enter broader areas of state governance. This prefaced the role that is fulfilled by most modern intelligence institutions.

While the government had ignored its advice in the prelude to the Second Boer War, the ID remained an important part of foreign and imperial policymaking from 1899 to 1901. Ardagh remained vocal in policy decisions. The close connection between foreign and imperial policy ensured that the ID's intervention in one area affected the other. Involvement in these realms continued to expand its remit out from purely military boundaries. Its importance to these policy areas was recognised by the Foreign Office, which sought to preserve its connection to the ID's information. Just as it had failed to prevent the continued effect of

⁵¹³ 'Boundary between Uganda & the Congo State (26 May 1900)', Ibid

⁵¹⁴ 'China. Advisability of Occupation of Pei-[Jang], Tongshan, Ching-wang-tao, and Shan-hai-kuan; and general observations (22 Sept. 1900)', Ibid, p.14, pp.14-15

political and administrative culture, the Second Boer War did not stall the ID's involvement in foreign and imperial policymaking.

Conclusion: The Voice from the Wilderness

1899 to 1901 proved to be an eventful period for the ID. The Second Boer War dominated the narrative, and it looked as if it would destroy the progress made by the ID. Yet, while it certainly caused major problems, the War was unable both to disrupt the evolutionary process or to disrupt the predominant influence of political and administrative culture which continued to preponderate. Despite the initial wave of criticism, partly fuelled by some government figures, the ID was able to retain strong ties with the civilian sphere. It retained a positive working relationship with state and government officials. Even in the prelude to the War, when it was neglected by the War Office, the Colonial Office received the ID's information and tried to bring attention to it. This demonstrates how the ID remained an inter-departmental structure. The War was unable to shake the principles upon which the ID had been built. Ardagh was a proponent for 'integrated control' advocating that the ID should develop within this model. It reveals how embedded these state governance principles, based on political and administrative culture, had become to the evolutionary process. The effect of political and administrative culture remained strong into the twentieth century.

1899 to 1901 demonstrated the negative impact of the military leadership upon the ID's evolution. The Second Boer War served to heighten the effects of the former's apathy. Wolseley's performance as Commander-in-Chief hampered the flow of intelligence to civilian policymakers. Added to this, the ID continued to be treated as the poor relation to the other parts of the Army remaining an undervalued institution. Military culture exerted a powerful stranglehold upon the development of foreign intelligence. The perennial emphasis upon field service persisted in damaging intelligence work, which was portrayed as antithetical to the ideal of a British officer. This separated intelligence officers from their military peers. DMI Ardagh sought to elevate the ID's position within the Army's

hierarchy, to break the pattern of indifference and animosity. These remained the dominant elements of the ID's relationship with the Army's leadership at the turn of the twentieth century.

The government paid little heed to the ID's counsel in the prelude to the War in South Africa. This did not, however, signal the end of the latter's involvement in foreign and imperial policymaking. DMI Ardagh made forceful interventions into policy towards Persia, from January to July 1900, and over affairs in China, in September. The ID was not always successful in forcing adoptions of strategy but it denotes how intimately involved it remained within these policy realms. State and government officials recognised the ID's importance to foreign and imperial policy and wanted to preserve their access to its information. This displays how integral the ID had become to policymaking.

The Second Boer War, therefore, could not disrupt the evolutionary process. The influence of political and administrative culture pulled the ID towards the civilian sphere, causing the apathy of senior soldiers, and enabling its involvement in foreign and imperial policymaking. In the War's aftermath a new attempt was made to heighten the importance of foreign intelligence. A new organisation, the Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence, was formed in November 1901. It did not last long but it marks another important milestone in the evolution of Britain's foreign intelligence machinery.

Chapter 5: Reform and Continuity, 1901-1904

In November 1901 the Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence was created, incorporating both the ID and the Mobilisation Division. The head of this new agency was given the title of Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence. Lieutenant-General Sir William Nicholson was the only holder of this post. The Department of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence (DMMI) was to be short-lived, lasting only until February 1904.

Despite the brief span of time the evolution of the DMMI was driven by the same factors as its predecessors. The influence of political and administrative culture remained predominant. The DMMI was an inter-departmental structure and it became embedded in the Whitehall 'committee system', most prominently on the new Defence Committee established in 1902, which became the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1904. Senior government and military figures were made members of this Committee, and the inclusion of the Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence (DGMI) upon it signified a notable raise in authority and prestige for foreign intelligence. The DMMI was further integrated into the civilian sphere by this committee participation. Some problems emerged when the DMMI became involved in the debate over the formation of a General Staff. The work of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa and Lord Hardwicke's Committee would limit the DMMI's development, to prevent it from transforming into a General Staff. The Esher Committee, however, inaugurated a radical development that saw the formation of a General Staff and another transformation of foreign intelligence. The DMMI also reinforced the connections with important civilian departments, like the Foreign Office, and instituted a stronger connection with the Prime Minister.

There also proved to be a slight thaw in the DMMI's association with the Army. DGMI Nicholson was to enjoy a good working relationship with Commander-in-Chief Roberts, in stark contrast to DMI Ardagh's link with Wolseley in the late 1890s. Yet, other senior officers sought to curb the authority of the DMMI. It

remained a bastion of intellectualism and professionalism within the Army, qualities that were not embraced by all Army leaders. This period also witnessed a deterioration of the connection between the DMMI and the Royal Navy. These were all signs that a change was coming. The result would be significantly improved relations between Britain's foreign intelligence machinery and the Army's leadership. This remained a work in progress, however, from 1901 to 1904.

The DMMI became more intimately involved within foreign and imperial policymaking through this period. It was involved in important policy decisions, particularly the discussions over a partnership with France. It also was successful in influencing the direction of policy such as over Indian defence. This served to draw the DMMI further into the civilian sphere. The influence of political and administrative culture remained dominant driving the other parts of the evolutionary process. The period from 1901 to 1904 witnessed the reinforcement of important trends, while it also displayed the crucial developments that were underway. These would help secure the position of Britain's foreign intelligence machinery within the civilian and military spheres.

DGMI William Nicholson

William Nicholson was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in March 1865 serving in Barbados and India. He had assembled an impressive service record prior to 1901, including in the Afghan Wars (1878-1880), the Egyptian Expedition of 1882, the Burmese Expedition (1886-1887), and the Second Boer War. In this latter conflict he had served as Military Secretary to Lord Roberts, commander of the British forces from December 1899 to December 1900, and then as Director of Transport. Unlike Ardagh, Nicholson had not previously been employed in military intelligence. This was his first and only intelligence appointment. His experience of staff work likely made him an attractive candidate for helping to reconstitute the ID. Nicholson took over the ID from Ardagh in June 1901. He was given the new title of DGMI and charged with:

the preparation and maintenance of detailed plans for the military defence of the Empire and for the organisation and mobilisation of the Regular and Auxiliary Forces; with the preparation and maintenance of schemes of offensive and defensive operations; the collection and distribution of information relating to the military geography, resources, and armed forces of foreign countries, and of the British Colonies and possessions.⁵¹⁵

The DGMI was modelled upon the position of the Chief of Staff in foreign armies.⁵¹⁶ Unlike previous intelligence heads, Nicholson had never passed through the Staff College.⁵¹⁷ This fact, however, did not alter the professional and intellectual character of the DMMI.

The decision to transform the ID was taken by Salisbury's government in the aftermath of the Second Boer War, spurred on by the work of the Dawkins Committee. Established in 1901 to examine arrangements at the War Office, this Committee noted the administrative confusion that reigned at this department and the lack of individual responsibility amongst the various soldiers and civilians employed there.⁵¹⁸ The reconstitution of the ID was one measure by the government to combat this turmoil. An Order in Council, from 4 November 1901, amalgamated the Mobilisation Division with the ID altering the constitution and, in Nicholson's words, "the whole of the functions" of the latter.⁵¹⁹ This was hyperbolic. The DMMI carried out many of the same functions as the ID had. As it was being created another committee was formed to examine the new DMMI.

⁵¹⁵ 'Order in Council', 'Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.281

⁵¹⁶ *Hansard (Fourth Series)*, House of Commons Debate, 4 March 1902, Vol.104, col.377

⁵¹⁷ Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.22

⁵¹⁸ Kochanski, 'Planning for War in the Final Years of *Pax Britannica*, 1889-1903', *The British General Staff: Reform and Innovation c.1890-1939*, p.22

⁵¹⁹ 'Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (Volume I)', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.1

Lord Hardwicke's Committee

Lord Hardwicke's Committee was appointed in August 1901. Its task was to examine the issue of the 'Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division', meaning the DMMI. It was appointed in response to requests from DGMI Nicholson to secure an increase in the size of the DMMI. In response, the Finance Branch of the War Office suggested that a Committee should be formed to investigate the "adequacy of the present Establishment." Therefore, the aim of Lord Hardwicke's Committee was to enquire into the "duties and organization" of the DMMI.⁵²⁰ The Chairman was the Earl of Hardwicke who was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for India. The other members were Mr Robert Chalmers from the Treasury, Accountant-General Mr F.T. Marzials, and retired Royal Engineer officer Major Leonard Darwin. The Committee published its report on 10 March 1903.

There were three major recommendations. Firstly, the Committee advised that the DMMI should be increased in strength from twenty officers to twenty-nine. Secondly, that officers working there should receive equal opportunity for professional advancement. Finally, it recommended that the DMMI's work was to be solely advisory rather than executive. Any action of the latter category was to be left to the other administrative departments of the War Office.⁵²¹ This final point incensed DGMI Nicholson, who believed that the Committee had "entered upon an enquiry exceeding the terms of their reference."⁵²² Thanks to these recommendations the intelligence staff was increased. By 1903 there were thirty-three officers employed, although thirteen were attached.⁵²³ Yet, the Committee's final recommendation proved a serious impediment to the DMMI's future development. By categorising it as an advisory structure Lord Hardwicke's

⁵²⁰ 'Report of the Committee', *Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division*, WO 279/537, NAUK, p.4, p.5

⁵²¹ Ibid, p.11, p.7, p.11

⁵²² 'Memorandum by Sir William Nicholson', Ibid, p.58

⁵²³ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.250

Committee limited the DMMI's power, especially compared to other military departments which could authorise action. This ensured that the DMMI was bedevilled by the same problems, which its predecessors faced, in its relationship with the military establishment.

The DMMI

The DMMI consisted of a Mobilisation Division and an Intelligence Division. The latter was divided into three Sub-Divisions. These were: The Strategical Sub-Division (I.1), the Foreign and Indian Sub-Division (I.2), and the Special Duties Sub-Division (I.3). I.1 consisted of two sections. Section A was responsible for the "Military defence of the Empire, including the preparation and maintenance of plans of offensive and defensive operations (other than within the United Kingdom). Strategical consideration of Defence Schemes abroad. Strategical distribution of the military forces of the Empire." Section B dealt with, the "Collation and distribution of information relating to the military, geography, resources, and armed forces of the Empire (other than India)." I.2, encompassing the bulk of the foreign intelligence work, was consolidated into four sections. Section A focused upon France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Central and South America. Section B dealt with Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Africa. Section C was tasked with Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, the US, and its protectorates, such as Cuba and the Philippines. Finally, Section D focused upon Russia, India, Afghanistan, Burma, Siam, Japan, China, Central Asia, Persia, and the Middle East. I.3 contained four sections as well. Section A dealt with censorship, Section B the compilation and preparation of maps, Section C was the Map room, while Section D was the Library.⁵²⁴ In July 1902 there were twenty-eight officers employed at the DMMI. Eight of these,

⁵²⁴ 'Memorandum of 27th November, 1901, showing Distribution of Duties in Director-General of Military Intelligence's Department', 'Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.282

however, were either only attached or on a temporary employment.⁵²⁵ The Order in Council, from 4 November 1901, stated that the DMMI was to remain under the control of the Commander-in-Chief as the ID had.⁵²⁶ The DMMI's organisation underwent a radical change thanks to the work of another committee.

The War Office Reconstitution Committee

Despite his membership of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, Lord Esher had been unsatisfied with its recommendations. He was convinced of the need to institute further reform within the War Office. To this end, he used his personal connection to King Edward VII to chair a new committee to propose further administrative reform.⁵²⁷ Esher set himself a lofty goal "to take the War Office Administration right through, from top to bottom, and endeavour to make it a first class business machine."⁵²⁸ His wish was granted in 1903.

In November 1903 the War Office Reconstitution Committee was appointed by Secretary of State for War H.O. Arnold-Forster, with Esher assuming the position of Chairman. It is often referred to as the Esher Committee. The Committee's aim was to combat the:

want of co-ordination between the different branches of the War Office itself. The problem is not only to remedy this, but to bring about a practical co-ordination for War;

⁵²⁵ 'Appendix II', *Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division*, WO 279/537, NAUK, p.13

⁵²⁶ 'Order in Council', *Ibid*, p.281

⁵²⁷ Hew Strachan has correctly highlighted how "Esher used his chairmanship to sideline the secretary of war...and the cabinet...Instead he consulted the king, seizing the opportunity to reassert the royal prerogative." (Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, pp.67-68)

⁵²⁸ 'Letter from Esher to Francis Knollys (Private Secretary to Edward VII) (27 September 1903)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee*, 27 Sept 1903-21 Dec 1905, ESHR 10/28, The Papers of Viscount Esher, CCA, Cambridge, UK, pp.1-2, p.2

firstly, between the Navy and the Army, and secondly, between the Military forces of the Empire.⁵²⁹

On the Committee alongside Esher sat Admiral John Fisher, soon to become the First Sea Lord, and Colonel Sir George Clarke, shortly to become the first secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Fisher's presence was significant. Many of the reforms proposed by the Committee resembled the arrangements at the Admiralty.⁵³⁰

The work of the Esher Committee was in many respects a continuation of the work of previous committees. Esher was determined to promote the reforms that he had suggested during the Royal Commission. These had been firstly, "to reorganise the War Office Council, and to define more clearly their functions, as an advisory and executive Board;" secondly, "to decentralize internally the War Department, by a re-arrangement of duties...abolishing the cross jurisdiction now existing;" and finally, "to abolish the Commander-in-Chief, and to appoint a General Officer Commanding the Army, responsible to the Secretary of State for the efficiency of the military forces of the Crown."⁵³¹

One of the defining principles that underlay the Committee's recommendations was that the "first principle of War Office reform should be a War Organization adaptable to Peace, and not a Peace Organisation unadaptable to War."⁵³² In pursuit of this the Committee made several important recommendations. Firstly, it advised that the newly established Defence

⁵²⁹ 'Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part I) (11 Jan 1904)', 14 Nov 1903-19 Mar 1904, *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I: Reports, Evidence and Correspondence*, ESHR 16/4, The Papers of Viscount Esher, CCA, Cambridge, UK, p.1

⁵³⁰ The Committee argued that they had decided "to take the Admiralty system of higher administration as the basis of our action, and we are convinced that, while there may be imperfections in the working of that system, it is absolutely sound in principle." (Ibid, p.7)

⁵³¹ 'Note by Viscount Esher', 'Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Military Preparations and Other Matters Connected with the War in South Africa', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.146

⁵³² 'Report of the Committee (2 Dec 1903)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I: Reports, Evidence and Correspondence*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.1

Committee needed to be strengthened. To achieve this the Committee recommended adding a permanent nucleus to it, while transferring the functions of the CDC and the Joint Naval and Military Committee for Defence to its portfolio. Secondly, the Esher Committee recommended the creation of an Army Council, modelled on the Board of Admiralty, which would deal with the higher administration of the Army. This would contain four military and three civil members. The Secretary of State for War would preside while the other members would be responsible for special areas of military affairs. These were listed as: Operations of War, including intelligence; Personnel; Supply; Armament; Civil Business; and Finance. Thirdly, the Committee recommended that the position of Commander-in-Chief should be abolished.⁵³³ Fourthly, it advised that a General Staff should be established. This was an organisation that would devote “its undivided attention to military problems in the widest sense,” and which would be “occupied in peace in the training of all ranks of the Army and prepared to direct operations in the field.” Finally, it advised that there should be, within the War Office, a “change of personnel, in order to mark emphatically a complete change of system.”⁵³⁴ This final point was a recurrent theme. The Committee had determined that new blood was needed within the War Office if any sort of meaningful change was to be enacted.⁵³⁵

Although they spelled its end the recommendations of the Esher Committee were critical for the evolution of the DMMI. DGMI Nicholson was a victim of the Committee’s ruthless determination to introduce new men to the War Office. He was unceremoniously ousted from his position in the aftermath of the Committee’s Report on 11 February 1904.⁵³⁶ The DMMI itself was superseded by the new

⁵³³ ‘Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part I) (11 Jan 1904)’, Ibid, pp.4-5, p.9, p.10

⁵³⁴ ‘Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part II), 26 Feb 1904’, Ibid, p.22, p.1

⁵³⁵ I.F.W. Beckett, ‘Selection by Disparagement’: Lord Esher, the General Staff and the Politics of Command, 1904-14’, *The British General Staff: Reform and Innovation c. 1890-1939*, p.41. Hamer agreed with this point, arguing that, the “forced retirement of the entire ruling clique at the War Office was made the condition upon which the success of the scheme depended.” (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.243)

⁵³⁶ Henry Wilson described how, he “was in Nick’s room talking over things with him...when in walked Jimmy Grierson and said *Esher* had ordered him up from Salisbury to take over Nick’s office. Nick himself had not been informed, nor had he been told to hand over.” (Major-General

Directorate of Military Operations. The latter was a beneficiary of the Committee's recommendations. It was a key part of the new General Staff and Army Council. It also remained intimately involved within the Defence Committee, which was established on a permanent basis in 1904 and renamed the Committee of Imperial Defence. This latter organisation will be examined in the proceeding section as it was crucial to the evolution of the DMML.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

After the Second Boer War military reform became a pressing concern for Prime Minister Balfour's government. To this end, Secretary of State for War St John Brodrick (1901-1903) proposed a plan for potential army reform in March 1901. His proposal was that the Army should be increased and divided into six army corps. Three of these would consist of regular troops ready for despatch overseas. The remainder would consist mainly of volunteers, militia, and yeomanry primarily for home defence. Training was to be improved and more responsibility delegated to the officers of each corps. Interestingly, Brodrick did not rule out the possibility that the Corps detailed to serve overseas might be sent to fight in a Continental war. This was hardly a radical plan but it faced immediate opposition. This came chiefly from navalists, who feared that the proposal would mean a decrease in naval funding, and from the soldiers of the War Office.

The key figure here was Commander-in-Chief Roberts. He was generally inclined to support Brodrick's reforms, but the two men found themselves increasingly at odds. Roberts had been used to having a relatively free hand while Commander-in-Chief in India. He quickly became frustrated by what he viewed as Brodrick's meddling.⁵³⁷ In the end, however, Roberts gave his support to the

Sir C.E. Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson Bart., G.C.B., D.S.O. His Life and Diaries Volume I* (London, Toronto, Melbourne & Sydney: Cassell and Company, 1927) p.55 (emphasis in original)) For more on Esher's dislike of Nicholson see Beckett, 'Selection by Disparagement': Lord Esher, the General Staff and the Politics of Command, 1904-14', *The British General Staff: Reform and Innovation c. 1890-1939* pp.47-49

⁵³⁷ Atwood, *The Life of Field Marshal Lord Roberts*, p.224

reforms. Brodrick then came up against formidable opposition in the Cabinet from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks Beach. The contest with Beach bogged down Brodrick's reforms until July 1902. Even after this struggle was resolved, further attacks were made upon the proposals from outside government circles. Eventually, Brodrick was removed from the War Office in the Cabinet reconstruction of September to October 1903. Although he had recognised some of the key problems with the Army, Brodrick failed to win the necessary support for his reforms. In the end, his proposals were either abandoned or revised.⁵³⁸

Despite this climate of strife, reform, and faction political and administrative culture remained a supreme influence upon the development of British foreign intelligence. As with its predecessors the DMMI was inter-departmental in character, while becoming more intricately involved with the 'committee system'. Along with new state machinery, such as the Defence Committee, the DMMI helped to foster cooperation and consensus across the state's apparatus.

Compared to its predecessors, the DMMI was afforded an enlarged role within the 'committee system'. In 1901 the War Office Council was established with a remit to examine general affairs within the Army, dealing with questions such as organisation and administration. The membership of this Council included the Secretary of State for War, the Commander-in-Chief, and other important civilian and military figures at the War Office including the DGMI. The latter was also made a member of the Joint Military and Naval Defence Committee, whose purpose was to advise the Admiralty and the War Office upon "strategical questions in matters of defence."⁵³⁹ There was a deliberate attempt to include the DMMI within Whitehall's 'committee system'. In the Commons on 4 March 1902 Secretary of State for War Brodrick stated that, while the DGMI's predecessors had "always been on the outer ring of the War Office circle," the government had

⁵³⁸ L.J. Satre, 'St. John Brodrick and Army Reform, 1901-1903', *Journal of British Studies* 15/2 (Spring 1976), pp.128-130, p.136, p.137

⁵³⁹ 'Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (Volume I)', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.2, p.3, p.14

“now introduced him to the inner circle.”⁵⁴⁰ This referred to DGMI Nicholson’s inclusion upon several important committees.

The DMMI’s most important committee participation was on the Defence Committee. In the opening to its report the Esher Committee stated that:

no measure of War Office reform will avail, unless it is associated with provision for obtaining and collating for the use of the Cabinet all the information and the expert advice required for the shaping of national policy in war, and for determining the necessary preparations in peace. Such information and advice must necessarily embrace not only the sphere of the War Office, but those of the Admiralty and of other offices of State.⁵⁴¹

This was a function to be fulfilled by the Defence Committee, informally established by Prime Minister Arthur Balfour in December 1902. It was decided that the CDC and the Joint Naval and Military Committee for Defence were to become sub-committees of the Defence Committee.⁵⁴² The latter was designed to be an advisory body. As Lord Esher stated, on 29 February 1904, “Its duty is purely to advise.” Esher also urged that, except for the Prime Minister, it was undesirable that “the Committee should contain any *ex officio* Members.”⁵⁴³ This enabled the Prime Minister to call upon any politician or official, both civilian and military, to present counsel providing a good level of flexibility.⁵⁴⁴ From 1904 onwards officials from across the Empire also began to attend meetings.⁵⁴⁵ The Committee existed

⁵⁴⁰ *Hansard (Fourth Series)*, House of Commons Debate, 4 March 1902, Vol.104, col.377

⁵⁴¹ ‘Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part I) (11 Jan 1904)’, *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I: Reports, Evidence and Correspondence*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.3

⁵⁴² ‘Minutes of 1st Meeting (December 18, 1902)’, 18 December 1902-14 November 1905, Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

⁵⁴³ ‘A Note on the Constitution of the Defence Committee, PM Balfour (29 February 1904)’, 1904-1922, *Committee of Imperial Defence: Constitution and Functions*, CAB 21/468, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1, p.2 (emphasis in original)

⁵⁴⁴ Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, pp.57-58

⁵⁴⁵ Constitution and Functions of the Committee of Imperial Defence (31 May 1922)’, *Committee of Imperial Defence: Constitution and Functions*, CAB 21/468, NAUK, p.2

in a transitory state for just over a year.⁵⁴⁶ Working off the recommendations of the Esher Committee Prime Minister Balfour established the Defence Committee, renamed the Committee of Imperial Defence, on an official basis on 4 May 1904. The Prime Minister was confirmed as Chair and a permanent secretariat was added.

The Defence Committee was a striking example of several important features of British state governance: the ‘committee system’, inter-departmentalism, and a focus upon cooperation and consensus. It was a demonstration of the system of ‘integrated control’, as Balfour’s government sought to collate expert advice upon which to base policy. The DGMI was a regular member of this Committee. The DMMI’s inclusion aided its inter-departmental functions, while furthering its incorporation into the civilian sphere and its role in policy formation.

DGMI Nicholson attended all the thirty-four Committee meetings from 18 December 1902 to 10 March 1904. Speaking to the Esher Committee, Nicholson stated that he had “a considerable amount of work in connection with” the Defence Committee.⁵⁴⁷ In fact, the work proved so substantial that Nicholson was compelled to request an increase in the DMMI’s staff. At the eleventh meeting, on 29 April 1903, Secretary of State for War Brodrick, speaking on behalf of Nicholson, stated that, “owing to the amount of extra work thrown on the [DMMI] by the work of the Committee, it had become necessary to ask for a considerable increase of staff.”⁵⁴⁸ This signifies how important the DMMI was to the work of the Defence Committee.

⁵⁴⁶ Johnson argued that, during this period, the Committee achieved little of substance. Yet, it provided a blueprint for effective military planning which was achieved with the Committee’s reconstitution in 1904. (Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, pp.59-60)

⁵⁴⁷ ‘Interview No. 19, Sir William Nicholson (13 Jan 1904), *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.1

⁵⁴⁸ ‘Minutes of 11th Meeting, April 29 1903’, *Nos. 1-82*, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1

This participation met with universal approval. The Royal Commission on the War in South Africa expressed their satisfaction with the DGMI's inclusion within these committees.⁵⁴⁹ Nicholson's greater involvement within the 'committee system' gave the DMMI and its head greater authority and prestige over its predecessors, although they continued to carry out similar duties. This collaboration had begun in the late 1880s and this period witnessed its apogee. The Defence Committee became a crucial organ for military planning and foreign policymaking. With its participation within this forum the DMMI was elevated to the highest levels of state policymaking. This denotes the salient effect of political and administrative culture upon the DMMI's evolution. It reinforced the importance of a 'committee style approach' to the latter's work, a trend that was enlarged further in the succeeding periods.

As with its predecessors the DMMI remained an inter-departmental agency. It continued to act as a conduit for information and promoted cooperation across the state's apparatus. For instance, through late 1901 to early 1902 DGMI Nicholson was involved in an inter-departmental committee to work out the military reinforcements that India would need in case of attack. Nicholson sat alongside the Military Secretary at the India Office and Sir William Lee-Warner, the Secretary of the Political and Secret Department at the India Office.⁵⁵⁰ This episode illustrates two details. Firstly, it signals how the principles of inter-departmentalism and the 'committee system' reinforced each other. Secondly, it reveals how involvement within this system furthered the DMMI's inter-departmental functions.

With its flexible and revolving membership the Defence Committee saw a wide range of officials and departments represented on it. This exponentially

⁵⁴⁹ Report of His Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Military Preparations and Other Matters Connected with the War in South Africa', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.135

⁵⁵⁰ 'Defence of India. Observations on the Memorandum, dated the 7th August, 1903, by the Viceroy and the Commander-in-chief in India on the Provisional Report of the Committee of Imperial Defence upon the Defence of India, (11 November 1903)', 24 December 1901-5 May 1904, Nos 1-50, CAB 6/1, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.3

increased the DMMI's ability to disseminate information, while also affording it greater access to information from other departments. During the Committee's tenth meeting, on 23 April 1903, there was a resumption of "the discussion of the defence of the north-west frontier of India with special reference to the diary prepared by the Director-General of Mobilization and Military Intelligence of the movements of the Russian and British main forces in Afghanistan." Present at this meeting were Prime Minister Balfour, Commander-in-Chief Roberts, Secretary of State for War Brodrick, representatives of the Admiralty, Secretary of State for India Lord George Hamilton, and other senior officials at the India Office.⁵⁵¹ This indicates how increased participation in the 'committee system' expanded the DMMI's inter-departmental functions.

The increase in these roles meant access to more information from the different military and civilian offices. This resulted in the DMMI collating this information into unified assessments, therefore, achieving a level of consensus. On 7 February 1903 Lieutenant-Colonel W.R. Robertson, head of I.2, produced a memorandum entitled 'The Military Resources of Germany, and Probable Method of their Employment in a War between Germany and England'. It covered not only military policy and army figures but also Germany's population, economic position, and colonies.⁵⁵² The wide range of information revealed the broad number of sources that the DMMI drew upon to generate this memorandum. The principle of achieving consensus, through cooperation, remained at the heart of this establishment's work. Its greater involvement in the 'committee system' meant that the DMMI could work towards this goal more effectively than its predecessors. The nature of achieving consensus would change in Britain through and after the First World War, especially with the growth of an intelligence community. Yet, it remains a key principle of British intelligence culture. The

⁵⁵¹ 'Minutes of 10th Meeting, April 23, 1903', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1

⁵⁵² 'The Military Resources of Germany, and Probable Method of their Employment in a War between Germany and England (7 February 1903)', 19 June 1888; February 1901-25 August 1906, Nos. 1A-40A, CAB 3/1, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

work of the DMMI, through the 'committee system', was a substantial step towards the prioritisation of this goal.

Interestingly, the War Office Reconstitution Committee decried Whitehall's 'committee system', arguing that "It seems to have become a habit to assemble a Committee whenever any question arises requiring special consideration. The general result is to delay necessary action, to destroy responsibility, and to entail a large aggregate expenditure."⁵⁵³ While an interesting critique, it had a negligible effect upon dismantling the 'committee system'. This stayed firmly rooted within the British practice of governance, while the DMMI stayed intricately involved within this system.

Through this period the DMMI continued to develop connections with the great departments of state, along with government and state officials. Yet, there remained strained relations between it and the War Office. On several occasions Secretary of State for War Brodrick deliberately delayed DMMI papers from reaching the Cabinet. For instance, on 30 January 1902, Brodrick told Commander-in-Chief Roberts that he had detained the DMMI's memorandum on the 'Military Defence of the Empire in a War with France and Russia'.⁵⁵⁴ This was reminiscent of Wolseley's conduct in the 1890s. This time, however, it was a government minister who was the problem. The criticism that Brodrick was facing, due to his Army reforms, likely made him more hesitant about what information was disseminated from the War Office. This had a direct impact upon the DMMI's inter-departmental functions.

⁵⁵³ 'Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part III) (9 March 1904)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.20

⁵⁵⁴ Brodrick stated that he had done this due to "the various discussions which have taken place on the Estimates because, while we were dealing with one of the most important questions raised above, it would not have been practicable to raise questions altering the strength and organization of the forces." ('Military Needs of the Empire in a War with France and Russia (12 August 1901)', Nos. 1A-40A, CAB 3/1, NAUK, p.6)

Brodrick also occasionally disagreed with the DMML's assessments. On 4 November 1902 he reviewed the latter's memorandum for the Foreign Office upon the situation in Persia. This dealt with the possibility of joint French and Russian action in Persia. Brodrick felt that the DMML was scaremongering, underestimating the British Army's ability to counter Franco-Russian efforts in Persia and ignoring Germany's desire to prevent Russian predominance in Persia.⁵⁵⁵ While there remained issues between the DMML and its ministerial head, there were signs of an improved relationship developing between the two. As previously noted, Brodrick had advocated increasing the intelligence staff to the Defence Committee. His successor H.O. Arnold-Forster also displayed concern for the DMML. On 12 November 1903, upon his elevation to Secretary of State, Arnold-Forster wrote to DGMI Nicholson. He inquired about the recent additions and improvements to the DMML. He asked, "whether, in your opinion, these additions and improvements have enabled you to carry out your important duties as thoroughly and completely as you desire."⁵⁵⁶ This evinces a marked change in the DMML's relationship with the War Office. Problems remained, but the former was not as isolated within the latter as the ID had been in the 1890s.

The relationship with the Foreign Office remained of critical importance. The former continued to charge the DMML to undertake work, including on the situation in Persia in October 1902.⁵⁵⁷ In his evidence to the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa DGMI Nicholson detailed the work of each Sub-Division of the DMML. Referring to the Special Duties Sub-Division, Nicholson stated how it dealt with "confidential matters, or secret questions, chiefly in connection with the Foreign Office."⁵⁵⁸ This reveals the intimately close relationship between the DMML and the latter. Yet, this did not preclude the occasional difference of

⁵⁵⁵ 'Persia. War Office Memoranda on Sir A. Hardinge's Letter of August 27, 1902, and Papers Annexed to it (Oct-Nov 1902)', *Nos 1-50*, CAB 6/1, NAUK, p.9

⁵⁵⁶ 'Memo from H.O. Arnold-Forster to DGMI Nicholson (12 November 1903)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee, Volume II*, 26 April 1904-14 March 1905, ESHR 16/5, The Papers of Viscount Esher (Reginald Brett), Cambridge, CCA, UK, p.1

⁵⁵⁷ 'Persia. War Office Memoranda on Sir A. Hardinge's Letter of August 27, 1902, and Papers Annexed to it (Oct-Nov 1902)', *Nos 1-50*, CAB 6/1, NAUK, p.5

⁵⁵⁸ 'Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (Volume I)', *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.15

opinion. During the twenty-eighth meeting of the Defence Committee, on 14 December 1903, DGMI Nicholson and Foreign Secretary Lansdowne clashed over negotiations with France.

Despite these conflicts, the relationship with the Foreign Office remained critical to the evolution of the DMMI. Close communication between the two persisted through this period, particularly between the Special Duties Sub-Division and the Foreign Office. On 19 February 1904 Colonel J.K. Trotter, Head of the Special Duties Sub-Division, wrote to Sir Thomas Sanderson, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Trotter reported that he had received information, from an agent in France, over the likelihood of France joining Russia in a war with Japan. Trotter stated to Sanderson that “I do not place very much reliance upon his views, but it will be well for you [to] know what he thinks.”⁵⁵⁹ Links with the Foreign Office remained an important source of funding and resources for the DMMI. On 1 January 1904 Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Davies, of the Special Duties Sub-Division, wrote to Sanderson asking for funding to aid in his efforts to secure intelligence on French Army munitions. The Foreign Office appeared to acquiesce to Davies’s request.⁵⁶⁰ Writing to Sanderson, on 9 February 1904, Colonel Trotter inquired, “Would it be possible to ascertain from the Consul General at Hamburg whether the firm of Busch & co. have been exporting arms &c. to German S.W. Africa.”⁵⁶¹ The relationship with the Foreign Office continued to draw the DMMI into the civilian sphere.

While connections to the civilian sphere remained critical to the DMMI’s evolution, one issue caused some civilian officials to consider limiting that institution’s development. This was linked to the question of the formation of a General Staff within Britain. The idea of this was anathema to several government

⁵⁵⁹ ‘Colonel J.K. Trotter to Sir Thomas Sanderson (19 February 1904)’, 1904, *Movements of arms; further correspondence about ‘A’ and correspondence with War Office*, HD 3/127, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, pp.1-2

⁵⁶⁰ ‘Lieutenant-Colonel Davies to Sir Thomas Sanderson (1 January 1904)’, Ibid, pp.1-2, p.2, pp.3-4

⁵⁶¹ ‘Colonel J.K. Trotter to Sir Thomas Sanderson (9 February 1904)’, Ibid, pp.1-2

and state administrators. They viewed the DMMI's further enlargement, and that of the ID before it, as a worrying step towards the creation of a General Staff. These views were summarised by Chairman Elgin of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa. In a 1903 memorandum he declared that:

I am ready to say of the Intelligence Division...[it] had neither the staff, nor the money, to carry out its duties in South Africa, but I am not ready to determine that the Director of Military Intelligence ought to become...Chief of the Staff.⁵⁶²

The Chief of Staff would have been the head of any new General Staff. This statement bespeaks to how Elgin was determined to prevent a massive expansion of the DMMI, which could have led to the formation of a General Staff. These views were reflected in the Commission's report which did not argue for any further increase to the DMMI.⁵⁶³

Lord Hardwicke's Committee posited the strongest arguments to limit the size of the DMMI. Every proposal made by the Committee in its report, on 10 March 1903, was "based throughout on the assumption that the duties of the Director-General and of his Staff are solely advisory." It was determined to reduce the scope of the DMMI's work, often suggesting that duties carried out by the DMMI could be transferred to other military and state departments. It advised that the DMMI should not focus as much attention upon the preparation of strategical schemes, although this was a significant part of the DMMI's workload. The

⁵⁶² 'Memo. for Commissioners only (1903)', *Papers: South African War Commission: Papers and Correspondence*, ESHR 15/2, CCA, p.4

⁵⁶³ Not all the Commissioners felt similarly to Elgin. Writing to King Edward VII, on 15 October 1902, Lord Esher noted the shocking comparison between the DMMI's Strategical Sub-Division and its counterpart within the German General Staff. He noted how "Work which is deputed in the German Army to 140 officers, is here entrusted to 8, although the field covered by enquiries...is in Your Majesty's Empire - world wide, compared with any field of operations contemplated by the German Staff." This demonstrates that Esher showed a willingness to look abroad that was not always shared by some of his contemporaries. This remerged a few years later during the work of the Esher Committee. ('Esher to Edward VII (15 October 1902)', 14 Oct 1902-11 Jul 1903, *Typescript copy of Lord Esher's reports to Edward VII*, ESHR 15/1, The Papers of Viscount Esher, CCA, p.4)

recommendation to reduce this function was a deliberate attempt to prevent the DMMI's further growth. Finally, the Committee argued that the DMMI would benefit "from a comparatively small but compact Staff of highly trained and carefully selected Officers."⁵⁶⁴ These proposals were designed to prevent the DMMI's transformation into a General Staff.⁵⁶⁵

The extension of the system of 'integrated control' allowed the DMMI to develop its connections with the civilian sphere. The DGMI was one of the chief military advisers to the government. The clearest example of the effect of 'integrated control' upon the evolution of the DMMI was in the growth of a direct relationship between it and Prime Minister Balfour. On 2 May 1903 the DMMI produced a memorandum replying to questions posed by the Prime Minister regarding the defence of India.⁵⁶⁶ Balfour examined ways to increase the resources of the DMMI. On 30 November 1903 he wrote a note on bringing the Home and Indian Armies closer together. The advantage of this, he argued, was that it would afford "a useful training to regimental officers by requiring them to consider the larger problems of their profession (thus greatly increasing the resources of the present Intelligence Department)."⁵⁶⁷ The minutes of the Defence Committee provide further evidence for the growth of this connection. On 4 December 1903 Balfour requested the DMMI "to reconsider and report upon" the question of whether Russia would attempt to use the Seistan-Quetta railway.⁵⁶⁸ The growth of 'integrated control' furthered the DMMI's incorporation into the civilian sphere.

⁵⁶⁴ 'Report of the Committee', *Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division*, WO 279/537, NAUK, p.11, pp.9-10, p.9, p.8

⁵⁶⁵ David French has argued that the lack of a "properly constituted General Staff" handicapped the British government in the early part of the First World War. He also claims that the very "structure of Cabinet government was ill-adapted to the conduct of war." (French, *British Economic and Strategic Planning 1905-1915* (p.173)

⁵⁶⁶ 'Reply to Questions (a) and (b) in the Prime Minister's Note (2 May 1903)', Nos 1-50, CAB 6/1, NAUK

⁵⁶⁷ 'Note by Prime Minister Balfour, (30 November 1903)', Ibid, p.2

⁵⁶⁸ 'Minutes of 25th Meeting, December 4, 1903', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.2

This reveals the persistent importance of political and administrative culture to the evolutionary trajectory.

Although he looked to the DMMI for advice Balfour did not always look fondly upon Britain's senior soldiers. Writing to Esher, on 14 January 1904, Balfour praised the recommendations of the Esher Committee. He continued, however, that "How they will strike the leaders of military opinion in this country, I do not know." He complained that "My observation of these gentlemen teaches me that they are never tired of abusing things as they are, but are never prepared to agree to any reform."⁵⁶⁹ Balfour's diatribe might not have been aimed at the DGMI, but it is distinctly possible that Nicholson was lumped in with the 'leaders of military opinion'.

Intriguingly, on 20 December 1903, during the deliberations of the Esher Committee, Lord Esher posited a potential scheme that could have placed the DMMI on a different evolutionary path. He stated that "The time is not ripe, even if the principle can ever be adopted in our composite Empire, for a complete separation of the D.G.M.I. from the War [Office]."⁵⁷⁰ He did not elaborate upon this point and it does not appear anywhere else in the documents of the Esher Committee. The DMMI and the DGMI remained integrated within the War Office, as did its successor. With this proposal Esher likely hoped to see the DMMI freed from direct military oversight and away from the clawing bureaucracy of the War Office. This move would have allowed for even more civilian involvement within the DMMI, speeding up its amalgamation into the civilian sphere. This is purely speculation but it is evidence of how civilian involvement had become central to

⁵⁶⁹ 'Letter from Arthur Balfour to Esher (14 Jan 1904)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.1. Adding to this issue was d'Ombraïn's contention that Prime Minister Balfour believed in the primacy of a maritime policy for imperial defence. (d'Ombraïn, *War Machinery and High Policy*, p.64)

⁵⁷⁰ 'War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (20 December 1903)', *Ibid*, p.2

the work of the DMMI. Although Esher's proposal was not adopted the DMMI continued to operate in service of civilian officials and within policymaking.

While the Royal Commission and Lord Hardwicke's Committee hindered the development of the DMMI, the Esher Committee precipitated the next important evolution. While careful to stress the difference between the two nations, the Committee asserted that the object of War Office and Army reform "should be to secure for the British Empire, with the least possible derangement of existing machinery, the immense advantages which the General Staff has conferred upon Germany." Therefore, it recommended the establishment of a General Staff within Britain. The Chief of the General Staff would be in charge, and this new organisation would be divided into three branches under three directors: "(a) Director of Military Operations. (b) Director of Staff Duties. (c) Director of Military Training." The first of these officers was to carry out the duties assigned to the DMMI.⁵⁷¹ The Esher Committee's report was one of the most important moments in the evolution of British foreign intelligence.⁵⁷² The creation of the Directorate of Military Operations, the DMMI's successor, was the most significant increase in the size, scope, and resources of any British foreign intelligence organisation from 1870 to 1914. The former's inclusion within the General Staff both increased its status within the Army and afforded it a much greater role within policymaking.

A 'committee style approach', inter-departmentalism, and focus on cooperation and consensus were underlying principles of the DMMI. It was able, however, to work towards them more effectively than its predecessors could. This was primarily through increased involvement within the 'committee system', especially participation on the Defence Committee. This entrenched a 'committee

⁵⁷¹ 'Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part I) (11 January 1904)', *Ibid*, p.3, pp.22-23, p.23

⁵⁷² Interestingly, Strachan has argued that, for Esher, the Defence Committee was a more important organisation than the General Staff. He contends that "Esher had seen the General Staff of the army as an intelligence division locking into this wider framework." (H. Strachan, 'The British Army, its General Staff and the Continental Commitment 1904-14', *The British General Staff*, p.87) This may be true but there is no doubt about the great impact of the Committee's report on the DMMI.

style approach' to the work of the DMML. This, in turn, expanded its inter-departmental functions, meaning that it could work towards furthering cooperation and achieving a level of consensus. As these processes became ingrained so too did the DMML's involvement with the civilian sphere. The connections with state departments continued to drive the work of Britain's foreign intelligence machinery. This all denotes the integral influence of political and administrative culture upon the DMML. Yet, this also resulted in a persistent display of hostility from the military establishment.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

Like Wolseley, Lord Roberts suffered an ignominious end to his tenure as Commander-in-Chief. The Esher Committee was adamant that meaningful reform could never be brought to the War Office while the 'old gang' remained firmly entrenched. This meant Roberts and his circle, including DGMI Nicholson. The Committee got its way and the 'Roberts circle' was ousted without warning. Roberts would be the last British Commander-in-Chief. The General Staff was to be the organisation of the future. In their haste, however, to purge the War Office of the 'old gang', the Esher Committee "only succeeded in exacerbating the tensions within the army's highly personalised command structure."⁵⁷³ The DMML operated under the old system of the Army hierarchy which was soon to be dismantled. There were signs of improvement in the relationship between foreign intelligence and the Army's leadership. Yet, the DMML continued to suffer under the same prejudices and from the same obstacles as its predecessors had.

Nicholson's prior service with Lord Roberts in both India and South Africa proved a boon. Roberts made the decision, in June 1901, to appoint Nicholson as DGMI, believing that the latter would aid in his attempts to reform the War Office. That same month Roberts also successfully raised the position of DGMI to the same

⁵⁷³ Beckett, 'Selection by Disparagement': Lord Esher, the General Staff and the Politics of Command, 1904-14', *The British General Staff*, p.44, p.56

status as the Adjutant-General.⁵⁷⁴ This was to cause difficulties for Nicholson, but it shows the first tangible signs of the Army's leadership moving from apathy to support for intelligence. Nicholson and Roberts were able to work well together during this period. For instance, both agreed over the need to send significant reinforcements to India in case of war with Russia.⁵⁷⁵ Roberts gave active support to the DMML. On 10 January 1902 he urged Secretary of State for War Brodrick to pass a memorandum created by the DMML, entitled 'The Military Resources of France, and probable Method of their Employment in a War between France and England', along to the Cabinet.⁵⁷⁶ This was in stark opposition to Wolseley's conduct between 1896 to 1899. Yet, a good relationship with the Commander-in-Chief did not translate into improved relations with other senior soldiers.

During the hearings of Lord Hardwicke's Committee the hostility of senior officers was clearly voiced. Adjutant-General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny and Military Secretary Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Hamilton were dismissive of the DMML. They both felt that "the pure collection and compilation of facts [was] the most important function of the Division," and that the "strategical work of the Division was not so important." They also asserted that significant intellectual ability was not a prerequisite for an intelligence officer. It illustrates the persistence of the Army's conservative military culture, holding little regard for intelligence work, into the twentieth century. Henry Brackenbury, former intelligence chief and then Director-General of the Ordnance, also provided testimony. His evidence was much fairer, but he reported complaints from the Adjutant-General and the Inspector-General of Fortifications of interference by the DMML in their duties.⁵⁷⁷ Brackenbury recommended a clear delineation of duties amongst the Army's

⁵⁷⁴ Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.22

⁵⁷⁵ 'Military Needs of the Empire in a War with France and Russia (12 August 1901)', Nos. 1A-40A, CAB 3/1, NAUK

⁵⁷⁶ 'Field Marshal Roberts to S. of S. for War (10 January 1902)' in 'The Military Resources of France, and probable Method of their Employment in a War between France and England (27 December 1901)', Ibid, p.1

⁵⁷⁷ 'Evidence of Lieutenant-General Sir T. Kelly-Kenny', *Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division*, WO 279/537, NAUK, pp.45-46. 'Evidence of Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Hamilton', Ibid, p.48, p.49. 'Evidence of General Sir Henry Brackenbury', Ibid, p.43, p.44

hierarchy. He stated that the DGMI should not be allowed to intervene in other officer's remits. It is surprising that Brackenbury advocated limiting the powers of an intelligence head, but it presents another signal of persistent hostility from senior officers towards Britain's foreign intelligence institutions.

Based on this evidence Lord Hardwicke's Committee advised that the DMMI, should be "free from the daily round of administrative duties."⁵⁷⁸ It argued that:

Intelligence and Mobilization work is properly almost purely intellectual, and if with such intellectual work is mingled a multitude of details of a routine and executive nature, the intellectual aspect of that work will be merged in that of administration.⁵⁷⁹

It was this, alongside the claim that the work of the DMMI was purely advisory rather than executive, that so infuriated DGMI Nicholson. In his criticisms of the Committee's report, and referring directly to the accusations levelled by Brackenbury, he declared that: "I am responsible for my work to the Commander-in-Chief, and through him, to the Secretary of State; but I am not responsible to my colleagues...who hold appointments at the War Office equal, but not superior, to mine." He was determined that the position of DGMI should be afforded the same level of respect and authority as other senior military posts. He claimed that "if I were precluded from doing my own work in the same way as other heads of departments do theirs, my department would be paralysed and its efficiency destroyed."⁵⁸⁰ He claimed that Lord Hardwicke's Committee had misunderstood the division of duties amongst the Headquarters staff. Nicholson recognised that the Adjutant-General acted:

⁵⁷⁸ 'Report of the Committee', Ibid, p.11

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid

⁵⁸⁰ 'Memorandum by Sir William Nicholson on the recommendations of Hardwicke Committee (13 January 1903)', Ibid, p.58, p.59

as the Commander-in-Chief's mouthpiece in matters concerning his department, but as one of his Lordship's principal Staff Officers I conceive that I am equally his mouthpiece in matters concerning my department, and this I understand to be Lord Robert's view.⁵⁸¹

Nicholson was seeking to assert his authority as DGMI amongst the Army's leadership. The reference to the support of Roberts illustrates the good working relationship between him and Nicholson. Yet, it also reveals how this was insufficient by itself to protect the DMMI from the hostility of other senior military officers.

Even with the support of the Commander-in-Chief, therefore, the DMMI faced an uphill struggle to assert its authority within the Army's hierarchy. There was a bias displayed against the DMMI which was at least partially animated by personal animosity. In contrast to DMI Ardagh Nicholson did not always work well with others. His disputes with Kelly-Kenny were not an isolated incident. Lord Esher held Nicholson in contempt while a future intelligence head, Henry Wilson, was often vocal in his dislike.

Although, it continued to face prejudice from other senior military figures, the DMMI remained an important department within the Army. In early 1903 Roberts and Secretary of State for War Brodrick charged the DMMI, "with the preparation of all strategical orders and instructions issued to the [General Officer Commanding] in Somaliland."⁵⁸² This related to the failed military campaign, from February to June 1903, to subdue the Dervishes led by Mohammed Abdullah Hassan. Although the expedition was a failure,⁵⁸³ it was an impressive accolade

⁵⁸¹ Ibid, p.60

⁵⁸² 'Memo from DGMI Nicholson to Secretary of State for War Arnold-Forster (25 November 1903)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee, Volume II*, ESHR 16/5, CCA, p.3

⁵⁸³ The Dervishes were able to occupy the whole Nogal Valley in northern Somalia after forcing the British force to retire. (R.L. Hess, 'The 'Mad Mullah' and Northern Somalia', *The Journal of African History* 5/3 (1964) p.421)

for the DMMI to be afforded. It highlights that the DMMI was growing in importance within the Army despite the persistent hostility of senior soldiers.

Unlike amongst some senior soldiers, there was a recognition amongst leading government officials that specialised training was necessary for intelligence officers. On 10 November 1902, Secretary of State for War Brodrick and First Lord of the Admiralty the Earl of Selborne produced a 'Memorandum on the Improvement of the Intellectual Equipment of the Services'. They argued that officers who showed a special aptitude for intelligence work should be sought out, and that "their whole career should be modelled so as to fit them more and more for the work of Intelligence." Both advocated that these officers should return to their respective intelligence structures throughout their years of service.⁵⁸⁴ This shows that there was an appreciation for what was required to be an effective intelligence officer. It was just to be found outside of the Army. Lord Hardwicke's Committee understood that the DMMI needed to become a desirable place of employment. DGMI Nicholson bemoaned this issue. He stated that if an officer passed out of the Staff College:

Why should he come to me as a Staff Captain, when he is almost certain to be employed elsewhere as a [Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General] or [Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General]...especially as in my department he would find himself graded and paid on a lower scale than in other War Office Departments.⁵⁸⁵

This denotes the continued difficulty that the DMMI experienced in recruiting. An officer faced lower pay, a lower rank, and removal from field service for an extended period if they wanted to serve with the DMMI. The conservative military culture of the nineteenth century persisted, as the value of headquarters service

⁵⁸⁴ 'Memorandum on the Improvement of the Intellectual Equipment of the Services', *Committee of Imperial Defence: Constitution and Functions*, CAB 21/468, NAUK, p.5

⁵⁸⁵ 'Memorandum by Sir William Nicholson on the recommendations of Hardwicke Committee (13 January 1903)', *Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division*, WO 279/537, NAUK, p.61

was still not sufficiently elevated. It was civilian officials rather than senior soldiers who tried to remedy this situation. Lord Hardwicke's Committee recommended that "it is expedient to provide the more promising of the junior Staff with adequate prospects of reasonably early promotion therein."⁵⁸⁶

DGMI Nicholson, in part probably to remedy this situation, argued that the DMMI should be given responsibility for the training and military education of British troops. Writing to Secretary of State for War Arnold-Forster, on 25 November 1903, Nicholson highlighted how, in foreign armies, "the education of the staff and the higher training of the troops for war are allocated to the staff which draws up the plans for war." There was an officer responsible for these duties within the British Army, the Director of Military Education and Training. Nicholson argued that this officer "should be associated with the department which is immediately concerned with war preparation," meaning the DMMI. This connection "would be of much mutual advantage," he claimed.⁵⁸⁷

Nicholson brought his recommendation up again before the Esher Committee.⁵⁸⁸ This was interesting for two reasons. Firstly, it signals how the DMMI had picked up the mantle as the spearhead for the continued professionalisation of the Army. Secondly, it reveals how that mission had evolved. Before, the IB and the ID had sought to afford opportunities for intellectually gifted soldiers to rise through the ranks of the Army. Now, however, the DMMI was focused on taking charge of the entire system of military education. Nicholson's recommendation was not adopted. The DMMI, and its successor, remained separate from the department responsible for military education and training. This episode evinces, however, that the focus on professionalisation had endured through three decades. The DMMI had begun to enlarge its scope. These demands likely strained

⁵⁸⁶ 'Report of the Committee', *Ibid*, p.7

⁵⁸⁷ 'Memo from DGMI Nicholson to Secretary of State for War Arnold-Forster (25 November 1903)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee, Volume II*, ESHR 16/5, CCA, p.3

⁵⁸⁸ 'Interview No. 19, Sir William Nicholson (13 Jan 1904)', *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.1

the already frayed relations that existed between the DMMI and the other military departments.

The Esher Committee brought the issues of professionalisation and intellectual ability within the Army back to the fore. Although it promoted the formation of a General Staff, the Committee stated a serious obstacle to this was that it was “almost impossible to find competent officers to fill the posts.”⁵⁸⁹ Therefore, the Committee was dedicated to improving the intellectual abilities of Army officers. One way it sought to do this was to use the DMMI, and its successor, to place intellectually gifted officers back into the Army’s hierarchy. The Committee recommended that, the “rule of sending back officers to active employment for one year after four years should be enforced throughout the Military Staff of the War Office.” It argued that this would allow for an infusion of intellectually gifted officers into the Army, enabling the spread of their knowledge.⁵⁹⁰ Again, it was figures outside of military circles who recognised the DMMI’s ability to increase the professionalisation of the Army. The Committee also advocated for specialisation. It advised that intelligence officers should focus upon “forces operating in the countries they have studied, and should in peace time become personally acquainted with those countries.”⁵⁹¹ This highlights the desire to retain the professional and intellectual character of the DMMI.

A final subject that must be discussed is the relationship between the DMMI and the Royal Navy. In his evidence before Lord Hardwicke’s Committee, on 10 December 1902, DNI Prince Louis of Battenberg stated that, while “the work of [the DMMI and the NID] was quite distinct...where they touched there was exchange of information” and that, in his opinion, the “system worked well.”⁵⁹²

⁵⁸⁹ Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.19

⁵⁹⁰ ‘Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part II), 26 Feb 1904’, *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.5

⁵⁹¹ ‘Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part I) (11 January 1904)’, *Ibid*, p.23

⁵⁹² ‘Evidence of Captain H.S.H. Prince Louis of Battenberg’, *Permanent Establishment of the Mobilization and Intelligence Division*, WO 279/537, NAUK, p.52

This cooperation continued but the DMML often found itself at loggerheads with the Admiralty.

At the start of the twentieth century the Royal Navy remained the service that received the lion's share of state funding.⁵⁹³ In comparison to the Army, the Royal Navy was viewed as the establishment with the superior organisation and record.⁵⁹⁴ This caused further inter-service tension. Although new institutions such as the Defence Committee were designed to bring naval and military advice together, the two services became locked in bitter strategical arguments. While the ID had acted as a counter to this rivalry the DMML became involved in it.

Under Nicholson's leadership the ID challenged the tradition of naval preponderance in offensive action, such as if Britain had to fight the Franco-Russian Alliance. In a memorandum on the 'Military Needs of the Empire in a War with France and Russia', from 12 August 1901, it argued that "sea supremacy is but a weapon of defence against Continental nations...the Navy is incapable by itself of inflicting a direct blow which will penetrate any vital place in our enemy's armour." The ID continued that the "true offensive blows of our plan of campaign against France and Russia must therefore be undertaken by the Army, although in every case the co-operation of the Navy is necessary."⁵⁹⁵ The DMML continued this attack on the Admiralty's plans. During the eleventh meeting of the Defence Committee, on 29 April 1903, the DMML disseminated a paper criticising several points in a naval memorandum on the question of naval and military cooperation against foreign invasion.⁵⁹⁶ Rather than help ease any inter-service tension the

⁵⁹³ As Hamer accurately argued it remained "the principal beneficiary of recurring international crises," and that "only a major threat to national security could compel the government to act as the military desired that they should." (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.222)

⁵⁹⁴ The Esher Committee trumpeted this naval superiority. When discussing the issue of auditing the Army, the Committee claimed that "Tradition and custom have engendered habits of moral courage and outspokenness in officers commanding fleets and ships, which are alien to soldiers." ('Work of the Committee, Number 2, 15 Nov 1903', *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.1)

⁵⁹⁵ 'Military Needs of the Empire in a War with France and Russia (12 August 1901)', Nos. 1A-40A, CAB 3/1, NAUK, p.31

⁵⁹⁶ 'Minutes of 11th Meeting, April 29, 1903', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1

DMMI stood with the Army. This was in contradiction to the ID which had reached across the aisle to cooperate with the Royal Navy. In doing this the DMMI sacrificed its ability to lessen inter-service rivalry, although it remained well-equipped to do so.

There were definite signs of an improvement in the DMMI's relationship with the military establishment. Commander-in-Chief Roberts gave active support and formed a positive working relationship with DGMI Nicholson. Yet, this did not translate into a reduction in the hostility of other senior military officers. A conservative military culture also continued to pose problems, making it difficult to attract recruits. Rather than senior soldiers it was civilian officials who tried to remedy this issue. Finally, the DMMI possessed a fraught relationship with the Royal Navy forgoing cooperative efforts to attack the latter's strategic plans. Despite the recurrence of prior issues, this period signalled important changes that would soon occur within the evolutionary trajectory of British foreign intelligence. What did not alternate, however, was the DMMI's continued significant participation within policymaking.

Involvement in Policymaking

Salisbury's departure from the positions of Foreign Minister and Prime Minister, in 1900 and 1902 respectively, marked the end of an era in British foreign policy. His successor as Foreign Minister was Lord Lansdowne and scholars agree that foreign policy "changed direction" under his management.⁵⁹⁷ Lansdowne did not agree with Salisbury's policy of seeking isolation. While he did not want to commit Britain to a multitude of rigid alliances, he sought to remove the nation from its isolated international position. His primary aim was to secure a "concerted agreement on the Far East."⁵⁹⁸ This became even more critical in the aftermath

⁵⁹⁷ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.279

⁵⁹⁸ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.168

of the Boxer Rebellion, which threatened to raise further the tensions between Britain and its traditional rivals Russia and France.

To help bolster Britain's Far Eastern position, Lansdowne led Britain into an alliance with Japan in January 1902.⁵⁹⁹ The alliance was regional, focusing on the Far East, and designed to deter any future Russian aggression in the region. It had little appreciable effect on Britain's isolated situation in Europe.⁶⁰⁰ Although not completely revolutionary the Japanese alliance marked an important shift in British foreign policy. With its continued close connections to civilian officials, the DMMI remained intricately involved within foreign and imperial policymaking. Its increased participation in the 'committee system' also furthered the DMMI's involvement within these policy realms, again revealing the overriding impact of political and administrative culture.

Throughout this period, the DMMI provided assessments on foreign and imperial policy and was involved in high-level debates within these policy realms. As under Ardagh's leadership, the ID under Nicholson not only provided advice for the conduct of foreign policy but also advocated for the adoption of specific policy. On 12 August 1901 the ID constructed a study, entitled 'Military Needs of the Empire in a War with France and Russia'. It argued that Britain required an ally in such a conflict. The ally in question was Germany.⁶⁰¹ This argument closely

⁵⁹⁹ Salisbury disapproved of the alliance. He felt that it surrendered Britain's freedom of movement in international affairs. Yet, Charmley argues that it was not a complete abandonment of Salisbury's ideology. "In so far as the Japanese alliance sprang from a belief that Britain needed an ally in the Far East, it was a departure from Salisbury's views; in so far as Lansdowne regarded it as a purely local arrangement to secure limited objectives, it was not a Chamberlainite solution to the major problems he believed existed." (Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.296) The terms of the alliance were that: Both countries agreed to respect the independence of China and Korea; to remain neutral if either nation became embroiled in a war with a separate power; and to come to the assistance of the other power if a third nation declared war on the power already embroiled in conflict. While they did claim to respect the independence of China and Korea, the treaty did note that Britain held special interests in China and Japan in Korea. If these interests were threatened then either power could take action to safeguard them. (Original in NAUK, CAB 37/60/17. Quoted from Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists volume two*, pp.136-139)

⁶⁰⁰ Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists volume one*, p.249

⁶⁰¹ 'Military Needs of the Empire in a War with France and Russia (12 August 1901)', *Nos. 1A-40A*, CAB 3/1, NAUK, p.49

resembled those made by Ardagh in October 1896, where he urged for closer links with the Triple Alliance. This was not a radical opinion. Some members of Britain's foreign policy elite, such as Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Sir Thomas Sanderson, wanted the nation to seek closer ties to Germany.⁶⁰² While its advice was not always taken the DMML remained an important player within the foreign policy realm. The memorandum also signifies how the ID tried to influence the direction of imperial policy. It was critical of the government's policy regarding imperial defence, remonstrating that there was a "radical defect of being over-concerned with purely insular defence, to the flagrant neglect of vital factors, such as the defence of India and Egypt."⁶⁰³

Through some of its interventions the DMML tried to promote an enlarged role for the Army and, therefore, increased funding for it. On 27 December 1901 Lieutenant-Colonel W.R. Robertson of the DMML produced a memorandum, entitled 'The Military Resources of France, and probable Method of their Employment in a War between France and England'. Reviewing the size of the French Army, the coastal defences of the country, and the vulnerability of parts of the French colonial Empire, Robertson concluded that "a purely maritime war would not offer France reasonable prospects of [success]." He argued that, with France's "large and thoroughly-prepared army...offensive spirit and best traditions of the nation...the only logical deduction is that an invasion of England will be attempted."⁶⁰⁴ By downplaying the effect of naval action and focusing on the threat of invasion the DMML was using foreign policy to promote an agenda. The key point of the DMML's analysis was that in a war with France the British Army would have to be the essential component.

⁶⁰² Z. Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969) p.67

⁶⁰³ 'Military Needs of the Empire in a War with France and Russia (12 August 1901)', Nos. 1A-40A, CAB 3/1, NAUK, p.27, p.49

⁶⁰⁴ 'The Military Resources of France, and probable Method of their Employment in a War between France and England (27 December 1901)', Nos. 1A-40A, CAB 3/1, NAUK, pp.1-6, p.8, p.9. John Gooch has correctly noted the irrational logic of the ID's members regarding the likelihood of a foreign invasion of Britain. (Gooch, *The Prospect of War*, p.9)

The DMMI also produced foreign policy assessments that ran against the grain of official thinking. Through 1902 the DMMI produced memoranda on the military policy of Britain in a war with the United States. On 13 March 1902 Lieutenant-Colonel Altham, Head of the Strategical Sub-Division, wrote to DGMI Nicholson that, despite the assurances of friendship between Britain and the United States, “we cannot afford to drop reasonable precautions the neglect of which would seriously hamper the Empire in the fight for sea command in the event of sudden war.”⁶⁰⁵ This offered a stark contrast to official Foreign Office thinking where there had been a “growth of Anglo-Saxonism in the public discourse of late-Victorian politics.”⁶⁰⁶

The DMMI’s involvement on the Defence Committee afforded it an excellent opportunity to remain involved within imperial policy formation. At the Committee’s first meeting, on 18 December 1902, the DGMI was asked to prepare a paper on “the question of the military position in India on the outbreak of war with the Franco-Russian Alliance, with special reference to reinforcements required from home.”⁶⁰⁷ At the fifth meeting, on 4 March 1903, the DGMI was asked to consider the questions of the defence of the Indian frontier.⁶⁰⁸ This shows that the question of Indian defence was one of the most pressing concerns for the DMMI, as it had been with its predecessors. The minutes of the Defence Committee were evidence of this. Out of the Committee’s first twenty-nine meetings, from 18 December 1902 to 4 January 1904, the DGMI or the DMMI either presented

⁶⁰⁵ ‘Altham to DGMI (13 March 1902)’, *Defence and Operational Plans*, WO 106/40, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.6. The defence of Canada was inextricably bound up within this subject. John Gooch has conducted an excellent brief study of this issue in the third chapter of his work *The Prospect of War*. He asserts that examining debates around the defence of Canada reveals, “the limited effectiveness of the [Committee of Imperial Defence] and the very considerable difficulties posed by Admiralty intransigence in solving problems of defence against an ally rather than against an obvious opponent.” (Gooch, *The Prospect of War*, pp.52-53)

⁶⁰⁶ Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.232

⁶⁰⁷ ‘Minutes of 1st Meeting (December 18, 1902)’, Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1

⁶⁰⁸ ‘Minutes of 5th Meeting (March 4, 1903)’, *Ibid*, p.1

information about or were asked to consider and prepare reports on India and its defence at eleven (38%) of them.

The debate over Indian border policy continued into 1902. This discourse continued to revolve around the concepts of 'masterly inactivity', meaning a purely defensive policy, and 'mischievous activity', referring to a policy based on pushing British troops and influence beyond the Indian border. DGMI Nicholson was a believer in the latter. In a memorandum, from 19 December 1902, he argued that British troops needed to advance into Afghanistan to meet any potential Russian advance.⁶⁰⁹ This point was reiterated in a separate DMMI memorandum from 10 March 1903.⁶¹⁰ The continued focus on the problems of Indian defence had a definite result. On 30 November 1903 Prime Minister Balfour wrote that, because of prior investigations, "the chief military problem which this country has to face is that of Indian, rather than of Home, Defence."⁶¹¹ This denotes the importance of the DMMI to imperial policymaking and the power it possessed within that realm.

In early 1903 the DMMI again used foreign policy analysis to champion the priority of the Army in national defence. On 7 February 1903 the DMMI generated a memorandum, entitled 'The Military Resources of Germany, and Probable Method of their Employment in a War between Germany and England'. It contended that the Royal Navy would play an important role in a potential war with Germany. Because of this the DMMI argued that Britain faced a high threat of invasion.⁶¹² This was again an attempt to promote the interests of the Army while also increasing the role of the DMMI. If the Army was given precedence in home defence then the structure responsible for strategy, planning, and

⁶⁰⁹ 'Military Defence of India. Memorandum by the Intelligence Division, War Office, on the Occupation of the Province of Candahar. (19 December 1902)', *Nos 1-50*, CAB 6/1, NAUK, p.1

⁶¹⁰ 'Memorandum on the Defence of India. Prepared for the Committee of Imperial Defence (10 March 1903)', *Ibid*, p.12, p.13

⁶¹¹ 'Note by PM Balfour (30 November 1903)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁶¹² 'The Military Resources of Germany, and Probable Method of their Employment in a War between Germany and England (7 February 1903)', *Nos. 1A-40A*, CAB 3/1, NAUK, p.5, p.6

intelligence would also rise in prominence. This memorandum again illustrates how the DMML used its ability to intervene in foreign policy to pursue a specific agenda.

Even as it prepared strategic plans against Germany, the DMML continued to advocate for closer relations between it and Britain. On 10 February 1903 the DMML created a 'Memorandum on the Military Policy to be adopted in a War with Germany'. It outlined a strategic plan for the defeat of Germany based around the destruction of its seaborne trade.⁶¹³ Yet, the DMML still preferred to see negotiation between Germany and Britain. It asserted that:

although public opinion in England seems for the moment adverse to co-operation with Germany, yet, from a strategical point of view, an understanding with that Power on questions as to which we have common or conflicting interests would greatly strengthen our general position.⁶¹⁴

This exhibits how the DMML, through its strategic planning functions, continued to try and direct foreign policy. This realm remained the key outlet for the DMML to influence governance.

The DMML also became more involved in alliance politics through this period. The alliance with Japan afforded an opportunity for the DMML to gather more information from Asia. On 19 May 1903 Colonel Trotter, Head of the Special Duties Sub-Division, wrote to Sir Thomas Sanderson on this subject. Trotter relayed to Sanderson how "The Japanese Military Attaché called the other day & left an elaborate [memorandum] on a joint system of secret service. I told him I did not think we could enter into any plans of the nature he suggested." Although he had refused to enter into this scheme, Trotter stated that his Sub-Division was

⁶¹³ 'Memorandum on the Military Policy to be adopted in a War with Germany (10 February 1903)', Ibid, p.8

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, p.9

“now working on those lines, giving to the Japanese Military Attaché some confidential, not secret, details and we have received from them some matters of importance, including plans of Port Arthur & Vladivostok.”⁶¹⁵

Sanderson passed on Trotter’s information and proposal to Foreign Secretary Lansdowne, declaring that “As regards the Japanese I should say that Col. Trotter’s view is quite sound.” Lansdowne was optimistic himself and stated that “I agree. I should have thought that we might make use of Japanese agents freely in the Far East and perhaps employ them ourselves.”⁶¹⁶ The DMMI was involved in alliance politics. In 1893 the ID had worked to strengthen Britain’s partnership with Italy, but the DMMI’s work was a more formal involvement in this field. It signals how important the DMMI was to foreign policy by 1903. The reinforcement of a new alliance was an important task, and that the DMMI was playing a role within it evinces its centrality to foreign policymaking. The DMMI was actively involved in the new direction of British foreign policy.

The DMMI retained the robust system of information sharing and joint working with the Indian IB, including over intervention in Afghanistan.⁶¹⁷ In November 1903 both agencies collaborated over the exchange of agents.⁶¹⁸ This was not the only example of this. Lieutenant-Colonel W.R. Robertson, Head of the Foreign and Indian Sub-Division, had been employed in the Indian IB for five years before he arrived at the DMMI.⁶¹⁹ Cooperation continued into 1904. DGMI Nicholson

⁶¹⁵ ‘Colonel J.K. Trotter to Sir Thomas Sanderson (19 May 1903)’, *Memorandum on secret service in event of a European war and correspondence about activities of ‘A’; proposal for exchange of information with Japanese*, 1903-1905, HD 3/124 Part 1, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, p.2, pp.3-4

⁶¹⁶ ‘Sir Thomas Sanderson to Lord Lansdowne (19 May 1903)’, *Ibid*, pp.2-3, p.3

⁶¹⁷ ‘Explanatory Notes on the “Memorandum on the Defence of India” (28 March 1903)’, *Nos 1-50*, CAB 6/1, NAUK, p.5. ‘Diary of Movements of Russian and British Forces in Afghanistan; and Maximum Force that can be Supplied by a Single Line of Railway (7 April 1903)’, *Ibid*, p.8

⁶¹⁸ ‘Major E.W.S. Maconochy to DMMI (19 November 1903)’, *Ibid*, p.1

⁶¹⁹ ‘Minutes of Evidence (Volume I)’, *Royal Commission on the War in South Africa*, D1300/5/6, SRO, p.28. Martin Thomas contends that there was often a strong system of cooperation and exchange between colonial intelligence services and their counterparts in the metropole. (Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence*, p.46)

told the Esher Committee, on 13 January 1904, that intelligence was freely interchanged between home and India.”⁶²⁰ This connection ensured that the DMMI retained an imperial focus.

There were important connections too in France between home and colonial intelligence agencies. After the conquest of Algeria, beginning in 1830, a group of army officers established the bureaux arabes in 1844. This was tasked with a variety of roles including intelligence collection on the local population. Working here afforded several French officers important experience in intelligence work. As Bauer highlights, “nearly every single officer who would take the lead in designing or directing French intelligence at the beginning of the Third Republic had served in Africa,” several at the bureaux. These included Colonel Jean Sandherr who led the Statistical Section from 1886 to 1895. As with the intelligence connections between Britain and India, more work remains to be conducted upon this subject.⁶²¹ Yet, there is already evidence of similar intelligence connections and exchanges between British and French intelligence structures and their imperial counterparts from 1870 to 1914. This reveals a significant similarity between the respective evolutionary trajectories of British and French foreign intelligence.

By 1903 the DMMI became involved in the most important discussions around foreign policy. During the twenty-eighth meeting of the Defence Committee, on 14 December 1903, the DMMI’s criticisms of the proposals “for an Anglo-French Agreement” were discussed. The DMMI’s conclusion was that “the effect of the proposed Agreement might be to weaken seriously our strategical position in the Mediterranean.”⁶²² Despite the DMMI’s objections, Anglo-French talks proceeded

⁶²⁰ ‘Interview No. 19, Sir William Nicholson (13 Jan 1904), *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.1

⁶²¹ Bauer, ‘Marianne is Watching’ (Ph.D. Thesis) p.177, p.179, p.200, p.178

⁶²² ‘Minutes of 28th Meeting, December 14, 1903’, Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1. Samuel R. Williamson argued that Nicholson retained “unalterable opposition” to any proposals with France in the Mediterranean, fearing that they would weaken Britain’s position there. (S.R. Williamson, Jr., *The Politics of Grand Strategy: Britain and France Prepare for War, 1904-1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969) p.12)

leading to the signing of the ‘Entente Cordiale’ in 1904. This highlights the continued limits upon the DMMI’s ability to influence foreign policy.⁶²³ Under ‘integrated control’ the military advisors, including the DGMI, could present counsel but the final decision rested with government policymakers. This episode, however, reveals the prominent position that the DMMI occupied within foreign policymaking, and how participation within the ‘committee system’ furthered its involvement in this realm. This again illuminates the overriding influence of political and administrative culture. Continued international uncertainty and the Balfour government’s decision to elevate the DGMI within government circles helped to facilitate the DMMI’s expanded involvement within policy formulation. Yet, the influence of political and administrative culture remained dominant in allowing this expanded involvement. This episode shows that the DMMI, like its predecessors, had only a limited influence upon the outcome of policy decisions. Yet, it built upon the legacy of the ID and expanded its involvement within policy formulation. This would shortly lead to increased influence upon policymaking by the DMMI’s successor.

At the next meeting of the Defence Committee, on 4 January 1904, the discussion centred around the growing possibility of war between Russia and Japan. Two DMMI papers were put before the Committee, one of which examined the likelihood of Britain being dragged into war between Russia and Japan. The DMMI conceded that:

a crushing defeat of Japan by Russia would gravely affect the existing balance of power in the Far East, and would be highly detrimental to British interests. Apart, therefore, from our Treaty obligations, it may prove

⁶²³ This supports Franklyn Johnson’s argument that at no point “did the military leaders gain predominant influence in the [Committee of Imperial Defence].” (Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, p.358)

impracticable for [Britain] to hold aloof from the struggle as it develops.⁶²⁴

The conclusion was that “we should make every preparation to embark a large force for the East...but that we should not actually dispatch this force unless it should be evident that their services are urgently needed either in India or Manchuria.”⁶²⁵ There was no record of how the DMMI’s information was received by the government or senior military figures. Britain did not become directly involved in the Russo-Japanese War which began on 8 February 1904. This episode again demonstrates the importance of the DMMI to high level foreign policy decision making.

DGMI Nicholson maintained a high profile in foreign policy formation throughout his tenure. From March to April 1904 a conference was held between representatives of the Admiralty, Foreign, India, and War Offices to discuss the situation in Persia. Nicholson was selected as one of the War Office representatives. The questions put before the conference revolved around internal disorder in Persia, possible Russian intervention, and a potential war between Russia and Britain.⁶²⁶ The DGMI’s presence at this conference was significant. It reveals how the DMMI’s inter-departmental functions furthered its role within foreign and imperial policymaking.

From 1901 to 1904 foreign and imperial policy analysis became as integral to the DMMI’s workload as military planning. It was involved in discussions around the highest profile policy issues of the day and tried to influence the direction of policy. The DMMI’s prominence within imperial and foreign policymaking

⁶²⁴ ‘British Intervention in Far East (December 31, 1903)’, 23 February 1903-4 November 1905, 1-68, CAB 4/1, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, p.1

⁶²⁵ Ibid, p.6. In a postscript to the paper DGMI Nicholson stated his approval of it and suggested “that the proposed action should be taken.” (‘Post-script by DGMI Nicholson To Commander-in-Chief (December 31, 1903)’, Ibid, p.11)

⁶²⁶ ‘The Persian Question, (March-April 1904)’, Nos 1-50, CAB 6/1, NAUK, p.1, p.2. In the end, the conference decided that the best action would be for Britain to occupy the Persian province of Seistan and to seize key points along the southern coastline of Persia. (Ibid, p.2)

exemplifies how it evolved along the lines of its predecessors. By 1904 it was integral to state governance.

Conclusion: Brief but Highly Significant

While it lasted only three years the establishment and work of the DMMI was an important part of the evolution of British foreign intelligence. The influence of political and administrative culture retained its predominance. The principle of inter-departmentalism remained a foundational tenant and the DMMI continued to function as a conduit for information across the state's apparatus. What was most noticeable in this period was the expansion of the DMMI's involvement within the 'committee system', particularly within the Defence Committee. Its participation within this forum afforded the DMMI greater authority than its predecessors. It also increased its inter-departmental functions while enabling the DMMI to work effectively towards achieving consensus, collating more information into unified assessments. The evolution of the DMMI reinforced Britain's nascent intelligence culture. This continued to be based around inter-departmentalism, a 'committee style approach', cooperation, and consensus. The DMMI's development entrenched these principles further.

The DMMI reinforced the connections with the civilian sphere cultivated by its predecessors. Secretaries of State for War Brodrick and Arnold-Forster tried to improve the efficiency and position of the DMMI. The Foreign Office continued to provide funding and resources to the DMMI, while the Special Duties Sub-Division worked closely alongside it. A connection between the DMMI and Prime Minister Balfour developed through this period. Balfour often asked for its advice and sought ways to improve the DMMI's capability. The reinforcement of these connections was aided by the DMMI's involvement in the system of 'integrated control', and by how civilian policymakers remained a receptive audience for its information. The first point exhibits the continued importance of political and administrative culture to the evolutionary process. The work of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa and Lord Hardwicke's Committee hindered

the development of the DMML. The Esher Committee, however, proved instrumental in reshaping the DMML. Its recommendations saw the establishment of the General Staff which included the DMML's successor as a key component.

While the hostility of the military establishment persisted from 1901 to 1904 there were signs of improvement. Commander-in-Chief Roberts worked towards strengthening the DMML and promoting its information. Yet, the DMML continued to suffer from the hostility of senior military officers. They complained about the power exercised by DGMI Nicholson and sought to curb the authority of the DMML. Their testimony revealed the continuation of a conservative military culture that held little regard for staff work. It was civilian officials as opposed to senior soldiers who recommended methods to raise the profile of intelligence work. The former group also viewed the DMML as the institution best placed to spread intellectualism and professionalism throughout the Army. Through this period the DMML became involved in strategical disputes with the Royal Navy, diminishing its ability to engender cooperation between the two services. The DMML's relationship with the military establishment from 1901 to 1904 hinted at the better days to come for its successor.

Building on the work of the ID, from 1901 to 1904 the DMML remained intimately involved within imperial and foreign policymaking. It was involved in high-level policy discussions and its role in alliance politics grew as well. The DMML continued to advocate for policy adoption. While not as successful in the foreign policy realm the DMML achieved success within imperial policymaking. Its interventions helped to persuade Prime Minister Balfour of the importance of the issue of Indian defence. Involvement in the 'committee system' and its inter-departmental functions aided the DMML's ability to influence policy. This reveals again the impact of political and administrative culture. By March 1904 foreign policy work had become as fundamental to the DMML as that of strategic planning. In 1904 the DMML was transformed into the Directorate of Military Operations. The period from 1904 to 1910 illustrates how the evolutionary process both retained its character but also adapted, as the Directorate found itself in a more powerful position than its predecessors.

Chapter 6: Realignment and Readjustment, 1904-1910

1904 was a year of great change for Britain's growing intelligence machinery. The creation of a General Staff aligned the nation's Army with the other great powers. Despite some hesitation and initial teething problems the British General Staff became a permanent fixture by 1906, becoming the Imperial General Staff in 1909. Also formed in 1904 was the Directorate of Military Operations which took up the duties of the DMML. The former represented a significant upgrade in prestige and authority for British foreign intelligence. The same factors of political and administrative culture and involvement in policymaking continued to dominate the Directorate's evolution, although there was a noticeable change in the reaction of the Army's leaders towards it.

The influence of British political and administrative culture remained predominant from 1904 to 1910. The Directorate expanded its involvement within the 'committee system' and was integral to the work of the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) and its various sub-committees. The Directorate remained inter-departmental in character and this principle continued to underlie its work. In 1909 a new intelligence agency was created within Britain named the Special Intelligence Bureau, also formed upon the principle of inter-departmentalism. Through its inter-departmental character and increased participation in the 'committee system', the Directorate continued to promote cooperation and achieve consensus across the state's apparatus. It remained an important part of the system of 'integrated control'. The Directorate thus retained its strong connections with the major Whitehall departments. It worked particularly closely with the Foreign and Colonial Offices through this period. The Directorate also increased in importance within the War Office while reinforcing its relationships with state and government officials, including with the Prime Minister. It was again the overriding effect of political and administrative culture that drove this process. There was a noticeable shift in the Directorate's relationship to the military establishment through this period.

Compared to the apathy and animosity displayed towards its predecessors, the Directorate enjoyed a far better relationship with the Army's leadership. It formed one of the three core constituents of the new General Staff, helping to increase its authority within the military sphere. It also maintained a strong connection with the new Chief of the General Staff. As a result, military intelligence exercised significant influence over the development of military policy. As with the DMMI the Directorate continued to have a tense relationship with the Royal Navy. It also retained the professional and intellectual character of its predecessors. Its new position within the General Staff meant that it could work effectively towards increasing the professionalisation of the Army. While this relationship had undergone a significant change, the Directorate continued to remain intimately involved within policymaking. The evolutionary trajectory was so deeply ingrained that even the adaptation of one of the original parts could not stop it.

The Directorate continued to provide expert advice on foreign and imperial policy and its influence on the direction of policy increased. Foreign policy questions took precedence over imperial ones for the Directorate, continuing to absorb a large amount of its effort. It found more success in promoting policy than its predecessors had, demonstrated by the official adoption of a continental strategy. This engagement in policymaking, alongside cooperation with civilian officials, saw the further assimilation of the Directorate into the civilian sphere. Although it underwent a major revision the same factors, under the dominant influence of political and administrative culture, continued to drive the evolution of the Directorate through this period.

The Establishment of the Directorate of Military Operations

The Directorate of Military Operations was established in March 1904 replacing the DMMI. It was one of the three key departments that constituted the new General Staff. The other two were the Directorate of Staff Duties and the Directorate of Military Training. The first dealt with issues such as staff appointments, education,

and internal regulations. The second was responsible for training, home defence, and manoeuvres. At the head of the General Staff was to be the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) and each directorate was subordinate to him.⁶²⁷ Lieutenant-General Sir Neville Lyttelton became the first CGS on 12 February 1904. He held this position until 2 April 1908, when he was replaced by former intelligence chief Lieutenant-General Sir William Nicholson.

The Directorate was initially organised into four Sections. MO 1 was the Strategical Section divided into four Sub-Sections. These were: A (Operations in War, Imperial Defence), B (Strategical Distribution of the Army), C (British possessions other than the UK, India, and Africa), and D (Egypt, the Sudan, and possessions in Africa). MO 2 was the Foreign Intelligence Section. Its Sub-Section were: A (France and Belgium), B (Austria-Hungary, Near East, Balkans, Abyssinia, and Liberia), C (Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia), D (Russia and Manchuria), E (Japan, China, and Korea), F (USA and Mexico), G (Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Latin America), and H (India, and Persia). MO 3 was the Administration & Special Duties Section. Its Sub-Sections were A (Special Duties, Censorship, Submarine Cables, Wireless telegraphy), and B (General Staff Library). Finally, MO 4 was the Topographical Section. Its four Sub-Sections were A (Maps of Africa), B (Maps of Asia), C (Maps of North and South America, and Europe), and D (Map Room). By late 1904 ninety-four military and civilian personnel were employed at the Directorate.⁶²⁸ The significant increase in personnel allowed for greater geographical specialisation of MO 2.

The head of the Directorate was titled the Director of Military Operations. The first holder of this title was Major-General James Moncrieff Grierson. He was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in 1877 and served during the Anglo-Egyptian War of 1882 and in the Sudan in 1885. In 1890 he was appointed to the ID and, while there, had utilised his personal connections with German General Staff

⁶²⁷ 'Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (Part II), 26 Feb 1904', *War Office Reconstitution Committee Volume I: Reports, Evidence and Correspondence*, ESHR 16/4, CCA, p.25

⁶²⁸ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.251

officers to secure an important source of information. In 1896 he then became military attaché in Germany. In 1900 he served during both the Boxer Rebellion and the Second Boer War. After this he held several staff positions within the Home Army until he abruptly replaced DGMI Nicholson on 11 February 1904, in the aftermath of the Esher Committee's report. Grierson was chosen for the new position of Director of Military Operations (DMO) specifically by the Esher Committee.⁶²⁹ The lack of military input into Grierson's selection differentiated his appointment from previous intelligence heads. It was also a sign of civilian over military dominance during the reforming atmosphere of 1904. There were good reasons for Grierson's selection as DMO. Alongside his field service and previous posting to the ID, he was a popular figure, possessed good knowledge of the German Army, and had also established a good relationship with leading French soldiers.⁶³⁰ With his close ties to France, Grierson represented the definite shift in British foreign policy that had occurred since the turn of the century.

Grierson held the post of DMO until 6 October 1906 when he was replaced by Major-General John Spencer Ewart. The latter was commissioned into the Army in 1881. He had served with distinction through the Anglo-Egyptian War, in the Sudan, and during the Second Boer War while he had also studied at the Staff College. Ewart had also held several staff appointments in Britain, including as Military Secretary to Secretary of State for War Richard Haldane.⁶³¹ The latter personally chose Ewart to replace Grierson as DMO.⁶³² Ewart represents the trends that came to dominate senior military appointments in the British Army in the early twentieth century, field service mixed with professional study, while his

⁶²⁹ Ibid, p.202

⁶³⁰ Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.63

⁶³¹ 'The Times, Saturday, September 20, 1930' (<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/archive/article/1930-09-20/12/8.html#start%3D1784-12-31%26end%3D1985-01-01%26terms%3Djohn%20spencer%20ewart%26back%3D/tto/archive/find/john+spencer+ewart/w:1784-12-31%7E1985-01-01/1%26prev%3D/tto/archive/frame/goto/john+spencer+ewart/w:1784-12-31%7E1985-01-01/2%26next%3D/tto/archive/frame/goto/john+spencer+ewart/w:1784-12-31%7E1985-01-01/4>) [Accessed 14/07/20]

⁶³² Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.109

appointment again denotes how connections to a government official proved decisive in the appointment of an intelligence chief.

On 12 September 1906 the General Staff was finally established on a permanent basis. In November 1906 the Directorate was moved into the new War Office building in Whitehall. This ended the physical separation from the War Office that had been the status quo since before 1870. In 1907 the Directorate was restructured. MO 1 and MO 4 remained the same. The foreign intelligence work was divided between two new sections. MO 2 became the European Section and had four Sub-Sections. A dealt with France, Belgium, the Congo Free State, Morocco, and Siam. B with Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire, Greece, Abyssinia, and Liberia. C with Germany, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia. D with Italy, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, and South America. MO 3 became the Asiatic Section with four Sub-Sections. A focused on the US, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. B with the Russian Empire. C with India, Afghanistan, Persia, and Central Asia. D with China, Japan, and Korea. Two new Sections were added. One was MO 5, the Special Section with two Sub-Sections. A dealt with submarine cables, wireless telegraphy, censorship, and ciphers. B was the General Staff Library. The other section was MO 6, the Medical Section.⁶³³ This remained the Directorate's final organisation until August 1914. The greater geographical focus in most sections shows the increase in the Directorate's resources and manpower.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

In December 1905 Arthur Balfour resigned as Prime Minister and the Liberals formed a minority government, with Henry Campbell-Bannerman becoming Prime

⁶³³ *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, 1907, WO 106/6337, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, pp.6-8. John Gooch states that the divide of the foreign intelligence work, between MO2 and 3, showed a "changed spirit at the War Office," since "it was no longer thought possible for one officer to oversee such a large part" of the Directorate of Military Operations. (Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.109)

Minister. In the 1906 General Election the Liberals won by a landslide majority. The previous Conservative-Liberal Unionist ministry had begun creating machinery to ensure inter-departmental cooperation and long-term planning for imperial defence, notably with the creation of the CID. Yet more remained to be done.⁶³⁴ The ascension of the Liberals led to fears that the recently constructed imperial defence machinery might be swiftly dismantled, but these proved groundless.⁶³⁵ Liberal leader Campbell-Bannerman came to view the CID as “an invaluable addition to Britain’s constitutional machinery.”⁶³⁶ Under the Liberals, however, defence policy was relegated in importance to social reform.

From the late 1880s onwards, a new doctrine emerged within the Liberal Party. This ‘New Liberalism’ was focused on interventionist social reform to combat the systemic issues of slum housing, old-age poverty, and national insurance amongst others.⁶³⁷ Campbell-Bannerman was a committed reformer. He had secured his position as Liberal Party leader partly through his adherence to a social reform programme. As with most political parties, however, the Liberal Party was not a single monolith. Before the General Election, Campbell-Bannerman had faced a serious challenge from a group termed the ‘Liberal Imperialists’. This group, which included future Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, had supported Britain’s war against the Boers in 1899. This group remained committed to social reform but placed more focus on imperial security and

⁶³⁴ As John Mackintosh accurately stated the CID’s creation was “simply a stage in a long-drawn-out process.” (Mackintosh, *The British Cabinet*, p.266)

⁶³⁵ Balfour’s private secretary, John Satterfield Sandars, wrote to Lord Esher, on 16 October 1905, about the security of the CID under a Liberal government. He stated his belief that Campbell-Bannerman and his Cabinet “may well like to let this Institution become a mere rudimentary...organ of the Government.” (‘John Satterfield Sandars to Esher (16 October 1905)’, *Political Correspondence: The Prime Minister*, 28 Oct 1903-1 Dec 1905, ESHR 10/32, The Papers of Viscount Esher (Reginald Brett), CCA, Cambridge, UK, p.3) In Sir J.W. Fortescue’s opinion, the years of the Balfour government witnessed much “unprofitable discussion; and then the task of setting the nation’s military house in order was taken in hand” by the new Liberal government, particularly by Secretary of State for War Richard Haldane. (Sir J.W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army Vol. XIII* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1930) p.570)

⁶³⁶ Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, p.82

⁶³⁷ Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, p.344

prosperity.⁶³⁸ Campbell-Bannerman defeated the Liberal Imperialists' challenge and remained party leader. Within the new Liberal government there were those who were sympathetic to the Army's situation and to the needs of imperial defence. Secretary of State for War Richard Haldane was able to forge good working relationships with his military advisers. While Campbell-Bannerman did not call as many CID meetings as Balfour, the Committee remained an important state organ.⁶³⁹ This ensured that the Directorate of Military Operations evolved under the auspices of political and administrative culture, retaining the same principles as its predecessors.

The DMMI had taken an enlarged role within the 'committee system'. The Directorate expanded its role further. DMOs Grierson and Ewart were regular members of the CID in this period. The DMO or a member of the Directorate was present for forty-eight out of forty-nine CID meetings from 10 March 1904 to 14 July 1910. The Directorate became an important part of the expanded system of CID sub-committees. For instance, the DMO remained an important figure upon the CDC, now a sub-committee of the CID, where he represented the CGS. By 1907 the CDC's work was "mainly dependent, for information as to facts," upon the Directorate. Other sub-committees that the DMO served on were: 'the Sub-Committee on Combined Naval and Military Operations', 'the Sub-Committee on the Military Requirements of the Empire', and those dealing with foreign espionage and the SIB. The Directorate's expanded role within the 'committee system' highlighted how political and administrative culture dominated its evolution. By 1910 a 'committee style approach' was firmly established as a principle for its operation.

Inter-departmentalism remained a defining concept. The Directorate facilitated communication across the state's apparatus. For instance, at a CID meeting, on 22 November 1904, Secretary of State for India St. John Brodrick

⁶³⁸ G.L. Bernstein, 'Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and the Liberal Imperialists', *Journal of British Studies* 23/1 (1983) p.119

⁶³⁹ While Balfour's government called around sixty meetings of the Defence Committee and CID, Campbell-Bannerman's government only called sixteen. (Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, p.82)

proposed that the DMO should meet with him, to review demands by the Indian government for further reinforcements of British troops.⁶⁴⁰ This illustrates the way the Directorate acted as a conduit for information. Its involvement within the 'committee system' served to expand its inter-departmental functions. At another CID meeting, on 5 April 1905, DMO Grierson discussed issues surrounding the creation of a defence policy for Canada. Present at this meeting were: Prime Minister Balfour, Secretary of State for India Brodrick, First Lord of the Admiralty Earl Cawdor, First Sea Lord Admiral Fisher, DNI Captain C.L. Ottley, Secretary of State for the Colonies Alfred Lyttelton, Field Marshal Earl Roberts, Secretary of State for War Arnold-Forster, CGS Neville Lyttelton, and Chancellor Austen Chamberlain.⁶⁴¹ This large audience provided an excellent opportunity for the dissemination of information, reinforcing the Directorate's inter-departmental character and role within the British defence establishment.

The importance of inter-departmentalism is clear in the way the Directorate collected its information. A report on its organisation and work from 1907 listed "Foreign Office and Colonial Office despatches," "Parliamentary Debates," and "Colonial Office Reports" as major sources of information. It was also stated that the DMO was, "in close touch with the Foreign Office, India Office and Post Office, while the Directorate as a whole works in consultation with the Admiralty and Naval Intelligence Department in the interchange of information and ideas."⁶⁴² These statements evince how the Directorate functioned as an inter-departmental structure like its predecessors. Being in close touch with other departments, both civilian and military, the Directorate sat at the heart of information exchanges across the state's apparatus. The facilitation of inter-

⁶⁴⁰ 'Extracts from the Minutes of the Committee of Imperial Defence regarding Reinforcements for India (31 December 1906)', Nos. 76-100, 25 January 1905-2 August 1907, Nos. 76-100, CAB 6/3, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.8

⁶⁴¹ 'Minutes of 69th Meeting, April 5, 1905', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.2, p.1

⁶⁴² *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, WO 106/6337, NAUK, p.4, p.5, p.4

departmental communication was designated as a crucial function for the Directorate. Its involvement with the CID was a demonstration of this.

By engaging in inter-departmental communication and operating within the ‘committee system’, the Directorate worked towards promoting cooperation. These principles also allowed it to achieve a level of consensus, again by providing unified assessments, for the use of policymakers, from the disparate information that it collected. A clear example of this was a report created by the Directorate, on 25 August 1905, entitled ‘The Military Resources of France’. This contained an enormous amount of information on a variety of different subjects. These included: population statistics, military laws and reforms, army training, French naval policy, finance, trade, coastal defence, and information about the French Colonies. This information would have been drawn from numerous different sources illustrating the Directorate’s high level of inter-departmental communication. The Directorate also analysed the information to assess potential French policy in a war against Britain.⁶⁴³

In 1908 there was growing anxiety over the existence of a German espionage system within Britain. DMO Ewart, CGS Nicholson, and Secretary of State for War Haldane met in late 1908 to discuss this subject. The Admiralty expressed interest too in stopping German espionage, while also in increasing their ability to collect foreign intelligence particularly from Germany.⁶⁴⁴ A note prepared for DMO Ewart, on 4 October 1908, laid out a proposal for the new secret service system that was required. For the better collection of foreign intelligence there needed to be a network of agents “in Germany, based on a centre, in Switzerland, Denmark and Poland, to watch army and report concentrations and deployments.” For counter-espionage activities a domestic system was needed,

⁶⁴³ *The Military Resources of France*, 1905, WO 33/363, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁶⁴⁴ *History of the Security Service, its problems and organisational adjustments 1908-1945 and arrangements for its compilation*, 30 March 1944-31 March 1946, KV 4/1, Records of the Security Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.25

“to mark down spies and agents in peace, and to remain in German lines and spy on troops, if they land.”⁶⁴⁵

In response to these discussions Prime Minister Herbert Asquith decided, in March 1909, that a CID sub-committee should be formed to investigate the issue of foreign espionage.⁶⁴⁶ This Sub-Committee consisted of Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Sir Charles Hardinge, DNI Rear-Admiral Alexander Bethell, Commissioner of Police Sir Edward Henry, General Sir James Wolfe Murray, and DMO Ewart. It published its conclusions on 28 April 1909. It stated that any Secret Service Bureau “should be separate from...but must at the same time be in close touch with the Admiralty, the War Office, and the Home Office.”⁶⁴⁷ The objects of this new Bureau were to be:

(a) To serve as a screen between the Admiralty and War Office and foreign spies who may have information that they wish to sell to the Government. (b) To send agents to various parts of Great Britain...with a view to ascertaining the nature and scope of the espionage that is being carried on by foreign agents. (c) To act as an intermediate agent between the Admiralty and the War Office and a permanent foreign agent who should be established abroad, with the view of obtaining information in foreign countries.⁶⁴⁸

Therefore, the bureau would act as a thoroughly inter-departmental institution and as a conduit of information. A further meeting was held, on 26 August 1909,

⁶⁴⁵ ‘Organization of Secret Service (4 October 1908)’, *Formation of a Secret Service Bureau, 1908-1915*, WO 106/6292, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1. Keith Jeffrey related how important the fears over German aggression were in the formation of the Bureau. (K. Jeffrey, *MI6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010) p.3)

⁶⁴⁶ *History of the Security Service, its problems and organisational adjustments 1908-1945 and arrangements for its compilation*, KV 4/1, NAUK, p.26

⁶⁴⁷ ‘Conclusions of the Sub-Committee requested to consider how a secret service bureau could be established in Great Britain (28 April 1909)’, *Formation of a Secret Service Bureau*, WO 106/6292, NAUK, p.1

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid

at Scotland Yard, “to consider the arrangements to be made in order to give effect to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee.” The attendees were Sir Edward Henry, DMO Ewart, Colonels J.E. Edmonds and G.M.W. Macdonogh of MO 5, and Captain Temple representing the DNI.⁶⁴⁹ The result of these investigations was the creation of the Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB) in October 1909.

The SIB was divided into two parts. One part focused on counter-espionage operations. The War Office appointed as its head Captain Vernon Kell, “an exceptionally good linguist...qualified in French, German, Russian & Chinese.” It remained in close contact with the Directorate of Military Operations especially MO 5. The second part was responsible for foreign espionage. The Admiralty nominated as its head Commander Mansfield G. Smith Cumming who possessed “special qualifications for the appointment.” It was decided to use Brussels as a base from which to direct the various espionage activities. DMO Ewart updated Hardinge about the proposed measures and he consented.⁶⁵⁰ The SIB’s formation, along with the Directorate’s, perfectly illustrates the continued dominance of Britain’s interdepartmental administrative and political and administrative culture. Both organisations were inter-departmental in character. As previously stated, the CID Sub-Committee advocated that the SIB was to be in close communication with important civil and military departments. Therefore, it was designed to collect intelligence and then disseminate it. Each of these offices was to direct the SIB’s work.⁶⁵¹ Not only was each interested in the SIB’s information, but it was likely that this measure was also designed to promote increased cooperation.

As the British state became increasingly bureaucratised the concept of inter-departmentalism was expanded. As the issue of preparation for war became

⁶⁴⁹ ‘Memorandum regarding Formation of a S.S. Bureau (1909)’, Ibid, p.1

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid, p.1, p.2

⁶⁵¹ ‘Conclusions of the Sub-Committee requested to consider how a secret service bureau could be established in Great Britain, (28 April 1909)’, *Conclusions of the sub-committee requested to consider the setting up of a secret service bureau*, 1909, CAB 16/232, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.2, p.4

more pressing through the late 1900s, inter-departmentalism was utilised to deal with this problem. The Directorate was the ideal instrument to enable inter-departmental communications between different state and military organs. DMO Ewart and Colonel Macdonogh of MO 5 were present at a meeting, held at the Foreign Office, 'to discuss Inter-Departmental Arrangements'. This meeting helped to ease the exchange of information gathered by agents abroad and the transfer of money to allow for information gathering missions.⁶⁵²

The ID and the DMMI had become important parts of the new system of 'integrated control' since 1900. The Directorate became more intricately involved within this system through this period, furthering its inter-departmental functions. In a document on the CID from November 1905, likely created by the CID's secretariat, it was stated that "Under the British Constitution as now operative, it is vital that the Prime Minister of the day should make himself fully acquainted with the larger questions of national defence involving decisions for which he is inevitably responsible." The system of 'integrated control' was designed to allow for this. The DMO was considered one of "the principal official expert advisers of the Government." His position on the CID allowed him to present expert advice to the government on strategic and military policy.⁶⁵³ From 1904 to 1910 the Directorate was called upon frequently to advise the government. For instance, during a CID meeting on 14 July 1910 it was decided that the Directorate should collect all available information on aerial navigation.⁶⁵⁴ Once it had collated this information the Directorate could present it to civilian policymakers to inform their decisions. 'Integrated control',

⁶⁵² 'Report of First Meeting held at the Foreign Office to discuss Inter-Departmental Arrangements (11 May 1910)', *Secret intelligence: correspondence on financing, organisation and staffing; includes minutes of 1st meeting of Secret Service Bureau, 11 May 1910, 3 February 1909-17 March 1913*, FO 1093/108, Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁶⁵³ 'Notes on the Imperial Defence Committee (November? 1905)', *Committee of Imperial Defence: constitution and functions*, CAB 21/468, NAUK, p.6, p.7

⁶⁵⁴ 'Minutes of 107th Meeting, July 14, 1910', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.2

therefore, relied upon inter-departmental communication and the 'committee system' for its effective operation.

DMO Ewart and the other members of the Directorate recognised the dominance of civilian over military authority. This was the lynchpin of the 'integrated control system'. On 3 May 1909 the Directorate criticised General Officer in Command in South Africa Lord Methuen's decision to publicise his views on British policy in a war with Germany, beyond the circle of the military authorities within Britain and South Africa. It stated that "It is not the business of soldiers to put forward the political side of the question."⁶⁵⁵ The Directorate then outlined the respective duties of Methuen and the civilian head in South Africa High Commissioner Lord Selborne:

It is Lord Selbourne's business, subject to his instructions, to say what operations he wishes carried out in the event of war and Lord Methuen's to carry them out as far as the troops placed at his disposal by the General Staff at Head Quarters or by the High Commissioner permit.⁶⁵⁶

This clear delineation of civilian and military responsibility placed civilian power in the supreme position. It reveals how the Directorate supported the system of 'integrated control'.

The Directorate reinforced the link to Prime Minister Balfour formed by the DMML, supplying him with information and undertaking work on his behalf.⁶⁵⁷ After

⁶⁵⁵ 'Untitled Document (3 May 1909)', *Papers: various*, 1908-1911, WO 106/47, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.4

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid*, pp.4-5

⁶⁵⁷ On 12 March 1904, DMO Grierson responded to requests to supply information to Balfour about the existing strength and efficiency of Britain's military forces regarding Home and Indian defence requirements. ('Replies to Question as to the Existing Strength and Efficiency of the Military Forces of the Crown having regard to Indian and Home Defence Requirements (12 March 1904)', Nos 1-50, CAB 6/1, NAUK, p.1) On 28 April 1904 Balfour asked the Directorate to "consider certain strategical

his resignation the Directorate remained connected to his successors, despite Campbell-Bannerman's and Asquith's lower interest in foreign and military policy. By 1907 the DMO, through his seat on the CID, was one of the Prime Minister's principal advisers on military policy.⁶⁵⁸ DMOs Grierson and Ewart were appointed to many important committees by the Prime Minister. For instance, on 22 October 1908 DMO Ewart was appointed to a CID sub-committee chaired by Prime Minister Asquith, with the remit of considering potential wartime scenarios where Britain would have to fight alone or with allies.⁶⁵⁹ DMO Ewart's presence illustrates his importance to state governance in this period. The Directorate completed a process that had begun with Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Home in the 1870s. The influence of political and administrative culture, especially involvement in the 'committee' system, continued to impel the Directorate's closer ties to the civilian sphere.

As with its predecessors the Directorate continued to perform duties that aided the work of the Foreign and the Colonial Offices. MO 4, the Topographical Section, was involved with "matters connected with frontier questions, boundary delimitations and demarcation commissions."⁶⁶⁰ This aided the responsibilities of both offices for frontier and boundary questions. During its investigation into the smuggling of weapons into South Africa in May 1905, the Directorate kept in touch with both the Foreign and the Colonial Offices about its findings.⁶⁶¹ Through July 1905 MO 3 assisted the Colonial Office in work "in which we here are not strictly

questions" about future railway construction in the Persian province of Seistan. ('Note by PM Balfour (28 April 1904)', *Ibid*, p.1)

⁶⁵⁸ *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, WO 106/6337, NAUK, p.4

⁶⁵⁹ 'Copy of a Memo for Edward VII from Lord Esher (3 January 1909)', *Imperial Defence Questions*, 03 November 1902-27 June 1910, ESHR 16/12, The Papers of Viscount Esher, CCA, Cambridge, UK, p.1

⁶⁶⁰ *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, WO 106/6337, NAUK, p.7

⁶⁶¹ 'Telegram 'Alleged importation of rifles for Transvaal' (6 May 1905)', *Correspondence with various foreign service officials; declarations of money received and expended; comments on 'Secret Service in the event of a European War'; Kaid Maclean; correspondence with HM Embassy in St Petersburg about Russian attempt to gain access to documents*, 1905-1906, HD 3/128, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

speaking interested,” since the latter had “no means of obtaining information.”⁶⁶² This signals the continued close collaboration between the Directorate and this important Whitehall department. Links between the Colonial Office and the Directorate were especially close. By 1907, “All questions of military policy affecting the forces of our over-sea Empire” were “referred by the Colonial Office to the” DMO. That the Directorate was responsible for such an important task illuminates how important it was to the Colonial Office’s work.⁶⁶³

Despite the growth of this relationship the most important connection for the Directorate remained with the Foreign Office. The former was reliant to a great extent upon money from the Secret Service Vote, which was controlled by the Foreign Office. Therefore, the latter was afforded a significant level of oversight over the Directorate’s work. Correspondence from intelligence officers exhibits the importance of this funding. The sums of money that the Directorate asked for could be quite substantial. On 20 June 1904 Colonel J.K. Trotter of MO 3 wrote to Sanderson stating that, “I send you herewith a receipt for the £2000 which I have received.”⁶⁶⁴ The Foreign Office provided annual funding for intelligence work. Colonel Francis Davies, head of MO 3, sent the balance of his accounts for his secret service expenditures to the Foreign Office through 1906.⁶⁶⁵ On 15 January 1906 DMO Grierson wrote to Sanderson asking for money to “send an officer shortly to travel incognito over the German side of the Belgo-French frontier to see if any preparations are being made.”⁶⁶⁶ That the DMO himself was

⁶⁶² ‘Colonel Francis Davies to Sir Thomas Sanderson (27 July 1905)’, *Returns and declarations of secret service expenditure; correspondence about ‘A’ and with War Office*, 1905-1906, HD 3/129, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, pp.2-3

⁶⁶³ *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, WO 106/6337, NAUK, p.4

⁶⁶⁴ ‘Colonel J.K. Trotter to Sir Thomas Sanderson (20 June 1904)’, *Movements of arms; further correspondence about ‘A’ and correspondence with War Office*, HD 3/127, NAUK, p.1

⁶⁶⁵ *Repatriation of unprotected British subjects in Russia; employment of agents; Russian attempts to tamper with secret papers; accounts; vouchers and declarations ‘M’; ‘I’; correspondence with HM Consul Stevens; attempt to buy secret German papers; Dr Leyds; smuggling of arms into South Africa; policy in the Baltic in event of war with Germany; Kaid Maclean*, 1906, HD 3/133, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK. This folio contains most of Colonel Davies’s monthly accounts for 1906.

⁶⁶⁶ ‘James Grierson to Lord Sanderson (15 January 1906)’, *Foreign secret service budget; tampering with documents at HM Embassy, St Petersburg; surveillance on Dr Leyds; Lady Fawcett’s application for financial assistance; correspondence with War Office; observations upon ‘Secret Service in the event of War’; allowance for daughters of Mr Blunt; pension payments to Persian*

pleading for funding evinces how vital the Foreign Office was to the Directorate's work.

The Foreign Office rarely ever denied the Directorate funding. All the requests cited above were sanctioned. It was generous with its secret service money when it came to aiding the Directorate's efforts. For instance, on 2 December 1904 Sanderson told Foreign Secretary Lansdowne that the Directorate wa0073dxz "running short of funds. I propose to send a cheque for £1000." Lansdowne approved this and a cheque was sent the next day.⁶⁶⁷ The Foreign Office was not always enthusiastic about providing money. On 7 December 1904, Colonel Davies wrote to Sanderson asking him to sanction funding to send an agent to Diego Suarez, Madagascar to examine new fortifications being constructed there. Sanderson's laconic note to the request read "I suppose we must agree to this."⁶⁶⁸ Lansdowne's successor Sir Edward Grey proved just as amenable. On 10 August 1906 Colonel Davies wrote to the Foreign Office stating that, "I received Sir Edward Grey's permission to pay a man £10 for plans of some Belgian forts."⁶⁶⁹ The Foreign Office did not always assent to these funding requests. On 22 October 1906 Major George Cockerill asked Sanderson to sanction expenditure so that MO 3 could pay for some records of arms. The amount was relatively small at only £15. Yet, in this instance the Foreign Office's replied that the information was, "No use from our point of view & the [India Office] think it is neither necessary nor desirable."⁶⁷⁰ This denotes the limits of Foreign Office funding for the

princesses, 1906, HD 3/132, Records created or inherited by the Secret Intelligence Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, pp.1-2, p.2, p.4

⁶⁶⁷ 'T.H. Sanderson to Lord Lansdowne (2 December 1904)', *Movements of arms; further correspondence about 'A' and correspondence with War Office*, HD 3/127, NAUK, p.1

⁶⁶⁸ 'Colonel Francis Davies to Sir Thomas Sanderson (7 December 1904)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁶⁶⁹ 'Colonel Francis Davies to G.S. Spicer (10 August 1906)', *Repatriation of unprotected British subjects in Russia; employment of agents; Russian attempts to tamper with secret papers; accounts; vouchers and declarations 'M'; 'I'; correspondence with HM Consul Stevens; attempt to buy secret German papers; Dr Leyds; smuggling of arms into South Africa; policy in the Baltic in event of war with Germany; Kaid Maclean*, HD 3/133, NAUK, p.1

⁶⁷⁰ 'Major George Cockerill to Sir Charles Hardinge (22 October 1906)', *Foreign secret service budget; tampering with documents at HM Embassy, St Petersburg; surveillance on Dr Leyds; Lady Fawcett's application for financial assistance; correspondence with War Office; observations upon 'Secret Service in the event of War'; allowance for daughters of Mr Blunt; pension payments to Persian princesses*, HD 3/132, NAUK, p.1, p.3

Directorate. These examples were rare, however, compared to the numerous approvals of expenditure.

The Foreign Office's generosity towards the Directorate came at a time when the new Liberal government sought to decrease the amount of secret service money. Then Chancellor Herbert Asquith hoped to reduce the amount of secret service money from £50,000 to £40,000.⁶⁷¹ Even with this drive for economic efficiency the Directorate remained self-assured that there would be sufficient funding from the Foreign Office. On 11 May 1910 Colonel George MacDonogh, head of MO 5, spoke to Sir Charles Hardinge, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1906 to 1910, about travelling expenses for agents and officers. Hardinge reassured him that:

There was no intention to stint the money or cripple the work in any way, and that whenever application was made...for necessary money, there would be no difficulty put in the way of its supply, provided sufficient justification were shown.⁶⁷²

This exhibits the importance that the Foreign Office attached to the adequate funding of the Directorate and its activities.

The lack of parsimony by the Foreign Office was because the relationship with the Directorate was deemed of critical importance. The Foreign Office received important information from the latter that helped its daily business, and that of Britain's various ambassadors and consuls. On 24 October 1905 Sir Thomas Sanderson wrote to Britain's Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Sir Nicholas O'Connor. He told the latter "Pray look...at a memo. on the disturbances in Russia forwarded by the Director of Military Operations. [It is] very clear & most

⁶⁷¹ 'Hebert Asquith to Sir Edward Grey (20 January 1906)', Ibid

⁶⁷² 'Report of First Meeting held at the Foreign Office to discuss Inter-Departmental Arrangements (11 May 1910)', *Secret intelligence: correspondence on financing, organisation and staffing; includes minutes of 1st meeting of Secret Service Bureau, 11 May 1910*, FO 1093/108, NAUK, p.2

interesting.”⁶⁷³ On 12 January 1906, Britain’s Minister to the Netherlands Sir Henry Howard reported that he had “read with great care and interest the two memoranda drawn up in the [Directorate] - the first on “Secret Service in the event of a European War” - the second on “Secret Service in the event of war with Germany.” He provided his opinion on the subject.⁶⁷⁴ This reveals the useful connections that the Directorate possessed with Britain’s consular networks, facilitated by the Directorate’s links with the Foreign Office. This relationship remained mutually beneficial.

The importance of the civilian sphere to the evolutionary process in Britain contrasted sharply with the situation in France. Unlike its British counterparts, the Deuxième Bureau remained an institution under the near exclusive control of the French Army. The result was the absence of strong connections between the Bureau and civilian officials. Deborah Bauer asserts that, with a few exceptions, “Archival and published sources reveal that...government and policy makers were not very involved in the story of the growth and professionalization of intelligence.”⁶⁷⁵ Peter Jackson notes how the monopolisation of foreign intelligence collection and analysis by the French Army ensured that, it was “oriented overwhelmingly towards the acquisition of military knowledge for the army high command.”⁶⁷⁶ This contrasts with how Britain’s foreign intelligence

⁶⁷³ ‘Thomas Sanderson to Nicholas O’Conor (24 October 1905)’, *Correspondence with Grey, Lansdowne, and Sanderson*, Oct.-Dec. 1905, OCON 6/1/54, The Papers of Sir Nicholas and Lady (Minna) O’Conor, CCA, Cambridge, UK, pp.1-2

⁶⁷⁴ ‘Secret Memorandum (12 January 1906)’, *Foreign secret service budget; tampering with documents at HM Embassy, St Petersburg; surveillance on Dr Leyds; Lady Fawcett’s application for financial assistance; correspondence with War Office; observations upon ‘Secret Service in the event of War’; allowance for daughters of Mr Blunt; pension payments to Persian princesses*, HD 3/132, NAUK, p.1, pp.7-8, pp.2-4. The previous year, on 17 October 1905, the Directorate had received similarly useful information from Britain’s Minister at Copenhagen, Alan Johnstone. He had described how Denmark could be utilised as an effective place to collect intelligence on Germany. Johnstone even offered the services of the Consulate to help send intelligence back to Britain. (‘Secret Memorandum (17 October 1905)’, *Correspondence with various foreign service officials; declarations of money received and expended; comments on ‘Secret Service in the event of a European War’; Kaid Maclean; correspondence with HM Embassy in St Petersburg about Russian attempt to gain access to documents*, HD 3/128, NAUK, pp.6-7)

⁶⁷⁵ Bauer, ‘Marianne is Watching’ (Ph.D. Thesis) pp.269-270

⁶⁷⁶ Jackson, ‘Political Culture and Intelligence Culture: France before the Great War’, *Cultures of Intelligence in the Era of the World Wars*, p.38

organisations collected intelligence for both senior soldiers and policymakers. This represents a stark difference between the evolutions of British and French foreign intelligence from 1870 to 1914. As shown throughout this thesis, civilian departments played a leading role in the development of the Directorate and its predecessors. There was no similar comparison to be made in France. It reveals the unique evolutionary path of British foreign intelligence, while also demonstrating the importance of political and administrative culture.

While the Directorate enjoyed a strong attachment to the Foreign Office, its relations with other departments of state were not always so copacetic. The most troublesome, from the Directorate's point of view, remained the Treasury. In fact, the Directorate and its predecessors had gone to great lengths to try and avoid as much Treasury influence in their affairs as possible. On 30 November 1906 Major Cockerill replied to Sir Charles Hardinge's requests for information, about the origin of the system that allowed Britain's foreign intelligence organisations to obtain a proportion of the Secret Service Vote. He stated that:

As to the reasons for the arrangement, I doubt if the Treasury would give the War Office a special Secret Service grant in time of peace, but, even if they did, difficulties would be sure to arise...At present it is possible to keep our operations secret, as the number of officials at the War Office who know of them is very small, and all of them are officers of this Directorate.⁶⁷⁷

This evidence of the continued troublesome relationship between the Directorate and the Treasury is another reason the link with the Foreign Office was so prized.

⁶⁷⁷ 'Major George Cockerill to Sir Charles Hardinge (30 November 1906)', *Repatriation of unprotected British subjects in Russia; employment of agents; Russian attempts to tamper with secret papers; accounts; vouchers and declarations 'M'; 'I'; correspondence with HM Consul Stevens; attempt to buy secret German papers; Dr Leyds; smuggling of arms into South Africa; policy in the Baltic in event of war with Germany; Kaid Maclean*, HD 3/133, NAUK, p.2

It allowed the Directorate to undertake its business without an overbearing level of scrutiny.

The Directorate continued to improve its position within the War Office, preventing the repetition of the isolation that had hindered the ID. The DMO was one of the principal military advisers of the Secretary of State for War second only to the CGS. This afforded the DMO an excellent opportunity to influence War Office policy. An example of this was the instrumental role of DMO Ewart in the discussions around the issue of counterespionage in late 1908. At the year's end private conversations were held between the Secretary of State for War, the CGS, and DMO Ewart.⁶⁷⁸ This highlights the extent to which the Directorate was as important inside the confines of the War Office as it was outside of it.

The evolution of the Directorate remained as definitively influenced by political and administrative culture as those of its predecessors. It was inter-departmental in character and sought to cooperate with departments across the state's apparatus, while expanding its role within the 'committee system'. Finally, it provided a level of consensus by producing unified assessments for policymakers. The Directorate continued to play an important role within the system of 'integrated control' upholding its concepts. The SIB was established along similar principles to the Directorate especially inter-departmentalism. The Directorate continued to prioritise its relationships with the civilian sphere through this period. It built upon the connections developed by its predecessors. By 1910 it had reinforced the links with the important state departments, secured a prominent position within the War Office, and was positioned as an important advisory structure to the Prime Minister. These trends were again guided by the effect of political and administrative culture. This all signifies how integral it was to the Directorate's development through this period. While this influence

⁶⁷⁸ *History of the Security Service, its problems and organisational adjustments 1908-1945 and arrangements for its compilation*, KV 4/1, NAUK, p.25

retained its dominance, there were significant changes in the relationship between the Directorate and the Army.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

As Campbell-Bannerman's government took office in 1906 they were forced to confront the continued thorny issue of military reform.⁶⁷⁹ Although the order to create a General Staff had been issued back in 1904, wrangling amongst soldiers and politicians meant that it was not until October 1906 that the General Staff "came into recognizable existence."⁶⁸⁰ Into the maelstrom of continued reform and lingering recriminations entered Richard Haldane as the new Secretary of State for War. From 1906 to 1912 Haldane sought to introduce a new package of army reforms, following in the footsteps of his predecessors St John Brodrick and H.O. Arnold-Forster. The latter had expounded his own scheme for army reform in 1904. The crux of his proposal was to create two armies. The first was the General Service Army which was to be long service, while the other was to be the Home Service Army which was short service. His scheme faced considerable criticism from both military and civilian figures and was sunk leaving many pressing issues unresolved.⁶⁸¹ While he had hoped to become Chancellor, Haldane threw himself into his work at the War Office and sponsored a series of reforms to prepare the British Army for the exigencies of modern warfare.⁶⁸²

Haldane's scheme bore some resemblance to that of Arnold-Forster's in that it advocated for a two-line army. He stated that the Army needed to possess a "highly organized and well-equipped striking force." To sustain this, he wanted

⁶⁷⁹ John Gooch argues that the results of three years' worth of reforms and investigations, by the Balfour government, had resulted in "embittered officers, half-attained reforms, and an untried General Staff." (Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.89)

⁶⁸⁰ Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, p.246

⁶⁸¹ Barnett, *Britain and Her Army 1509-1970*, p.358, p.359

⁶⁸² Colonel J.K. Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army 1899-1914* (London: Methuen, 1938) p.231

to create a Territorial Army out of the existing Volunteers, Militia, and Yeomanry of the British military. This new army would “support and expand the striking force in the later stages of a protracted war.”⁶⁸³ By 1909 the bulk of Haldane’s reforms had been completed.⁶⁸⁴ He attained a level of success that had eluded his predecessors.⁶⁸⁵ The Directorate of Military Operations had to steer its way through these new sets of reforms. It had an advantage, however, over its predecessors as it enjoyed a far more positive relationship with the Army’s leadership.

The Directorate was responsible for important duties within the Army, primarily its strategic planning function. These duties had been fulfilled by the Directorate’s predecessors; however, this was made an official duty for the Directorate undertaken by MO 1.⁶⁸⁶ The official recognition of this function reveals the new attitude that prevailed towards the Directorate. It highlights the growing acceptance of the necessity for foreign intelligence work and strategic planning. A recognition of its duties meant a growing acceptance of the Directorate’s importance within the Army’s hierarchy. Controlling information, as its predecessors had, provided a platform for the Directorate to expand its influence within the formation of strategic policy, but it took official recognition for this outcome to become a reality.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸³ Spiers, *The Army and Society*, p.266

⁶⁸⁴ There were “new staff methods, new training, new men; an expeditionary force capable of taking the field in Europe within fifteen days, a simple and effective organization of regulars and auxiliaries.” (Barnett, *Britain and Her Army 1509-1970*, p.366)

⁶⁸⁵ Hamer attributed Haldane’s success, “not to the genius of his reforms...but to the pains that he took to create an atmosphere of co-operations in which civilians and soldiers could work with a limited amount of friction between them.” (Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations*, pp.259-260). Gooch, however, declares that Haldane’s reforms must be viewed in conjunction with those of his predecessors. Rather than inaugurating a new era of reform, Haldane built upon the work that had been undertaken since the end of the Second Boer War. (Gooch, *The Prospect of War*, pp.98-99)

⁶⁸⁶ *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, WO 106/6337, NAUK, p.6

⁶⁸⁷ This was mirrored in British naval intelligence. Nicholas Lambert notes how the DNI “possessed considerable influence in the formulation of strategic policy largely through his control of the information apparatus within the naval bureaucracy.” (N.A. Lambert, *Planning Armageddon*:

There were no examples of the animosity that the IB, the ID, and the DMMI had endured from senior soldiers, which had resulted in their isolation from the Army's hierarchy. The primary reason for the acceptance of the Directorate was because it constituted one of the three key departments of the new General Staff. Two years after the Directorate's establishment saw the formal foundation of the General Staff in October 1906. While its predecessors had acted as quasi-General Staffs, the Directorate formed one of the three pillars that comprised this new institution. This gave it a high level of authority and prestige and it was viewed as integral to the workings of the General Staff. In 1908 Director of Staff Duties Douglas Haig stated that, "all officers noted for General Staff employment should go through a further course of training lasting about 12 months." This included "In operations, under the D.M.O., by means of attachment at Army Headquarters for at least three months."⁶⁸⁸ That the Directorate was assigned such a key role demonstrated the importance allocated to it for the efficient running of the General Staff as a whole.

The DMO also possessed a close working relationship with the CGS. At a CID meeting on 26 July 1905 it was decided to set up a sub-committee 'to Consider and Prepare Schemes for Combined Naval and Military Operations'. Prime Minister Balfour was to be its president while CGS Lyttelton would represent the Army. Sitting alongside Lyttelton was DMO Grierson and Colonel Charles Callwell head of MO 1, the only other General Staff representatives on this Sub-Committee.⁶⁸⁹ This further underlines the prominent role that the Directorate held within the General Staff. The DMO also represented the CGS on several committees such as on the CID sub-committee, from June 1910, discussing aerial navigation and on the CDC.⁶⁹⁰ This illuminates the senior role that the DMO held within the General Staff.

British Economic Warfare and the First World War (Cambridge MA & London: Harvard University Press, 2012) p.27)

⁶⁸⁸ 'Considerations Regarding the Organization of the General Staff, and the Selection and Training of General Staff Officers (1908?)', *Imperial Defence Questions*, ESHR 16/12, CCA, p.4

⁶⁸⁹ 'Minutes of 77th Meeting, July 26, 1905', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1, p.4

⁶⁹⁰ 'Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Minutes of Meeting, June 20, 1910', 133-138, 11 December 1911-20 July 1912, CAB 4/4/1, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.6. *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, WO 106/6337, NAUK, p.4

His senior position enabled the Directorate to influence military strategy, development, and policy.

Two of the DMO's primary duties were listed as the "Strategical distribution of the Regular Army," and the "Preparation of schemes of offence for the Imperial Army under various conditions."⁶⁹¹ This enabled the Directorate to opine upon the direction of military policy. The DMO also often participated in discussions over strategic policy and the Army's role. For instance, at a CID meeting on 30 May 1907, DMO Ewart was appointed to a CID sub-committee by Prime Minister Campbell-Bannerman with a remit "to consider what are, in present circumstances, the reasonable military requirements of the Empire."⁶⁹²

In January 1906 DMO Grierson was involved in the CID's discussions over potential wartime scenarios. The discussion was framed around the issue of war between France and Germany with Britain sending support to the former. Grierson was a firm advocate of sending support to France, an issue which will be examined in the section on involvement in policymaking. At a conference held on the 12 January 1906, involving the members of the CID, Grierson "undertook to have a general plan drawn up" examining the military force that Britain could send to aid France in a conflict with Germany.⁶⁹³ His position as DMO allowed Grierson to opine his strategic views and to help implement them. By 1906 the Directorate's inter-departmental functions and 'committee-style approach' afforded it significant power within the Army, especially in the role of strategic planning. This provided a marked contrast to how these principles had caused animosity for the Directorate's predecessors.

⁶⁹¹ 'Proposals for so Organizing the Military Forces of the Empire as to Ensure their Effective Co-operation in the Event of War (17 July 1909)', *Subject: Imperial Conference: proceedings Vol. I*, 1909, CAB 18/12A, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.77

⁶⁹² 'Minutes of 98th Meeting, May 30, 1907', *Nos. 1-82*, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.4

⁶⁹³ 'Notes of a Conference Held at 2, Whitehall Gardens, January 12, 1906', *Subject: Unnumbered Committee of Imperial Defence Papers, 1905-1912*, CAB 18/24, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.7

Grierson was remarkably successful in furthering his own views on strategic policy. His ideas were adopted by the General Staff and retained traction after he left the Directorate. For instance, in November 1908 the General Staff strongly argued that, in the case of war between France and Germany, "Prompt and direct assistance by the British army may then mean all the difference between defeat and victory."⁶⁹⁴ It argued for a large force to be sent to aid France. By February 1909 it was entrenched in this position:

a military entente between [Britain and France] can only rest upon an understanding that, in the event of war in which both are involved...the whole naval and military strength of the allies will be brought to bear at the decisive point.⁶⁹⁵

This resembled Grierson's views. There is no direct evidence demonstrating that Grierson transformed the General Staff's strategic views singlehandedly. Yet, his direct involvement in strategic policy formation, along with his forthright opinions, form one logical conclusion. This was that Grierson was instrumental in helping to dictate the direction of strategic policy. This illustrates how British intelligence officers were starting to gain important influence over the direction of policy. The Directorate built upon the expanded involvement of its predecessors to begin to impact the outcome of policy formulation.

Britain's network of military attachés remained an important source of information for the Directorate. By this period the latter had managed to assume a large amount of control over the attachés,⁶⁹⁶ a goal that had eluded the

⁶⁹⁴ 'Memorandum by the General Staff (November 1908)', *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.4

⁶⁹⁵ 'Lord Esher's paper on the assistance to be given by the United Kingdom to France if she is attacked by Germany. Note by the General Staff (February 1909)', *Ibid*, NAUK, p.5 (emphasis in original)

⁶⁹⁶ For instance, through July to August 1908, the Directorate asked the military attaché to Germany to provide information about German counter-espionage practices, which he dutifully did. ('Colonel Frederick Trench to MO 2 C (24 August 1908)', *Counter espionage laws in foreign countries: other nations' laws regarding the offence of espionage, 1908-1918, 1905-1917*, KV 3/1, Records of the Security Service, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1)

Directorate's predecessors. Working in the Directorate's favour was the elevation of former intelligence officers to Attaché posts, including Lieutenant-Colonel Gleichen who was attaché in Germany between 1903 to 1906. As a former intelligence officer Gleichen knew exactly what kind of information the Directorate was looking for and worked in conjunction with the Directorate on a secret work entitled the 'Military Resources of Germany'.⁶⁹⁷ The desirability of appointing attachés from the ranks of Britain's intelligence officers had been mooted since the 1870s. While there had been resistance against it in the 1890s this principle had been fully adopted by the 1900s.

Through this period the Directorate exercised a growing control over senior military figures across the Empire. An example of this relationship was the correspondence between the Directorate and Lord Methuen, General Officer in Command in South Africa, from January to May 1909. The correspondence revolved around a defence scheme for South Africa in case of war with Germany. The Directorate was responsible for directing Methuen to prepare either a defensive or an offensive scheme for the military forces in South Africa. For his part, Methuen asked the Directorate to help ensure the retention of an officer involved in reconnaissance work in South Africa. The Directorate did not possess the power to sanction this, the Treasury retained that power, but DMO Ewart promised to liaise with the Adjutant-General to try and ensure this outcome.⁶⁹⁸ This communication highlights the increased authority that the Directorate possessed over Britain's and the Empire's military forces.

While its relationship with the Army's leadership continued to improve the Directorate held a much tenser relationship with the Royal Navy. There was, however, some continued inter-service cooperation from 1904 to 1910. On 14 March 1907, the General Staff affirmed that they used "every endeavour to keep

⁶⁹⁷ 'Lieutenant-Colonel Gleichen to Sir Frank Lascelles (3 November 1906)', *Europe*, July 1897-July 1908, WO 106/46, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

⁶⁹⁸ 'Colonel Adye to Spencer Ewart (19 April 1909)', 'Spencer Ewart to Lord Methuen (22 January 1909)', *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.1

in close touch with naval opinion.”⁶⁹⁹ The chief instrument for this was the Directorate which worked “in consultation with the Admiralty and Naval Intelligence Department in the interchange of information and ideas.”⁷⁰⁰

The Directorate and the NID continued to cooperate. During a CID meeting on 25 August 1904 the issue of gaining intelligence from French colonial ports was discussed. It was decided that “the General Staff and Naval Intelligence Department should confer the matter, and put forward proposals for organizing a Secret Service to acquire the necessary information.”⁷⁰¹ The Directorate would have been responsible for liaising with the NID and for creating further proposals. At another CID meeting on 13 November 1906 the DMO and DNI were assigned to a committee on the formation of a Historical Section for the CID.⁷⁰² DMO Ewart and DNI Bethell were both members of the Sub-Committee formed to examine the establishment of the SIB through mid-1909. On 22 February 1910, the DMO and DNI discussed “naval and military responsibility for the removal of Europeans from the coastal ports of China in the event of native disturbances.”⁷⁰³

The DMO kept the DNI abreast of developments in military policy. In April 1909, DMO Ewart sent DNI Bethell a memorandum upon military operations in South Africa in a war with Germany. Ewart asked if Bethell would “favour him with his views on the subject, as Naval considerations must greatly influence the

⁶⁹⁹ ‘The Strategical Conditions of the Empire from the Military Point of View (14 March 1907)’, *Subject: Imperial Conference: proceedings Vol. I*, CAB 18/12A, NAUK, p.247

⁷⁰⁰ ‘Organisation and Work of the Military Operations Directorate of the General Staff’, *Notes with Regard to the Collection of Intelligence in Peace Time*, WO 106/6337, NAUK, p.4

⁷⁰¹ ‘Minutes of 55th Meeting, August 25, 1904’, *Nos. 1-82*, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.2

⁷⁰² ‘Minutes of 93rd Meeting, November 13, 1906’, *Ibid*, p.3

⁷⁰³ ‘Questions Requiring Inter-Departmental Consideration (22 February 1910)’, 15 March 1907-22 August 1911, 101-132, CAB 4/3, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

instructions to be given to” Lord Methuen.⁷⁰⁴ This all signals a continued working connection between the Directorate and the NID.

The Directorate was often in communication with the Admiralty as a whole. On 12 July 1904 DMO Grierson accompanied Lord Roberts to a meeting at the Admiralty, which included the DNI and Senior Naval Lord Walter Kerr, for discussions over the garrisons of Gibraltar and Malta.⁷⁰⁵ Through 1905 to 1906 MO1 A communicated with the Admiralty over the issue of cutting telegraphic cables in wartime, and argued that the General Staff should support the Admiralty’s position.⁷⁰⁶ In 1908 the Admiralty found it difficult to enquire about suspected cases of German espionage. To remedy this, it “had accordingly communicated with Colonel Edmonds [head of MO 5] in regard to certain cases of this description.”⁷⁰⁷ The Directorate remained the primary inter-service link allowing for the transfer of information. It was also involved in the formulation of joint military and naval plans.⁷⁰⁸ This afforded it the opportunity to examine the Admiralty’s strategic opinions which provided the chance for criticism.

From 1904 to 1910 the Admiralty devised several plans for a potential war with Germany. The main object of these plans was “to force the German Navy out into the North Sea where a decisive naval battle could be fought.” In these plans the Army was to operate against the German coast in a clearly subsidiary role.⁷⁰⁹ For most senior soldiers this was unacceptable and the Directorate was mostly

⁷⁰⁴ ‘Secret Note to DNI (April 1909)’, *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.1

⁷⁰⁵ ‘Sub-Committee Meeting at Admiralty (12 July, 1904)’, *Nos. 1-40*, 22 October 1902-28 May 1906, CAB 5/1, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

⁷⁰⁶ ‘M.O. 1 (a) to Assistant Director of Military Operations (13 December 1906)’, *Europe*, WO 106/46, NAUK, pp.1-2

⁷⁰⁷ *History of the Security Service, its problems and organisational adjustments 1908-1945 and arrangements for its compilation*, KV 4/1, NAUK, p.25

⁷⁰⁸ For instance, at a CID meeting on 26 July 1905 DMO Grierson was assigned to a sub-committee whose objective was, to decide “upon the practicability of various plans for combined naval and military action in certain contingencies, and to work out these plans in detail.” (‘Minutes of 77th Meeting, July 26, 1905’, *Nos. 1-82*, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.4)

⁷⁰⁹ Williamson, *The Politics of Grand Strategy*, p.105, p.107

aligned with these views. It did recognise that the Royal Navy should have primacy in certain areas of imperial defence, particularly for preventing any invasion of Britain. On 6 November 1907, Captain Adrian Grant-Duff of the Directorate argued that the critical point was “to prevent a landing and the navy is unquestionably better fitted than the army to do this.”⁷¹⁰ This recognition did not prevent the Directorate censuring naval strategy.

The Directorate was extremely critical of the Admiralty’s plans for potential army operations in wartime especially the use of troops on the Baltic coast. On 9 September 1905 Grant-Duff examined the feasibility of these schemes. His findings were that “there is no feasible military operation on the Baltic coast promising adequate results to the risks run.”⁷¹¹ In another note Grant-Duff challenged the whole premise of naval prominence in strategic planning. He argued that “Without a powerful army to back our sea power we can exert little influence on the peace of Europe. If the Admiralty accept this conclusion we have taken the first step towards real reform.”⁷¹²

On 10 November 1905 MO 1 produced an extensive memorandum about the landing of 100,000 British soldiers on the German coasts. Again, the conclusions reached were pessimistic. It was asserted that unless the 100,000 men could be landed within ten days of the outbreak of war they could not:

be expected to have any results which would materially affect the military situation or render any effective assistance to France, and that in all probability the

⁷¹⁰ ‘Invasion of the United Kingdom’ (6 November 1907)’, *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.6

⁷¹¹ ‘British Military action on the Baltic Coast in the event of a war between Germany and Great Britain and France in alliance (9 September 1905)’, *Europe*, WO 106/46, NAUK, p.3

⁷¹² ‘British military action on the Baltic coasts in the event of a war between Germany and Great Britain in alliance with France’, *Ibid*, p.1

expeditionary force...would be decisively defeated, and either driven back into the sea or taken prisoners.⁷¹³

This was a damning indictment and struck at the heart of naval wartime policy. This was a view shared by the Army's hierarchy. In November 1908 the General Staff bluntly stated that, the "idea of a diversion by way of the Baltic does not appear to have anything to commend it from a military point of view."⁷¹⁴ Instead, it urged that "Direct support to the French army offers a better prospect of useful result."⁷¹⁵ This was a repetition of the views expressed by the Directorate. As with the DMMI the Directorate sacrificed its ability to lessen inter-service tension, focusing instead upon discrediting naval plans and advocating for a larger role for the Army. As its relations with the Army's leadership improved the Directorate abjured some of its functions. This included promoting cooperation across the inter-service boundary.

The drive for professionalisation across the British Army continued unabated through these years, especially for General Staff officers. The Directorate was the organisation best suited to remedy this issue. It could work towards promoting professionalism and intellectualism. The Directorate's members emphasised the need for high intellectual abilities for intelligence officers. The Sub-Committee formed to examine the formation of the SIB, of which DMO Ewart was a member, underlined the need for good linguistic skills, technical knowledge, and other intellectual abilities for any officers appointed to the SIB.⁷¹⁶ Colonel Gleichen, head of MO 2, delivered a lecture on 'Intelligence Duties in the Field' in March 1908. His lecture focused on the skills that were needed to be an

⁷¹³ 'Memorandum on the feasibility of landing a British Force of 100,000 men on the coasts of Germany, in the event of Great Britain being in active alliance with France in a War against Germany, and the probable effect on the military situation (10 November 1905)', *Ibid*, pp.6-7

⁷¹⁴ 'Report and Proceedings of a Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence on the Military Needs of the Empire 1909', *Military needs of the Empire: report and proceedings*, 1909, CAB 16/5, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.18

⁷¹⁵ 'Memorandum by the General Staff (November 1908)', *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.4

⁷¹⁶ 'Conclusions of the Sub-Committee requested to consider how a secret service bureau could be established in Great Britain (28 April 1909)', *Formation of a Secret Service Bureau*, WO 106/6292, NAUK, p.2

effective field intelligence officer. The thrust of the lecture was the importance of intellectual ability to intelligence work. For instance, he argued that intelligence officers “should if possible have had a Staff College education.”⁷¹⁷ This reveals how the Directorate retained a professional and intellectual character. While this ethos had served to isolate the IB, the ID, and the DMMI from the Army’s leadership, by 1908 these qualities were advanced as the standard for all senior officers. This eased the Directorate’s relationship with the Army.

The Directorate benefited from a positive relationship with the military establishment. Its prestige and authority were boosted by its central place within the General Staff. Its functions, such as strategic planning and foreign intelligence work, were finally recognised as important duties. The DMO worked closely with the CGS and often represented him, again strengthening the Directorate’s position. From its elevated position the Directorate was able to influence military strategy. It exercised a significant level of control over the military attachés and senior officers around the Empire. Although it cooperated with the NID the Directorate continued to criticise naval strategic plans, sacrificing its ability to lessen inter-service tension. The Directorate retained a professional and intellectual character, values which became prized within the Army’s leadership. As its relationship with the military establishment improved the Directorate remained heavily involved within policymaking.

Involvement in Policymaking

⁷¹⁷ *Intelligence duties in the Field: lecture by Col. Count Gleichen*, March 1908, WO 106/6151, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.5. Jennifer Siegel has detailed the difficulties that plagued the training of British intelligence officers before the First World War. She notes that, while there was “the development of an institutional commitment to intelligence and of a corresponding appreciation of the need to train a professional intelligence officer corps,” this did not translate “into policy implementation, and the outbreak of war in 1914 found Britain’s military intelligence preparations to be woefully inadequate for the challenges ahead.” (J. Siegel, ‘Training Thieves: The Instruction of “Efficient Intelligence Officers” in Pre-1914 Britain’, in *Intelligence and Statecraft: The Use and Limits of Intelligence in International Society*, P. Jackson & J. Siegel (eds.) (Westport, CT & London: Praeger, 2005) p.128)

Through early 1904 conversations and negotiations were underway between Britain and France. A century of antagonism and hostility had culminated in the showdown at Fashoda in 1898. Prime Minister Salisbury had sought to reduce tension between the two nations and resolve ongoing colonial disputes.⁷¹⁸ While he was unsuccessful this work was continued by Arthur Balfour's government. These endeavours came to fruition on 8 April 1904 with the signing of the 'Entente Cordiale'. Although Britain had already entered an alliance with Japan, the 'Entente Cordiale' signified how different British foreign policy would be in the twentieth century as opposed to most of the nineteenth.⁷¹⁹ At the same time Britain hoped to reach an agreement with Russia to reduce tensions in Central Asia and the Far East. The outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in February 1904 put paid to these hopes. France and Britain both feared that they might get dragged into the conflict in support of their respective allies.⁷²⁰ The signing of the 'Entente' came as a great relief to both nations.⁷²¹ While it was an important historical document, and a sign of how British foreign policy was changing, the 'Entente' was not viewed by British policymakers as anything particularly special.⁷²² Although the 'Entente Cordiale' grew in strength in the years to come, it was an agreement "designed to eliminate an enemy rather than to make an

⁷¹⁸ P.M.H. Bell argues that the ground was particularly fertile for rapprochement between the two nations because, "At the start of the twentieth century, the two countries were...being forced into fresh calculations about their respective positions in terms of power." (P.M.H. Bell, *France and Britain, 1900-1940: Entente and Estrangement* (London & New York: Longman, 1996) p.11)

⁷¹⁹ Andreas Rose argued that, under Foreign Secretary Edward Grey, there was "a qualitative change in Britain's alliances." This centred around increasing concern for the security of the Empire rather than for the balance of power on the Continent. (A. Rose, *Between Empire and Continent: British Foreign Policy before the First World War*, Translated by R. Johnston (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017) p.384)

⁷²⁰ As Otte correctly argues "the conflict was a strong incentive to place relations between the two countries on a firmer footing." (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.285)

⁷²¹ The 'Entente' resolved numerous Anglo-French colonial disputes across the globe. These included Newfoundland, West Africa, Siam, and the New Hebrides. The major item was a deal over Egypt and Morocco. This saw a "recognition of each other's privileged position; but it also looked forward to the exclusive control of Egypt and most of Morocco by England and France respectively." (Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.182)

⁷²² Charmley reiterates how Lansdowne was prepared to shelve the whole deal only a few days before it was signed. This, he asserts, demonstrated that the 'Entente' "was indeed on the same level as the Anglo-German and even the Anglo-Russian negotiations - a welcome limitation of Britain's liabilities, but by no means a vital or indispensable part of a new course on British foreign policy." (Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.311)

ally.” Yet, Germany viewed the ‘Entente’ as a dangerous grouping of potential adversaries.⁷²³

A fear of German power had risen in Britain since 1871. It grew exponentially through the start of the twentieth century. Along with some colonial collisions, German attempts to force Britain to join the Triple Alliance had stoked further resentment. By 1904 to 1910 the two nations became caught in a cycle of mutual hostility.⁷²⁴ This growing animosity affected public opinion and the views of Britain’s military and political leaders. Zara Steiner contended that, the “internal history of the Foreign Office reveals the rise of a group of men...who were committed to an anti-German policy and were anxious to strengthen Britain’s links with France and Russia.”⁷²⁵ Germany tested the strength of the ‘Entente’, hoping to dissolve it, in 1905 when it attempted to interfere in the affairs of Morocco. This was a country in which France had been afforded suzerainty supported by Britain. The latter came down firmly on the side of France and forced a German climb down.⁷²⁶ The ‘Entente’ proved enduring in the lead-up to the First World War. Events in Morocco helped to convince Britain that Germany was the real enemy to watch.

After the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War in September 1905, Britain restarted its negotiations with Russia, trying to find a similar settlement to the one made with France. On 31 August 1907 an agreement was reached.⁷²⁷ The

⁷²³ Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, pp.182-183

⁷²⁴ Robert Gibson marked 1903 as the year in which Germany eclipsed France as Britain’s most serious adversary. In this year Erskine Childers’ novel ‘The Riddle of the Sands’ was released, the plot of which revolved around an attempted German invasion of Britain. (Gibson, *Best of Enemies*, p.232)

⁷²⁵ Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, p.70

⁷²⁶ Otte references how in 1905 “senior diplomats and officials were united in their conviction of the necessity to render diplomatic assistance to Britain’s entente partner.” (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.300)

⁷²⁷ The terms of this agreement were focused again on extinguishing any potential colonial hotspots between the two nations. These included agreements over China’s territorial sovereignty, the inclusion of Afghanistan in Britain’s sphere of influence, the division of Persia into respective zones of influences, and the recognition of British primacy in the Persian Gulf. (Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, pp.185-186)

negotiations with Russia proved even more divisive than those with France.⁷²⁸ Historians have tended to view the Anglo-Russian Entente as a measure not designed primarily to challenge Germany.⁷²⁹ While this certainly may have been true, by 1907 Britain had re-centred its diplomatic axis around closer relations with France and Russia to the detriment of those with Germany. This remained the general position up to the outbreak of war in 1914.⁷³⁰

The Directorate of Military Operations positioned itself at the heart of much of the foreign policy wrangling that occurred between 1904 to 1910. It pressed its own views and played an important role in the formation of foreign policy. It played a key part in the dialogue that opened between Britain and France. Its members, particularly DMO Grierson, helped to push the 'Entente' further towards a sort of alliance. The Directorate was now a permanent player in foreign policymaking and utilised it as a primary platform to exert influence over state governance.

As Continental affairs began to loom in importance imperial defence remained an issue of prime importance.⁷³¹ A traditional view has been to see the British Empire as a fading star in the years before the First World War. After reaching its peak in the mid-late Victorian era, the Empire is seen as going into a

⁷²⁸ Steiner noted how "British diplomacy towards [Russia] did not follow a well-defined path." (Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, p.151) Otte argues that there was a division in the Foreign Office between the Victorian and Edwardian generations of statesmen and officials. The former group were generally disinclined to enter serious negotiations with Russia, while the latter were more amenable. (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, pp.304-305)

⁷²⁹ Bourne argued that the continuing difficulties with Russia encouraged Britain to continue to try and seek some form of agreement with Germany. (Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.187). Otte categorically states that the agreement with Russia "was part of a strategy of imperial consolidation...It was not regarded as a means of containing Germany in Europe." (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.309)

⁷³⁰ Charmley provides the best summary for Britain's foreign policy aims in this period, by summarising those of one of the key figures Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey. Charmley states that "Grey believed in the potential German hegemony, the utility of the Russian *entente*, the seminal importance of the French connection and the maintenance of the balance of power." (Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.345)

⁷³¹ Keith Wilson argued that imperial interests remained, over European interests, the driving force behind British foreign policy in the years before the First World War. (Wilson, *Empire and Continent*, p.164)

slow but terminal decline through the Edwardian period.⁷³² This view has been challenged in the last two decades. John Darwin, P.J. Cain, and A.G. Hopkins have all asserted that, through this period, Britain's imperial position remained dominant and unchallenged.⁷³³ The Directorate remained involved within imperial policymaking from 1904 to 1910. Imperial policy was an issue of secondary importance, however, as continental affairs absorbed the bulk of its attention.

Yet the Directorate remained an important source of information for foreign and imperial policy formation. During a CID meeting on 27 April 1904, it was asked to examine the strategic advantages that Russia would accrue from proposed railways between the Caucasus and Persia.⁷³⁴ The DMO was appointed to several important sub-committees formed to tackle pressing questions of imperial policy and defence. DMO Grierson was part of a sub-committee that met "to consider the question of the Garrisons of Malta and Gibraltar" on 22 July 1904.⁷³⁵ This illustrates the way the CID and the 'committee system' continued to provide important forums for the Directorate to influence imperial and foreign policy. It also denotes how the influence of political and administrative culture expedited the Directorate's involvement in foreign and imperial policymaking. The continued uncertainty within the international realm, the personality of Grierson, and the support of the Balfour, Campbell-Bannerman, and Asquith governments all contributed to the continued expanded involvement, and growing influence, of the Directorate within policymaking. But again, the influence of political and administrative culture prevailed in facilitating the Directorate's policy involvement and influence. In fact, this influence guided the support of the

⁷³² Hyam claimed that, despite the Edwardians "effective patching-up," they were simply "masking and delaying the end." (Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, p.311)

⁷³³ Darwin has argued that "Too little has been made of the rising wealth of the Edwardians' empire and the growing mass of assets they were piling up abroad." (J. Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) p.256) Cain and Hopkins contend that, "On the eve of World War I, Britain remained a dynamic and ambitious power," which retained the "ability to impose her will within and beyond the empire." (P.J. Cain & A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2002) p.402)

⁷³⁴ 'Minutes of the 40th Meeting, April 27, 1904', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.84

⁷³⁵ 'Sub-Committee Meeting, at Admiralty, July 12, 1904', Ibid, p.97

successive governments and ensured that Grierson's personality, as with Brackenbury's and Ardagh's, had an effective impact upon the elevation and working of his agency.

Imperial defence concerns remained important to the Directorate. On 25 March 1904 DMO Grierson produced a memorandum on outstanding questions that lay before the CID, on which the War Office needed urgent answers. He listed important questions affecting the defence of several British colonial possessions.⁷³⁶ On 18 April 1904 Grierson claimed that: "the present means of obtaining intelligence regarding Central Asia are not as satisfactory as could be wished...considerable improvement could be effected by a more generous expenditure of money on the part of India for intelligence purposes."⁷³⁷ In 1905 the Directorate classified the "defence of India and the outlying parts of the Empire, and the maintenance of communication with them," as the second most vital interest to be defended, after the supply of food and raw materials to the metropole.⁷³⁸ On 6 November 1907 the Directorate highlighted Britain's limited means to uphold its defensive obligations to Canada.⁷³⁹ The Directorate also remained linked into wider imperial networks. On 29 March 1905 the CID noted "with satisfaction the improved relations between the Intelligence Branches at Home and in India."⁷⁴⁰

Yet, a noticeable shift in opinion occurred through this period regarding the priority of imperial defence issues. The Directorate's predecessors had stressed

⁷³⁶ 'Memorandum of Outstanding Questions now before the Committee of Imperial Defence, on which an early decision is urgently needed by the War Office (25 March 1904)', 1912, *Imperial Conferences*, WO 106/44, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁷³⁷ 'I. Observations on the Comments of the Commander-in-chief in India, dated February 15, 1904, on the War Office Memoranda regarding the Defence of India. II. Observations on the Detailed Examination of the War Office Memoranda by the Quarter-Master General in India, which accompanied the above Comments (18 April 1904)', Nos 1-50, CAB 6/1, NAUK, p.13

⁷³⁸ 'Suggested Outlines of a Military Policy (1905)', *Europe*, WO 106/46, NAUK, p.2

⁷³⁹ 'Invasion of the United Kingdom' (6 November 1907)', *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.7

⁷⁴⁰ 'Minutes of 68th Meeting, March 29, 1905', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.3

the need to prioritise imperial interests. Yet, between 1904 to 1910 these interests lost their previous prized position. Just as DMI Chapman had inculcated a greater imperial viewpoint within the ID, DMO Grierson impressed a more European focused mindset within the Directorate. An upshot of this was the lowering of imperial priorities. For years Indian defence had been a priority for Britain's foreign intelligence organisations. On 22 June 1904 DMO Grierson attempted to change fundamentally the established order of priorities. Providing remarks upon a paper by Prime Minister Balfour, on 'Army Reform and Military Needs of Empire,' Grierson argued that the problem was how the paper proposed "to base the strength of the army solely upon the consideration of war with France and Russia, and that almost exclusively on the study of only one aspect of that problem, the defence of the north-west frontier of India." Grierson contended that "The importance of the defence of India is admitted, but there is no assurance that success in that quarter will terminate the war, unless we are in a position to strike effectively elsewhere."⁷⁴¹

This was a striking statement to make. It contradicted the advice presented by previous intelligence heads and stood in opposition to prevailing views.⁷⁴² Yet, Grierson retained his beliefs throughout his tenure as DMO. On 4 January 1906 he prepared a 'Memorandum upon the Military Forces required for Over-sea Warfare'. Out of the six contingencies that would require British troops overseas Grierson listed four international situations as compared to two imperial situations.⁷⁴³

⁷⁴¹ 'Remarks on Mr. Balfour's Note on "Army Reform and Military Needs of Empire, dated 22nd June, 1904', *Schemes for Army re-organisation, 1903-1906*, CAB 17/13A, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.4

⁷⁴² On 19 December 1904 Prime Minister Balfour asserted that, in terms of imperial military requirements, "the chief point of doubt and difficulty being now, as ever, the amount of force required to supplement the army of India in a great war on the north-west frontier." ('Military Requirements of the Empire: Supplementary Notes by the Prime Minister', *Nos. 1A-40A*, CAB 3/1, NAUK, p.1)

⁷⁴³ The imperial situations Grierson listed were, "A Boer rising in South Africa," and "Small Wars." The international ones were, "War with France, War, in alliance with France, against Germany, War with the United States, War with Russia." Interestingly, Grierson continued to promote the potential of war between Britain and the US. ('Memorandum upon the Military Forces required for Over-sea Warfare (4 January 1906)', *Imperial Conferences*, WO 106/44, NAUK, p.3, pp.7-8) This came at a time when most British foreign policymakers believed that it was important for Britain to maintain positive relations with the US. Ideas over a shared Anglo-Saxon bond were also gaining

Obviously these international circumstances would have entailed threats to British imperial interests, but they were of an international nature. They would have entailed British troops operating upon the European, or North American, continent as opposed to purely in British colonial territory. Therefore, these contingencies cannot be regarded as primarily imperial situations.

The Directorate continued to utilise foreign policy to promote the Army's interests as the DMMI had done. The report on 'The Military Resources of France' from 25 August 1905 scrutinised the prospects of a French invasion of Britain. The Directorate argued that:

one cannot avoid the conviction, supported as it is by all the known facts of the military situation of France...that invasion is, in French opinion, the primary consideration and ultimate aim, and all other measures are of a secondary order of importance.⁷⁴⁴

This reveals how the Directorate continued to push the threat of invasion to try and increase the Army's role within wartime strategy. It was also interesting that, one year after the signing of the 'Entente Cordiale', the Directorate continued to compose reports detailing France as a potential enemy. This would change by the end of 1905.

The Directorate also remained involved with alliance politics through this period. It participated in working out arrangements concerning Britain's continuing alliance with Japan. At two CID meetings on 1 and 15 February 1906, DMO Grierson related his conversations with the Japanese military attaché over proposed British military aid to Japan.⁷⁴⁵ These discussions were part of the larger

in popularity. (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.272) It signals how the Directorate's views were not beholden to the general direction of British foreign policy.

⁷⁴⁴ *The Military Resources of France*, WO 33/363, NAUK, p.299

⁷⁴⁵ 'Minutes of the 83rd Meeting, February 1, 1906', 'Minutes of 84th Meeting, February 15, 1906', *Ibid*, p.3, p.2

process of the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1905.⁷⁴⁶ At a CID meeting on 25 April 1907 DMO Ewart related his continued discussions with the Japanese military attaché.⁷⁴⁷ This exemplifies how the Directorate became more involved in alliance politics. This was a sign of its importance within foreign policymaking. This all denotes how the Directorate carried forward the trends of the DMML. It remained important to foreign policymaking, utilised foreign policy to promote the Army's interests, and remained intimately involved in alliance politics. Yet, the Directorate was to become more influential in foreign policymaking than its predecessors had been.

Although it had lost precedence to foreign policy the Directorate remained involved in important imperial policy issues through this period. In early 1907 DMO Ewart was appointed to an important Sub-Committee on 'the Military Requirements of the Empire', specifically military requirements for India.⁷⁴⁸ Along with Ewart, Secretary of State for India John Morley, Foreign Secretary Grey, Chancellor Asquith, Secretary of State for War Haldane, Lord Esher, CGS Lyttelton, and General John French were all members. Great importance was assigned to its conclusions.⁷⁴⁹ Ewart was involved in an even more extensive effort to coordinate imperial defence. He was a member of an Imperial Conference dedicated to this subject which began on 28 July 1909. It brought together the leading political and military representatives of Britain and the Dominions.⁷⁵⁰ The stated aim was "the

⁷⁴⁶ Otte argues that Britain had two main aims with the renewal of the Alliance. Firstly, it was "an attempt to establish a degree of control over the rising, allied regional Great Power by cooperating with it." Secondly, the renewal of the Alliance "was also a means of winning Japanese support for an Anglo-Russian arrangement." (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.297)

⁷⁴⁷ 'Minutes of 97th Meeting, April 25, 1907', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1

⁷⁴⁸ 'Report of the Sub-Committee on the Military Requirements of the Empire. (India), (1 May 1907)', Nos. 76-100, CAB 6/3, NAUK

⁷⁴⁹ According to a governmental paper from 1 April 1921 detailing the CID's history, the Sub-Committee's work was credited with providing "the real foundation on which was based the establishment of our professional army right up to the outbreak of the war." ('The Committee of Imperial Defence (1 April 1921)', *Committee of Imperial Defence: constitution and functions*, CAB 21/468, NAUK, p.1)

⁷⁵⁰ The British government was represented by Prime Minister Asquith, the Secretaries of State for the Colonies and for War, and the First Lord of the Admiralty. Representing Britain's military establishment were the DNI, the CGS, and the DMO. The Dominions represented were Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the various constituent parts of the Union of South Africa. ('Imperial

foundation of a workable system which will enable us, should necessity arise, to employ the potential military strength of the Empire for a common Imperial purpose.”⁷⁵¹ Ewart was present for the whole of the Conference but there is no record of him speaking. His inclusion signifies, however, that the Directorate remained involved in imperial policymaking at its highest levels. Yet, by this time political and military views on imperial defence issues were changing. The ‘Sub-Committee on the Military Requirements of the Empire’, referenced above, declared that a Russian threat to India was unlikely. It argued that Russia:

has now been crippled in every element of power – financial, social, political, and military...it seems idle to suppose that Russia will for a longish time to come embark on designs that would instantly bring down upon her the certainty of vast expenditure, and the chance of a fresh collision with Japan.⁷⁵²

This demonstrates how official opinion became aligned with the views that DMO Grierson had espoused since 1904.

Five years after Grierson’s assessment on the over-prioritising of Indian defence the General Staff fell in line with this view. By February 1909, addressing concerns about Indian security if Britain were to fight alongside France against Germany, the General Staff argued that the alliance with France “would ensure us at least the benevolent neutrality of Russia, and the contingency of war across the north west frontier of India may therefore for the time being be set aside.”⁷⁵³ Britain’s major responsibility in this event, they argued, was the preservation of

Conference on the subject of the Defence of the Empire, 1909. Minutes of Proceedings (October 1909)’, *Subject: Imperial Conference: proceedings Vol. I*, CAB 18/12A, NAUK, p.1)

⁷⁵¹ ‘Proposals for so Organizing the Military Forces of the Empire as to Ensure their Effective Co-operation in the Event of War (17 July 1909)’, *Ibid*, p.48

⁷⁵² ‘Report of the Sub-Committee on the Military Requirements of the Empire. (India), (1 May 1907)’, *Nos. 76-100*, CAB 6/3, NAUK, pp.v-vi

⁷⁵³ ‘Lord Esher’s paper on the assistance to be given by the United Kingdom to France if she is attacked by Germany. Note by the General Staff (February 1909)’, *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.2

internal order which could be achieved with far fewer troops. There was no doubt that the changed international situation, with the strengthening of the ‘Entente Cordiale’ and the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention, pushed the General Staff to this conclusion. Yet, there can be little doubt that Grierson helped to push the military leadership in this direction. The DMO held an important position within the Army’s hierarchy. His views would have carried weight and, since his Directorate was responsible for strategic planning, he had the power to promulgate these views and direct, to an extent, the Army’s strategic policy. As with Chapman Grierson was responsible for a significant change in opinion. The latter, however, affected a much wider audience than the former had. Grierson promoted a significant change in military thought.

It was in the discussions that took place after the signing of the ‘Entente Cordiale’ where the Directorate exerted its most significant influence upon foreign policymaking. In April 1913 Ewart’s successor DMO Henry Wilson produced a minute for Chief of the Imperial General Staff Sir John French, detailing the work that had been undertaken by the Directorate to prepare the British Expeditionary Force for service on the continent. Describing the work of his predecessors Grierson and Ewart, Wilson stated that, after the signing of the ‘Entente Cordiale’, the “result of their labours was to obtain permission to “work out all the details” of a scheme of combined operations with the French against the Germans.”⁷⁵⁴

From 1905 onwards, there was a concerted effort by the Directorate to highlight the potential for the British Army to become involved in a war on the European continent. Between January to May 1905, the Directorate prepared and undertook a strategic war game based around the scenario of a war between Germany and France.⁷⁵⁵ The scenario was that, attempting to break the deadlock

⁷⁵⁴ ‘Minute to CIGS reporting progress on scheme of E.7. (April 1913)’, HHW 3/7, Private Papers of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson GCB DSO, Imperial War Museum London (IWM), London, UK, p.1

⁷⁵⁵ Williamson highlights the importance of this exercise, calling it “the first thorough British evaluation of the problems of continental warfare.” (Williamson, *The Politics of Grand Strategy*, p.46)

along the Franco-German frontier, Germany had launched an invasion of Belgium. While at this point the Directorate did not believe that Germany would adopt this course in a war with France, this war game shows how it had focused upon the prospect of continental war, alongside France, by the mid-1900s.⁷⁵⁶

On 29 September 1905 the General Staff circulated a memorandum entitled 'The Violation of the Neutrality of Belgium during a Franco-German War'. Responsible for strategic planning the Directorate would have been heavily involved in generating this memorandum. It was created in response to questions that had been posited by Prime Minister Balfour about a German invasion of Belgium. The General Staff also thought it unlikely that Germany would pursue this scheme at the outset of war, but that it might occur as the conflict dragged on.⁷⁵⁷ That these conclusions were so aligned to the Directorate's strategic war game points to its significant involvement in producing the General Staff's judgements. It also highlights the traction that the Directorate's views were gaining amongst the Army's leadership. This displays how, only one year after the signing of the 'Entente Cordiale', the Directorate had centred its attention on conflict with France against Germany. To this end, it also became intimately involved in developing links with France.

The first Moroccan crisis from March 1905 to May 1906 had drawn Britain and France closer together.⁷⁵⁸ Facing a shared threat from Germany, military conversations began between the two nations in the aftermath of this crisis. Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey gave official sanction to these conversations in January 1906, but this was not their starting point. J.D. Hargreaves posited that these conversations most likely began on 20 to 21 December 1905, with

⁷⁵⁶ 'Records of a Strategic War Game, 1905, WO 33/364, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁷⁵⁷ 'The Violation of the Neutrality of Belgium during a Franco-German War (29 September 1905)', 1-68, CAB 4/1, NAUK, p.1

⁷⁵⁸ Charmley contends that Foreign Secretary Lansdowne was keen to support French claims over Morocco, mainly because he sought "to prevent a bilateral deal between the French and the Germans which would be unfavourable to British interests." (Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* p.320)

conversations between the French military attaché in Britain Lieutenant-Colonel Victor Huguet and DMO Grierson.⁷⁵⁹ The latter's role in strengthening the 'Entente Cordiale' has been noted by numerous scholars.⁷⁶⁰ Crucially, the exchanges between Grierson and Huguet "constituted the only direct exchanges of information between military personnel" in Britain and France, during this period of unofficial communication.⁷⁶¹ Grierson urged that the communications with the French officers should be made official.⁷⁶² Significantly, Grierson gave a personal assurance to Huguet that Britain would aid France in a war with Germany.⁷⁶³ This all denotes the Directorate's role in transforming the 'Entente Cordiale' from a simple colonial agreement into a more solid partnership.

Since the signing of the 'Entente Cordiale' there had been a growth of what has been termed a "continental school" within the British Army.⁷⁶⁴ This school of thought saw military action on the continent as the most likely major operation that the Army would undertake, so planning became focused along these lines. At the forefront of this new shift was the Directorate. DMO Grierson had taken the lead with his original war game and then his subsequent discussions with French military officials.⁷⁶⁵ On 4 January 1906, he argued that "At the present moment a

⁷⁵⁹ Hargreaves did, however, note that the official evidence was "of doubtful validity." (J.D Hargreaves, 'The Origin of the Anglo-French Military Conversations in 1905', *History* 36/128 (October 1951) p.248)

⁷⁶⁰ William Philpott argues that Grierson "did much to establish close informal contacts between the two armies." (W. Philpott, 'The General Staff and the Paradoxes of Continental War', in *The British General Staff*, p.98)

⁷⁶¹ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.207

⁷⁶² Williamson, *The Politics of Grand Strategy*, p.75

⁷⁶³ J. McDermott, 'The Revolution in British Military Thinking from the Boer War to the Moroccan Crisis', in P. Kennedy (ed.), *The War Plans of the Great Powers 1880-1914* (London: Routledge, 2014) p.110

⁷⁶⁴ Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.209

⁷⁶⁵ Andreas Rose singles out Grierson as the individual who particularly "sought to focus the role of the army on Europe." (Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, p.202)

war in alliance with France against Germany appears to be within the bounds of possibility, and is an eventuality to be seriously considered.”⁷⁶⁶

DMO Ewart did not pursue discussions with the French Army as fully as Grierson had, or his successor Henry Wilson would. Ewart continued, however, to push the ‘continental school’ of thought. In July 1909 Ewart was a member of a sub-committee of the CID that examined the ‘Military Needs of the Empire’.⁷⁶⁷ In its report the Sub-Committee gave its backing to the General Staff’s conclusion, from 1905, that, while unlikely at the outset of a war, the tide of battle could lead to a German violation of Belgian neutrality.⁷⁶⁸ As a person with the most relevant knowledge, DMO Ewart’s voice would have carried significant weight during the Sub-Committee’s discussions. It was highly likely, therefore, that he significantly shaped its recommendations. This explains the alignment with the arguments posited by the General Staff, which the Directorate also significantly shaped. This evinces Ewart’s commitment to action on the continent and for support for France against Germany.⁷⁶⁹

Through this period, the Directorate continued the trends of its predecessors. It continued to act as a reservoir of expert knowledge for foreign and imperial policymaking. It used foreign policy to promote the Army’s interests, highlighted pressing imperial defence issues, became more involved in alliance politics, and remained linked into imperial networks. Yet the Directorate made

⁷⁶⁶ ‘Memorandum upon the Military Forces required for Over-sea Warfare (4 January 1906)’, *Imperial Conferences*, WO 106/44, NAUK, p.6

⁷⁶⁷ Prime Minister Asquith instructed the Sub-Committee to consider: “(a.) Any circumstances not already reviewed by the Sub-Committee in which the British Army might be called upon to operate either alone or with other Powers;” and “(b.) The nature and extent of the demands that such operations would make upon our naval and military forces at present constituted.” (‘Report of the Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence on the Military Needs of the Empire (24 July, 1909)’, 101-132, CAB 4/3, NAUK, p.39)

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.1

⁷⁶⁹ John Gooch assigns Ewart a prominent place in the evolution of Britain’s continental strategy on account of this point. He asserts that, Ewart “was moving towards the idea that the best way to evict the Germans from Belgium would not be by direct support of the Belgians but by co-operation in the field with the French.” (Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.284) This strategy was developed further by his successor DMO Henry Wilson.

two important additions. It began to focus more upon foreign policy issues, to the detriment of imperial policy, and it influenced state and military officials to do the same. Finally, the Directorate became highly influential in foreign policymaking. DMOs Grierson and Ewart were successful in encouraging the growth of the 'continental school' of military thought, in impressing the necessity of a continental focus upon policymakers, and in strengthening the 'Entente Cordiale' with France. By 1910 the Directorate was a highly influential player in foreign policy formation.

Conclusion: Nearing the Apogee

Between 1904 to 1910 part of the evolutionary process underwent a significant change, as the Directorate of Military Operations' relationship to the Army's leadership improved. Yet, political and administrative culture remained the dominant influence, allowing the Directorate to reinforce its connection with the civilian sphere and its prominent position within foreign and imperial policymaking. This influence, however, also now aided the Directorate's relationship with the Army's leaders. The former's inter-departmental functions, and participation with the 'committee system' were now appreciated qualities.

The Directorate from 1904 to 1910 was heavily involved in the 'committee system', illustrated by its important participation on the CID and its extensive system of sub-committees. A 'committee style approach' clearly defined the Directorate's work. It retained an inter-departmental character remaining a conduit for information across the state's apparatus. This was again facilitated by its involvement in the 'committee system'. The SIB's establishment also demonstrated the continued prominence assigned to inter-departmentalism. This persistent focus enabled the Directorate to work towards promoting cooperation. Gathering and disseminating information required it to communicate and collaborate with other departments. Through this cooperation the Directorate achieved a level of consensus by creating unified assessments. It also continued

to develop within the system of 'integrated control', upholding the dominance of civilian over military power which underpinned this regimen.

The Directorate strengthened its connections with the civilian sphere. It formed a close working relationship with the various Prime Ministers of this period, while aiding the work of the important departments of state. For instance, by 1907 the Colonial Office was referring all questions affecting imperial military policy to the Directorate. The connection to the Foreign Office remained vital providing information and funding, the latter of which was especially valuable. It remained a mutually beneficial relationship for each side and meant that the Directorate could bypass Treasury opposition. Finally, the Directorate increased its authority and position within the War Office through these years. Its inter-departmental functions and participation within the 'committee system' helped the Directorate to collect information for policymakers, and to entrench its connections within the civilian sphere.

The Directorate's connection to the Army's leadership from 1904 to 1910 was defined by positivity and inclusion. There was a recognition of the former's important functions, such as its foreign intelligence and strategic planning work. There was no sign of the animosity which had obstructed the work of the Directorate's predecessors. By 1910 the Directorate had established a significant level of authority over Britain's military attachés, and over the Army's General Officers in Command stationed around the Empire. This can be attributed to a general appreciation of the Directorate's inter-departmental functions by senior soldiers. This bonhomie was also the result of the Directorate's position as one of the key pillars of the new General Staff. It was integral to the latter's operation and developed a close working relationship with the CGS. This imbued the Directorate with more prestige and authority than had been bestowed on its predecessors, allowing it to take a greater role within the direction of military policy. This swiftly bore fruit as DMO Grierson's strategic views took hold within the General Staff. The Directorate continued to cooperate with the Royal Navy, but the relationship was marked by persistent tension. The Directorate criticised naval plans and challenged naval supremacy in wartime strategical planning. As

with the DMMI the Directorate sacrificed its ability to lessen inter-service tension, focusing on championing the Army's cause. The Directorate retained the professional and intellectual character of its predecessors. Fortunately for the Directorate the values of professionalism and intellectualism became prized assets for senior officers.

The Directorate was at the heart of foreign and imperial policymaking from 1904 to 1910. It remained an important reservoir of knowledge and policymakers constantly turned to the Directorate for advice. The latter continued to highlight pressing imperial defence issues and remained connected into wider imperial networks. It utilised foreign policy to champion the Army's interests and became intimately involved in alliance politics. Yet, a significant shift occurred in this period as continental affairs took priority over imperial defence issues. This change was inaugurated by DMO Grierson from mid-1904 and continued by DMO Ewart. Their views helped to initiate a shift in military and political opinion. The Directorate also proved highly influential in the transformation of the 'Entente Cordiale' into a quasi-alliance. DMO Grierson established good relations with leading French military figures pushing Britain and France closer together. The Directorate promoted the development of the 'continental school' within the Army and convinced policymakers and senior soldiers of the necessity of pursuing a continental strategy. This signals how the Directorate had become an integral and influential part of the foreign policymaking process. Again, British political and administrative culture facilitated this expanded role, particularly inter-departmentalism and involvement within the 'committee system'.

By 1910, the first great evolutionary phase of modern British foreign intelligence was nearly complete. The Directorate had entrenched the character of its predecessors, while the process guiding its evolution remained in motion despite a significant change to one part. The influence of political and administrative culture remained predominant. The period from 1910 to 1914 saw the final cementing of this character and the form that the Directorate's successors would all resemble. DMO Henry Wilson epitomised the progress that had been made since 1870.

Chapter 7: Towards a Modern Intelligence Community, 1910-1914

By late 1910 the Directorate of Military Operations was a vital part of the British state's apparatus. It had secured a privileged position within both the military and civilian sphere and was an important player within foreign and imperial policymaking. It had also adopted the practices and culture of its predecessors. The period from 1910 to 1914 saw the final stage of this first evolutionary phase of Britain's modern intelligence machinery. These years witnessed the final systemisation of the trends that had begun in the 1870s. To the end, the impact of political and administrative culture retained its predominance.

The Directorate's evolution continued to be characterised by inter-departmentalism, a 'committee style approach', cooperation, and consensus. All these principles became entrenched in this period. It sat at the heart of information exchanges across the state's foreign and security policy apparatus, tasked with furthering inter-departmental communication and producing unified reports. The Directorate remained an integral part of the system of 'integrated control' and mostly continued to uphold the concepts underpinning this system. Regardless, the impact of the British state's political and administrative culture predominated as it had since 1870. The Directorate continued to develop its relations with the civilian sphere. It formed strong connections with leading policymakers, including Home Secretary Winston Churchill. The connections with the important state departments were reinforced and the Directorate maintained its prominent position within the War Office. There was, however, tension between DMO Henry Wilson and Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, while noticeable cracks emerged in the relationship with the Foreign Office. These point to the way that the Directorate's increased position within the civilian sphere led to a more conceited attitude on its part. Yet, by 1914 the Directorate had been nearly fully incorporated into the civilian sphere.

The Directorate retained the positive relations with the senior army command which had characterised the preceding period. The Directorate

functioned as the hub of strategic planning. There was a slight resurgence of the hostility experienced by the Directorate's predecessors, characterised in the animosity between DMO Henry Wilson and Chief of the Imperial General Staff Sir William Nicholson. Yet, as a sign of its power and position, this personal clash had no serious repercussions upon the Directorate. It also remained locked in a battle of wills with the Royal Navy, but periods of cooperation remained, highlighting the dual strands of its relationship with naval leaders. Finally, the Directorate retained its professional and intellectual character and worked towards promoting these values within the Army. This illustrates the elevated position that it had achieved within the Army's leadership.

From 1910 to 1914 DMO Wilson continued to push the continental strategy of his predecessors. He was successful in influencing the direction of foreign policy. The Directorate remained involved in imperial policy formation, but the focus remained upon continental affairs. Despite this, the Directorate remained linked into the wider imperial networks. This was not enough to draw the Directorate's focus away from Continental affairs. By 1914 it had achieved a powerful position within both foreign and imperial policy formation. This trend, like so many others, was encapsulated perfectly in the career of DMO Henry Wilson.

Henry Wilson and the Evolution of the Directorate of Military Operations

Henry Wilson was born in County Longford, Ireland on 5 May 1864 and entered the Army in July 1884, commissioned into the Royal Irish Regiment. He was posted to India seeing service in Burma before returning to Britain and entering the Staff College. He passed out at the end of 1893 and in November 1894 he joined the ID. He stayed there for three years working in Section A, which collected intelligence from France and Belgium. He served during the Second Boer War seeing action in

some major engagements and performing well under fire.⁷⁷⁰ At the War's conclusion he returned to work at the War Office, becoming vocal on the issue of army reform.⁷⁷¹ In the aftermath of the Esher Committee's report in early 1904, he entered the Directorate of Military Education and Training. He remained there until he became the Commandant of the Staff College at Camberley in 1906. In this post he was determined to "establish a coherent system of higher education and training for the army."⁷⁷² On 2 August 1910 Wilson succeeded Ewart as DMO.

Like Ewart, but unlike most of his predecessors, Wilson never served with the Royal Artillery or Engineers. Yet, he provided the perfect blend of active service and intellectual ability to satisfy most senior soldiers. He had also gained experience working within the War Office and the General Staff. This made him an excellent candidate for the post of DMO. His appointment was made by Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) Sir William Nicholson, former DGMI, in June 1910. Nicholson apparently decided that Wilson's skills would be best served at the Directorate.⁷⁷³ He held the post of DMO until the outbreak of war in August 1914, when he joined the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) en route to France.

Henry Wilson was and remains a figure of some controversy.⁷⁷⁴ Contemporary opinion of him was sharply divided. Sir Charles Deedes, who served

⁷⁷⁰ K. Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson: A Political Soldier* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) p.33

⁷⁷¹ Interestingly, when writing upon the subject of army reform, Wilson stressed Britain's unique position, and how it was difficult to compare Britain's military system to those of the Continental nations. (Ibid, pp.44-45)

⁷⁷² Ibid, p.68. In his study of the Staff College from 1854 to 1914, Brian Bond is very complimentary about Wilson's performance as Commandant. He argued that Wilson's "achievements in his three-and-a-half years at the Staff College were outstanding. He inspired staff and students alike by his professional zeal, greatly increased the geographical range and scope of outdoor exercises, and secured large additions to the establishment of the College." (Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College*, p.270)

⁷⁷³ Wilson was allegedly disappointed to be made DMO, as he had hoped to gain command of a brigade. (Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson His Life and Diaries Volume I*, p.82)

⁷⁷⁴ His biographer Keith Jeffrey stated that Wilson "was one of the most controversial British soldiers of the modern age." (Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, p.vii) Hew Strachan has characterised him as "arguably the most notoriously 'political' of all British army officers." (Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, p.124) Brian Bond termed Wilson "one of Britain's

under Wilson in the War Office, asserted that his “energy, determination & foresight” ensured that the British Army “was brought to a state of readiness to proceed overseas in August 1914.”⁷⁷⁵ On the other hand, James Edmonds dismissively called Wilson “the villain of the piece.”⁷⁷⁶ Wilson offended several people with his forthright criticism and heavy-handedness. Yet, he possessed an engaging personality and excellent communication skills.⁷⁷⁷ Wilson was an outgoing man who enjoyed socialising and holding parties.⁷⁷⁸ This brought him many admirers particularly amongst civilian figures. These included Sir Arthur Nicolson, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office 1910 to 1916, and Secretary of State for War Richard Haldane.⁷⁷⁹ His close connection with senior politicians, alongside his forthright personality, likely led to the resentment shown by some of Wilson’s military peers. Yet, his success as DMO, like DMIs Brackenbury and Ardagh, can be tied to his ability to work alongside civilian officials. While this led to hostility from soldiers, it placed him in a much stronger position than his predecessors to handle any critique. This denotes both how far the Directorate had become integrated into the civilian sphere, and how important state and government officials were to its operations. In many ways, Henry Wilson embodied the character of his Directorate by 1910 to 1914.

Under Wilson’s leadership, the Directorate retained the same internal structure as it had since 1907. MO 1 was the Strategical Section, MO 2 the

most exuberant, flamboyant, exotic, outspoken and even perhaps preposterous generals.” (Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College*, p.244)

⁷⁷⁵ Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, p.85

⁷⁷⁶ Edmonds, *Memoirs of Sir James Edmonds*, p.256. He attributed Wilson’s success to his gifts of a “ready Irish wit, a striking capacity to appropriate and claim as his own the ideas and work of others, and a real ability to make military matters clear in simple language to civilians.” (Ibid, p.255) Secretary of the CID Maurice Hankey also disliked and distrusted Wilson. (Roskill, *Hankey: Man of Secrets Volume I*, p.238)

⁷⁷⁷ Charles Callwell argued that his “ready wit, coupled with a bland ingenuousness of manner which he had cultivated successfully,” enabled Wilson to dodge trouble from his superiors after he used his blunt tone when addressing them. (Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson His Life and Diaries Volume I*, p.87)

⁷⁷⁸ Wilson’s residence in London was relatively close to Whitehall affording a convenient location for him to entertain people. (Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, p.88)

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid

European Section, MO 3 the Asiatic Section, MO 4 the Topographical Section, and MO 5 the Special Section. Wilson did briefly reorganise the Directorate, from August 1910 to January 1911, to allow for the full undertaking of a major strategical war game. This was an important change and will be examined in the section on involvement in policymaking. The Directorate remained subordinate to the CIGS. Another element that did not change was the dominant influence of political and administrative culture upon the Directorate's evolution.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

By 1914 the British political scene had undergone several key changes. One was that "the numerical hold of the landed elite in the House of Commons" had been broken by 1914. While 39% of MPs had come from "long-serving gentry families" in 1870, that figure was only 3% by 1914.⁷⁸⁰ The House of Lords had seen a major reduction in its relative power to influence the government. This was demonstrated when Asquith's Liberal government clashed with the Lords over the passage of key legislation. The result was the 1911 Parliament Act which limited the Lords' veto power and established the supremacy of the Commons.⁷⁸¹

The curtailment of the Lords' power coincided with the expansion in the authority of the Cabinet, which had grown exponentially since the 1870s.⁷⁸² This growth was facilitated by tighter organisation within the political parties and the expanded power of the electorate. Power within the Cabinet became concentrated in the hands of the Prime Minister and other senior ministers. For

⁷⁸⁰ Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, p.379

⁷⁸¹ P. Norton, 'Resisting the Inevitable? The Parliament Act of 1911', *Parliamentary History* 31/3 (October 2012), p.444. The Act forced a re-evaluation of the Lords' role within state governance. As Mackintosh accurately argued, the "experience of this struggle forced the Lords to appreciate and be content with the position to which they had been relegated when Cabinets became dependent first on the House of Commons and then on the electorate." (Mackintosh, *The British Cabinet*, p.214)

⁷⁸² By 1912 Lord Selborne complained that there was, "no more a House of Commons than a House of Lords. There is nothing but the cabinet, subject to a continuous but slight check of the Crown, and the violent but occasional check of the electors." (Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, p.384)

instance, the decision to commit Britain to war against Germany in August 1914 was made by Prime Minister Asquith, “interpreting the wishes of his colleagues.”⁷⁸³ Even with this transformation in state authority the principles behind state governance remained largely the same as they had been in 1870, although they had grown in both scope and scale. The influence of political and administrative culture retained the same supremacy over the continued evolution of the Directorate.

The ‘committee system’ remained entrenched within Whitehall’s administrative culture. It was valued as a method through which Britain could adequately prepare for large-scale warfare. The practice of appointing CID sub-committees to investigate strategical and technical questions in greater depth was expanded. Prime Minister Asquith strengthened this convention by appointing to these sub-committees, “the heads or the representatives of many of the great public Departments.”⁷⁸⁴ The system was not always popular, especially with some soldiers.⁷⁸⁵ But it allowed for many important issues to receive proper attention, especially within a state apparatus stretched to the limit by its expanded remit. The Directorate remained an important part of the ‘committee system’.

DMO Wilson was a member of numerous important committees and CID sub-committees. In October 1910 the CID asked for the assembly of a permanent sub-committee to discuss potential strategic plans if Britain should go to war with Germany. DMO Wilson was added as a member.⁷⁸⁶ He played an important role on a sub-committee on naval and military imperial defence, which had its first

⁷⁸³ Mackintosh, *The British Cabinet*, p.282, p.323, p.324

⁷⁸⁴ ‘Proposal for the Appointment of a Co-ordination Sub-Committee to be a Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence (12 December 1911)’, *Subject: Unnumbered Committee of Imperial Defence Papers*, CAB 18/24, NAUK, p.1

⁷⁸⁵ Grant-Duff complained about “the constant committees recommending this that & the other with little or no result.” (‘18 October 1910’, *Photocopy of a Diary - Concerning Adrian Grant Duff’s work as Assistant Military Secretary to the C.I.D.*, 29 Sept 1910-18 Dec 1911, AGDF 2/1, The Papers of Adrian Grant-Duff, CCA, UK, p.14)

⁷⁸⁶ ‘Draft of letter asking for assembly of Permanent Sub-Committee of Imperial Defence (October 1910)’, *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, pp.1-3

meeting on 24 March 1911. It was decided that DMO Wilson should help to prepare the “paper on General Defence Policy.”⁷⁸⁷ This signals the prominent role of DMO Wilson upon this Sub-Committee.

Wilson was also a member of the ‘Overseas Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence’, which had its first meeting on 29 April 1911,⁷⁸⁸ and the ‘Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence on the Co-ordination of Departmental Action on the Outbreak of War’, which met from 5 April 1911 to 25 June 1914. The latter was focused upon the need to facilitate inter-departmental communication in the preparation for and during wartime.⁷⁸⁹ This again exemplifies the importance of this principle to British state governance. Wilson or Colonel George Macdonogh, head of MO 5, attended six out of the seven Sub-Committee meetings. The Directorate’s role in this forum illustrates its significant role within both the ‘committee system’ and state governance. This reveals how fundamental the ‘committee system’ was to its operation.

Participation in the ‘committee system’ afforded the Directorate an expanded role in state governance. This is demonstrated by a letter from DMO Wilson to Colonel G.H. Thesiger, Inspector General of the King’s African Rifles, on 20 December 1911. The latter had written to Wilson about the destabilising situation in Jubaland, in modern day Somalia. Wilson advised Thesiger that:

I hope...in your official correspondence that you will press for the whole thing to be laid before the Colonial Defence Committee. By that means we shall get a

⁷⁸⁷ ‘Minutes of 109th Meeting, March 24, 1911’, Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.1

⁷⁸⁸ ‘Overseas Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, (29 April 1911)’, Nos. 41-89, 29 May 1906-13 June 1911, CAB 5/2, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁷⁸⁹ ‘Interim Report of the Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence on the Co-ordination of Departmental Action on the Outbreak of War, (27 April 1912)’, *Minutes of meetings, 1-7, 1911-1914*, CAB 15/1, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.iii

chance in this office of having something to say in that matter.⁷⁹⁰

This exhibits how the DMO remained an influential figure upon the CDC. Wilson's statement also reveals how the 'committee system' expanded the Directorate's authority within state governance. Political and administrative culture continued to empower the Directorate.

The most important aspect of the 'committee system' for the Directorate remained the CID. The latter faced some challenges in these years. It was not popular with several important political figures.⁷⁹¹ When it was proposed to rehouse the CID further away from Whitehall in 1912, its supporters argued against it. They asserted that, if this move was undertaken, "the present facilities for conference provided by the Committee, which are so freely made use of by the Departments, will be reduced, and that both Ministers and the permanent officials of the Departments will be reluctant to come."⁷⁹² These arguments focused on how the CID facilitated inter-departmental communication and needed to be physically close to departments of state. Again, this illustrates the importance of inter-departmentalism and how it was intimately linked with the 'committee system'. The CID remained important within the state's apparatus especially as preparations for war continued.⁷⁹³

⁷⁹⁰ 'Henry Wilson to Colonel G.H. Thesiger (20 December 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, 23 July 1910-1 January 1912, WO 106/59, *Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies*, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.1

⁷⁹¹ For instance, Lord President of the Council John Morley allegedly viewed it "as a dangerous Constitutional Innovation." ('18 July 1912', *Photocopy of a diary - Concerning Grant Duff's work as Assistant Military Secretary to the C.I.D.*, 11 Jan 1912-10 Aug 1913, AGDF 2/2, The Papers of Adrian Grant Duff, CCA, Cambridge, UK, p.61)

⁷⁹² 'Future Work of the Committee of Imperial Defence (22 November 1912)', *Future Work of the Committee of Imperial Defence*, 22 Nov 1912, HNKY 7/8, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, CCA, Cambridge, UK, p.10,

⁷⁹³ Johnson argued that, by 1911, the CID, had "made itself the centre of strategic planning and foreign policymaking by the whole Empire in relation to a possible war with Germany." (Johnson,

DMO Wilson was an important member of the CID. He represented the Imperial General Staff, alongside the CIGS, and was seated next to the Secretary of State for War during meetings.⁷⁹⁴ The DMO was also one of the few people who received complete files of the CID papers.⁷⁹⁵ Wilson took part in important CID discussions during these years, including the issue of the representation of the Dominions on the CID on 5 November 1912.⁷⁹⁶ This increased the prominence of the Directorate within state governance.

Along with continued involvement within the 'committee system', the Directorate retained its other inter-departmental functions. It engaged in extensive information exchanges with important Whitehall departments, including with Winston Churchill's Home Office through August 1911. These conversations reveal how the Directorate remained a major conduit for information across the state's apparatus. The work that it undertook regarding the formation of the Press Bureau was inter-departmental in nature, involving discussions with both the Admiralty and the Foreign Office. The Directorate acted as a conduit for the information and opinions of all three sides, as illustrated by DMO Wilson's correspondence to DNI Bethell in March 1911.⁷⁹⁷ There was again a strong correlation between these functions and the Directorate's participation within the 'committee system'. Several of the committees that DMO Wilson sat on were designed to promote inter-departmentalism, such as the Overseas Sub-Committee of the CID.⁷⁹⁸ Secretary of State for War Haldane often tasked DMO Wilson with

Defence by Committee, pp.120-121) There is merit to this argument, but it fails to consider the Directorate's substantial role in both strategic planning and foreign policymaking.

⁷⁹⁴ 'Minutes of 113th Meeting, May 30, 1911', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.25

⁷⁹⁵ 'Committee of Imperial Defence. Constitution and Functions, (27 August, 1912)', Nos. 41-89, 27 August 1912-5 January 1915, CAB 4/5, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.4

⁷⁹⁶ 'Representation of the Dominions on the Committee of Imperial Defence, (5 November 1912)', Nos. 90-130, 11 April 1912-10 March 1921, CAB 5/3, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁷⁹⁷ 'Henry Wilson to Rear-Admiral the Hon: A.E. Bethell (3 March 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.1

⁷⁹⁸ 'Overseas Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, (29 April 1911)', Nos. 41-89, CAB 5/2, NAUK, p.3

inter-departmental communication. For instance, on 14 August 1911 Haldane told Wilson that “Mr Churchill has sent me an admirable paper, which I hope you will remark on in a conciliatory spirit.”⁷⁹⁹

The most important way in which the Directorate contributed to the furtherance of inter-departmentalism was through, the CID’s Standing Sub-Committee on the Co-ordination of Departmental Action on the Outbreak of War’. Its first meeting was on 5 April 1911. Its goal was “the co-ordination in the event of war of all the great Departments of State.”⁸⁰⁰ The belief was that the establishment of proper and regular intercommunication between different departments would prevent the upsetting of strategic plans. By November 1912 this Sub-Committee made real progress and it was preparing for the first revision of the ‘War Book’.⁸⁰¹ An examination of the measures drawn up by this Sub-Committee illustrates the importance attached to intelligence in inter-departmental communication. For example, by 29 September 1911, on the issue of intelligence collection prior to war, the Sub-Committee laid out the requirements for each department. For example, the War Office was to communicate “to the Government Departments concerned such information bearing on Foreign, Colonial, or Indian affairs as may reach it from its own sources.” The Imperial General Staff and the NID were to “exchange intelligence regularly.”⁸⁰² By 9 April 1912, after further revisions, during the ‘precautionary period’ the Home Office was expected to expedite cooperation between Police and “Military Authorities in Defence matters, including - Immediate transmission

⁷⁹⁹ ‘14 August 1911’, *Photocopy of a Diary*, AGDF 2/1, CCA, p.87

⁸⁰⁰ ‘Proposal for the Appointment of a Co-ordination Sub-Committee to be a Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence (12 December 1911), *Subject: Unnumbered Committee of Imperial Defence Papers*, CAB 18/24, NAUK, p.2

⁸⁰¹ ‘Future Work of the Committee of Imperial Defence (22 November 1912)’, Future Work of the Committee of Imperial Defence, HNKY 7/8, CCA, p.6, p.4. The ‘War Book’ offered “a comprehensive list of the individual actions and responsibilities of the departments, service and otherwise,” in wartime. (Johnson, *Defence by Committee*, p.131)

⁸⁰² Co-ordination of Departmental Action on the Outbreak of War. Part III. Chapter 4. Intelligence, (29 September 1911)’, *Memoranda, Series K. 1-100*, January 1911-27 October 1924, CAB 15/2, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.2

of any intelligence which they may acquire.”⁸⁰³ DMO Wilson’s role on the Sub-Committee, and therefore in the conception of these plans, denotes how the Directorate was linked with the concept of inter-departmentalism, and how it was well-placed to strengthen the practice further.

Its focus on inter-departmental communication again ensured that the Directorate cooperated with departments across the state’s apparatus. This again meant that the Directorate could achieve a level of consensus, by generating unified reports from the assorted information that it collected. The best example of this was the Directorate’s report on the ‘Special Military Resources of the German Empire’ from February 1912.⁸⁰⁴ This work contained a wide-ranging examination of Germany, its military, the character of Kaiser Wilhelm II, and its people, investigating military, political, economic, and international issues. The report would have been based on information gathered from a diverse group of sources, both military and civilian. This signals clearly how the Directorate achieved consensus, through its inter-departmental communication and cooperation. The idea of seeking consensus would be broadened out in the succeeding decades, as the intelligence community grew, but the principle was in effect by 1914.

The Directorate secured its power within state governance through the system of ‘integrated control’. Therefore, it continued to support the system’s underlying principles, especially the dominance of civilian power. In a memorandum from 1913, DMO Wilson referred to how the Directorate had operated under the guidelines set by the government. Reviewing the preparations for war undertaken by the Directorate since the Agadir crisis Wilson stated that:

⁸⁰³ ‘Part II, Chapter 6. Summary of Action to be taken by the War Office, (9 April 1912)’, Ibid, p.14

⁸⁰⁴ Its aim was “of setting forth in readily accessible form the most recent information regarding the German Empire: its military resources, national characteristics, power of offence and defence, and possible strategic action under certain broadly-defined conditions.” (*Special Military Resources of the German Empire*, 1912, WO 33/579, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.ii)

in carrying out the directions of the Committee of Imperial Defence, we have been forced by necessity & the policy of the Government, and always with its permission, successively to consult such various bodies as the French General Staff, the Admiralty & the British Railway Companies, in order to carry into effect the task allotted to us.⁸⁰⁵

This illustrates the way the Directorate's actions were guided by government policy. Wilson argued that working under these conditions had been far from ideal. Despite this he reassured that "the greatest care has been taken throughout by us so that the plans for rendering military assistance to France, should His Majesty's Government determine to render such assistance...as being secret, hypothetical & non-committal."⁸⁰⁶ This demonstrates that the Directorate worked under the direction of civilian authority, adhering to its role of providing expert advice to enable policymakers to dictate policy. For its part, Asquith's government continued to aid the efforts of the Directorate, the Security Service, and the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), through actions such as the revisions of the Official Secrets Act. This signals how 'integrated control' proved mutually beneficial to both sides.

In this period, however, there was a development of resistance within the Directorate to the principle of the dominance of civilian over military authority. On 21 October 1912 DMO Wilson told Secretary of State for War J.E.B. Seely that:

The foreign policy of this country is a matter for the consideration and decision of His Majesty's Government, it neither demands nor permits the criticism of soldiers; but the strategy, which any given foreign policy imposes, is almost entirely a naval and military question, and it is the duty of the Naval and Military advisers of the

⁸⁰⁵ 'Memorandum by DMO Wilson (1913)', HHW 3/7, Private Papers of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson GCB DSO, IWM, London, UK, p.13

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid, p.18, pp.13-14

Government to give their opinions freely and formulate their plans.⁸⁰⁷

This reveals the two strands running through Wilson's mind. On the one hand, he respected the government's ultimate authority to make final policy decisions. He was determined, however, to ensure that the Army's leadership played a role in policy formation. He would brook no civilian attempt to silence military opinion. Yet, the Directorate continued to operate under the conditions of 'integrated control'. Although it may have caused annoyances, the system was beneficial to the Directorate, giving it increased power and influence within state governance.

Throughout this period the Directorate continued to entrench its connections to the civilian sphere. By 1914 it had become an integral part of this realm, completing the process of assimilation that had begun in the 1870s. Political and administrative culture prevailed in facilitating this trend. The Agadir crisis of mid to late 1911 signaled the importance of the Directorate within the civilian sphere. In July 1911 Germany sent the gunboat 'Panther' to Agadir in Morocco. The Kaiser was determined to force France into giving compensation to Germany in the Congo, in return for French dominance in Morocco.⁸⁰⁸ As with the earlier fracas in 1905 Britain gave its full support to France, serving to draw the two nations closer together while simultaneously damaging relations with Germany. DMO Wilson had planned to undertake an extended trip across Europe during Summer 1911. These plans were shelved by the Agadir crisis. On 29 August CIGS Nicholson advised Wilson that "I am rather doubtful about you and me being both away at the present juncture. The Cabinet may want information at any time at the [least] notice, and in your absence, there would certainly be delay in

⁸⁰⁷ 'Henry Wilson to S. of S. for War (21 October 1912)', HHW 3/5, Private Papers of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson GCB DSO, IWM, London, UK, p.1

⁸⁰⁸ Foreign Secretary Edward Grey wanted to lend his full support to France. He was overruled, however, by the Cabinet and instead could insist only that Britain was consulted about the final settlement. Yet, a speech by Chancellor David Lloyd George inflamed public opinion in Germany against Britain and led to a serious war scare. (Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.189)

supplying it.”⁸⁰⁹ The DMO remained a chief military advisor to the government and, therefore, needed to remain close at hand.⁸¹⁰

The Directorate continued to develop its connections with senior government ministers. Through August 1911 DMO Wilson was involved in a lengthy communication with Home Secretary Winston Churchill over a potential war between France and Germany. This was a conversation that earned Wilson a stern rebuke from CIGS Nicholson. Wilson provided comments upon Home Office papers to Churchill while the latter posed the former several questions, such as about the position of Belgium and the Netherlands and their suitability as British allies.⁸¹¹ Rather than having Wilson answer these questions by letter, Churchill sent for him to come over to the Home Office. He “spent one & quarter hours with [Churchill] answering all these questions verbally.” Churchill also informed Wilson that he had passed on his information to the Chancellor, who, in turn, passed it onto the Foreign Secretary.⁸¹² This denotes the importance of the Directorate to the government. It also reveals the significance of its inter-departmental functions, showing how political and administrative culture continued to expedite the Directorate’s growing connections with civilian officials.

This was not the only association between Wilson and Churchill. On 5 September 1911 Wilson telephoned Churchill and Foreign Secretary Grey and invited them over to his house to view information that he had received from an officer travelling in Germany. The four men then “had a long talk which [Churchill] tells [Wilson] today greatly impressed Grey.”⁸¹³ Wilson had chosen the location of

⁸⁰⁹ ‘W.G. Nicholson to Henry Wilson (29 August 1911)’, *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, Private Papers of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson GCB DSO, IWM, London, UK, pp.1-2

⁸¹⁰ Interestingly, compared to the central role of the Directorate, Jeffrey contended that the SIB’s performance during the crisis was lacking. (Jeffrey, *MI6*, p.27)

⁸¹¹ ‘Henry Wilson to CIGS (15 August 1911)’, HHW 3/5, IWM, p.1

⁸¹² ‘Winston S. Churchill to Henry Wilson (31 August 1911)’, *Ibid*, p.1, p.2, p.1

⁸¹³ ‘5 September 1911’, *Photocopy of a Diary*, AGDF 2/1, CCA, pp.96-97

his London home well.⁸¹⁴ This episode is striking for what it illuminates about the position of the DMO within the civilian sphere in these years. It again exhibits the importance of the Directorate's inter-departmental functions, but also how the DMO remained an important figure within the civilian sphere.

The most important relationship for the Directorate remained that with the Foreign Office. Regular communication persisted between the two and the Foreign Office retained ultimate authority over the SIB's activities by control of its budget. This meant further collaboration between that department and the Directorate. The Foreign Office held a predominant role overseeing the SIB. Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Sir Arthur Nicolson chaired a committee which supervised the Bureau's work from November 1910 to May 1913. Nicolson provided a consistent level of support to the SIB's activities.⁸¹⁵ This displays again the continued importance of the Foreign Office and the 'committee system' to the development of British foreign intelligence. Several meetings were held at the Foreign Office regarding the SIB from 1911 to 1913. DMO Wilson or head of MO 5 Colonel Macdonogh were present either separately or together.⁸¹⁶ The Foreign Office also continued to ask for the Directorate's assistance. In early June 1911, Foreign Secretary Grey asked the Directorate for "our views on the draft of a revised Treaty of Alliance between Great Britain and Japan."⁸¹⁷

The Foreign Office remained reliant upon the aid of the Directorate. During the Agadir crisis the former was a driving force behind ensuring that DMO Wilson stayed in London to assist.⁸¹⁸ On 20 December 1911, Colonel Macdonogh shared information with the Foreign Office that MO 5 had received about suspected

⁸¹⁴ Jeffrey related how "It was close enough to Whitehall...and it was conveniently located for the entertaining that he so enjoyed." (Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, p.88)

⁸¹⁵ Jeffrey, *MI6*, p.23, p.27

⁸¹⁶ *Secret Service Bureau: Minutes of Meetings*, 1 May 1911-31 May 1913, FO 1093/25, Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁸¹⁷ 'DMO to CIGS (12 June 1911)', HHW 3/5, IWM, p.1

⁸¹⁸ 'Henry Wilson to Lieutenant-Colonel A.V.F. Russell (25 Sept. 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.1

German agents operating within Britain.⁸¹⁹ This illustrates the continued significant level of communication between the Foreign Office and the Directorate, and the former's reliance upon the latter. The Directorate also remained beholden to the Foreign Office which often dictated its recommendations and proposals. On 8 May 1911 Wilson wrote to Nicholson about potential invasion routes into Egypt. He suggested counters to a potential invasion but was forced to limit his recommendations due to Foreign Office restrictions. He stated that, "although the Foreign Office will not agree to our occupying any places in the Sinai Peninsular in peace time they would probably raise no objection to an increase in the Sinai police force."⁸²⁰ On 30 December 1911 DMO Wilson corresponded with Colonel E.G. Granet, military attaché to Italy, about the feasibility of British officers travelling around Europe. Wilson stated that "I am trying to get a decision out of the Foreign Office...as to whether they will allow us to remove the embargo on officers going to Italy and Turkey." He continued that "Personally, I am in favour...but so far I have not been able to get any agreement from the Foreign Office."⁸²¹

The Directorate received major benefits from its relationship with the Foreign Office, again including access to Britain's vast diplomatic network. Britain's ambassadors remained a good source of information for the Directorate. On 20 December 1911 the Ambassador to Russia Sir George Buchanan wrote to DMO Wilson providing new information about the Russo-German frontier, the financial trouble in Germany due to the Agadir crisis, and where the loyalties of the Polish people would lie during a major conflict.⁸²² This was all useful information and evinces the continued utility of its link to the Foreign Office. The main reason for the continued dependence remained a question of finance. On 29

⁸¹⁹ 'Lieutenant-Colonel G.M.W. Macdonogh to Lord Onslow (20 December 1911)', *Secret intelligence: correspondence on financing, organisation and staffing; includes minutes of 1st meeting of Secret Service Bureau, 11 May 1910*, FO 1093/108, NAUK, p.3

⁸²⁰ 'DMO to CIGS (8 May 1911)', HHW 3/5, IWM, p.2

⁸²¹ 'Henry Wilson to Col. E.G. Granet (30 Dec. 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.1

⁸²² 'Sir George Buchanan to DMO Wilson (20 December 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1912*, 1912, HHW 2/71, Private Papers of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson GCB DSO, IWM, London, UK, p.1

July 1911 Macdonogh related to the Foreign Office how the Agadir crisis had forced an increase in spending. While he promised to try and find measures to limit expenditure, Macdonogh admitted that “I anticipate that about £400 will be required, & of course if there are any further developments more will be wanted.”⁸²³

As was the case during the previous period the Foreign Office granted these funding requests. Sir Arthur Nicolson, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, acquiesced to Macdonogh’s request mentioned above.⁸²⁴ On 19 December 1910 Foreign Secretary Grey sanctioned a wide range of intelligence requests. These included assistants to Kell and Cumming, the establishment of a Continental Agency at Copenhagen, and intelligence officers at British Ports.⁸²⁵ Reliance on this funding kept the Directorate, along with the Security Service and SIS, bound to the Foreign Office. Finance remained an issue for the Directorate through this period. There was financing available from the Financial Branch of the War Office, but this often proved difficult to obtain. On 30 December 1910, DMO Wilson admitted to Lieutenant-Colonel H.L. Reed that there was little the Directorate could do to combat the Branch’s refusal to provide compensation for Reed’s trip to Norway and Sweden. The Directorate was already fighting the Branch about a further compensation claim that they had refused to sanction.⁸²⁶ There was usually much less resistance from the Foreign Office, ensuring that it remained the most valuable source of funding for the Directorate.

In these years, however, noticeable cracks began to appear in the relationship between the Directorate and the Foreign Office. DMO Wilson did not

⁸²³ ‘Lieutenant-Colonel G.M.W. Macdonogh to Lord Cranley (29 July 1911)’, *Secret intelligence: correspondence on financing, organisation and staffing; includes minutes of 1st meeting of Secret Service Bureau, 11 May 1910*, FO 1093/108, NAUK, pp.1-2

⁸²⁴ ‘Lieutenant-Colonel G.M.W. Macdonogh to Lord Cranley (Onslow) (27 September 1911)’, *Ibid*, p.2

⁸²⁵ ‘Foreign Office to Sir Graham Greene (19 December 1910)’, *Ibid*, p.8

⁸²⁶ ‘Henry Wilson to Lieutenant-Colonel H.L. Reed (30 December 1910)’, *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK

have a favourable opinion of Foreign Secretary Grey.⁸²⁷ Grey, for his part, was not always impressed with the government's naval and military advisers when it came to policy recommendations.⁸²⁸ During Spring 1911, the issue of the use of military pressure to combat Turkish aggression in the Persian Gulf produced contention between the Directorate and the Foreign Office. The latter advocated for a British military force to be sent to the Gulf and corresponded with the Directorate to provide comment.⁸²⁹ While it did not dispute the Foreign Office's policy, the Directorate was displeased with the vague nature of the enquiry.⁸³⁰ On 30 August 1911, during the Agadir crisis, DMO Wilson complained to CIGS Nicholson about the Foreign Office. Wilson detailed a despatch sent by the military attaché to France, Colonel Fairholme, detailing the opinions of a senior French general on a future Franco-German conflict. Wilson wanted to highlight the value and importance of the information, but he also wanted to rage against what he viewed as the Foreign Office's negligence. He complained:

That a despatch of this description, written by a man in Colonel Fairholme's position at a time of anxiety and almost of crisis, should be forwarded by our Ambassador in Paris without comment, and should be sent on to us from the Foreign Office without asking for an expression of opinion, is to me a very significant and a very alarming fact. It would be impossible to imagine a case more eloquent of the complete estrangement between policy and strategy.⁸³¹

⁸²⁷ Lieutenant-Colonel Grant-Duff reported that Wilson had "a very poor opinion of Grey." ('5 September 1911', *Photocopy of a Diary*, AGDF 2/1, CCA, p.97)

⁸²⁸ For instance, in March 1911, Grey stated that "he was not prepared to bring serious pressure to bear on Turkey, in connection with Koweit and Turkish encroachments down the Persian Gulf, "until the Naval and military authorities were prepared with a scheme of operations." ('A.H. Gordon to Henry Wilson (8 March 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, p.1)

⁸²⁹ 'Local Action in the Persian Gulf, (1 May 1911)', *Nos 101-130*, 24 June 1908-26 January 1923, CAB 6/4, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁸³⁰ 'Henry Wilson to CIGS (24 April 1911)', HHW 3/5, IWM, p.1

⁸³¹ 'Henry Wilson to CIGS (30 August 1911)', *Ibid*, p.2

This comment demonstrates a vastly different tone from what had been voiced by Wilson's predecessors. Tension had arisen between the Directorate's predecessors and the Foreign Office before, such as during Captain Grierson's visit to Russia in 1893. Yet, the ID had voiced no hostility towards the Foreign Office. Wilson's diatribe, therefore, represented a departure in the relationship between the Directorate and the Foreign Office.

It is important not to overstate the impact of this evidence. The link between the Directorate and the Foreign Office remained the most important relationship that the Directorate possessed within the civilian sphere. Yet, cracks were beginning to appear. This was likely a result of the Directorate's increased position and authority. Previously the relationship with the Foreign Office had served as a means for its predecessors to increase their profile. By 1910 to 1914 the Directorate had achieved a secure position as a valuable organ of the state. Therefore, the connection with the Foreign Office lost some of its utility, especially as the Directorate increased its influence within the Army's high command.

Since the 1870s British intelligence officers had developed a growing relationship with their respective Prime Ministers. DMO Wilson possessed a nuanced relationship with Prime Minister Herbert Asquith. By all accounts, Asquith held little interest in military affairs or intelligence work. The invasion scares of the early twentieth century forced him to take more of an interest in both these areas. While he may not have possessed much enthusiasm for intelligence, this did not prevent Asquith from listening to the advice of the Directorate and supporting their recommendations. This is clearly illustrated by the pivotal CID meeting of 23 August 1911. At this meeting, DMO Wilson laid out the Imperial General Staff's strategic plan for intervention on the Continent in case of war with Germany. This was that "our whole available strength should be concentrated at the decisive point, and that point they believed to be on the French frontier."⁸³² The Admiralty tried to counter and present their own case. The Army's case was

⁸³² 'Minutes of 114th Meeting, August 23, 1911', Nos. 1-82, CAB 2/1, NAUK, p.17

better received by Prime Minister Asquith and the other Ministers.⁸³³ While he tried to maintain a neutral position, Asquith revealed his preference for the Army's strategic plans pointing out the holes and omissions from the Navy's case.⁸³⁴ It was the Army's scheme that the government would follow upon the outbreak of war. DMO Wilson's impact at this meeting has been noted by several scholars.⁸³⁵ This meeting also exemplifies how Asquith relied on and supported the Directorate. It also again shows how involvement in the 'committee system' afforded the Directorate increased influence within state governance.

Yet, DMO Wilson did not enjoy a harmonious relationship with Asquith. This is clear in the meetings of a CID Standing Sub-Committee, formed to investigate the issue of the potential invasion of Britain, in 1913. On 31 October 1913 Maurice Hankey, Secretary of the CID, wrote to Asquith and argued that the Sub-Committee should hear evidence from DMO Wilson. Hankey's suggestion held an ulterior motive. He stated to Asquith that "in some of the newspapers there has been a disposition to cavil at General Wilson's omission from the Sub-Committee, but if you hear him...there can be no further ground for complaint."⁸³⁶ This line of argument won over Asquith and Wilson delivered his evidence to the Sub-Committee.⁸³⁷

This episode reveals some interesting points about the relationship between Prime Minister Asquith and DMO Wilson. The latter's omission from this Sub-

⁸³³ As John Gooch rightly states, the "relative impact of each of the separate cases could be gauged from the fact that the Prime Minister went so far as to commit himself to the military strategy." (Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.292) David French contends that, against DMO Wilson's well-reasoned case, the Admiralty's arguments "gave the impression of having been concocted on the spur of the moment." (French, *British Economic and Strategic Planning 1905-1915*, p.32)

⁸³⁴ '25 August 1911', *Photocopy of a Diary*, AGDF 2/1, CCA, p.92

⁸³⁵ Williamson accurately argued that the Army's victory at the meeting lay with Wilson's "confident, lucid, and logical presentation," while the Admiralty's case "appeared vague, ill-advised, and dangerous." (Williamson, *The Politics of Grand Strategy*, p.192)

⁸³⁶ 'M.P.A. Hankey to Prime Minister Asquith (31 October 1913)', *Defence against attacks on the United Kingdom Part I, 1913-1914*, CAB 17/35, Records of the Cabinet Office, NAUK, Kew, London, UK, p.2

⁸³⁷ 'M.P.A. Hankey to General Wilson (7 November 1913)', *Ibid*, p.1

Committee is rather perplexing. The Directorate devoted significant attention to the issue of invasion. Wilson would have brought a high level of expertise to any discussions. His omission hinted at a more personal reason behind the snub, potentially Asquith's dislike of Wilson's forceful personality. It illustrates that DMO Wilson could be a divisive figure amongst both statesmen and soldiers. This had the potential to limit Wilson's, and his Directorate's, ability to engage in and influence policy formation. In the end, however, Wilson was not excluded from the business of the Sub-Committee. Enough external pressure was exerted in his favour, allied to the realisation of the expertise that Wilson could bring. Although he may have possessed a slightly troubled relationship with the Prime Minister, DMO Wilson and the Directorate were significant players within state governance and the civilian sphere.

The Directorate remained based within the War Office becoming more integrated within here than was the case at the end of the nineteenth century. DMO Wilson represented the War Office at several meetings through this period. The Secretary of State for War often asked the DMO to undertake certain business or communicate with persons outside the department. These included senior governmental figures but also important figures from other nations. For instance, in March 1913 Secretary of State for War Seely asked Wilson to correspond with senior French general Vicomte de Curières de Castelnau.⁸³⁸ DMO Wilson also sought to protect, and perhaps increase, the War Office's authority. This is shown during the fifth meeting of the 'Standing Sub-Committee on the Co-ordination of Departmental Action on the Outbreak of War' on 30 April 1913. Wilson, when discussing the "arrangements between the Admiralty and the Post Office for cutting certain enemy cables," suggested "that the War Office should be consulted when action was necessary."⁸³⁹ This all reveals how the Directorate had become a prominent department of the War Office by 1910 to 1914.

⁸³⁸ 'Henry Wilson to General de Castelnau (11 March 1913)', HHW 3/5, IWM, pp.1-2

⁸³⁹ 'Minutes of the Fifth Meeting, (30 April 1913)', *Minutes of meetings*, 1-7, CAB 15/1, NAUK, p.5

Between 1910 to 1914, political and administrative culture remained the dominant influence over the Directorate's evolution. It remained intricately involved in the 'committee system' and facilitated inter-departmental communication and cooperation, allowing it to achieve a level of consensus. The Directorate also remained a significant part of the system of 'integrated control', which afforded it greater influence over state governance. At the same time, it reinforced its ties with the civilian sphere, forging close connections with senior Cabinet Ministers and strengthening its links to the important Whitehall departments. The Directorate also secured a prominent place within the hierarchy of the War Office. There were moments of tension, but this did not sever the Directorate's ties with civilian officials. Its incorporation into the civilian sphere was once again facilitated by the effect of political and administrative culture. By 1914 the Directorate had formalised the trends that had begun from 1870 to 1871. Political and administrative culture had fundamentally shaped its character and operation. Unlike its predecessors, however, this influence did not harm the Directorate's relationship with the Army.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

As it became more likely that Britain would be drawn into a great European war, it became more pressing to secure a highly professional military force. The Haldane Reforms had helped to inculcate greater professionalism, as did the efforts of the Imperial General Staff. Important steps taken by the latter included: the establishment of "definite training principles by means of the staff manuals;" the contribution "to practical staff work through field exercises at various levels;" and the provision of "a fairly efficient 'thinking department' at the War Office."⁸⁴⁰ The Directorate of Military Operations continued to play a leading role in these efforts.

⁸⁴⁰ Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College*, p.239

The strategic plans for the coming war also became firmly settled. From 1906 to 1914 the British Army committed itself to sending a military force to the Continent, to aid the French Army against Germany. The plan of having the BEF integrated into the French battle line on the left flank was formalised, in large part owing to the influence and work of Henry Wilson.⁸⁴¹ There remained those, like senior naval leaders, who opposed this plan. By 1914, however, “the dominance of military over naval strategy in a European war” had been secured.⁸⁴² The BEF joined the French Army’s left flank in August that year. Regardless of the strategy selected, most historians agree that the BEF “was well prepared for war in August 1914.”⁸⁴³

Even with its progress the Army found itself at the centre of controversy due to the Curragh incident of March 1914.⁸⁴⁴ There was fierce opposition to the Liberal Home Rule Bill from Protestant Ulster.⁸⁴⁵ This led to several British officers threatening to resign their commissions if the government ordered them to march against Ulster. CIGS French and the Cabinet diffused the situation, but public controversy ensued as the government was seen to have submitted to a few mutineers. It led to the resignation of French as CIGS.⁸⁴⁶ The legacy of the incident upon the Army has divided scholars, but it offered another example of the continuing tension that existed between soldiers and civilians in this period.⁸⁴⁷

⁸⁴¹ Barnett, *Britain and Her Army 1509-1970*, p.370

⁸⁴² Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.295

⁸⁴³ Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914*, p.284

⁸⁴⁴ Strachan accurately contends that this event represented, “the denouement to the army’s politicization in the course of the nineteenth century through its involvement in the empire.” (Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, p.116)

⁸⁴⁵ The substance of the Bill had been to “place Protestant Ulster under the rule of a predominantly Southern Irish and Catholic parliament in Dublin.” This was an eventuality that the Ulstermen were prepared to resist with force. (Barnett, *Britain and Her Army 1509-1970*, p.387)

⁸⁴⁶ Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914*, p.283

⁸⁴⁷ While Strachan views the incident as an important event in the history of the politics of the British Army, Edward Spiers argues that, while “the source of intense controversy in the spring of 1914,” the incident did not leave a lasting legacy upon the Army. Spiers claims that the British Army “was neither rent apart internally nor the object of profound distrust by the rest of society.” Despite downplaying its legacy, he did admit that the incident added to “a legacy of suspicion between military and political leaders.” (Ibid)

DMO Wilson was at the centre of the incident as he was fiercely against Irish Home Rule.⁸⁴⁸ Yet this political focus did not negatively impact Wilson's performance as DMO.⁸⁴⁹ Even with civil-military tensions running high, the Directorate cemented its prominent place within the Army's hierarchy from 1910 to 1914.

While he was an intelligence chief, Henry Wilson was also an important figure within the formation of military and strategic policy through his position as DMO. The result was that the Directorate became more than just an intelligence agency, as its planning and operational functions increased. It became the strategic hub of the Army. Through much of 1910 to 1914 Wilson acted less as an intelligence officer and more as a director of military organisation and strategy. These latter areas truly engaged Wilson's interest and effort and he was determined that his Directorate would play a leading role within the formation of military policy.⁸⁵⁰ This did not mean, however, that Wilson never acted as an intelligence officer.⁸⁵¹ This expansion of role was a direct result of the utility of the Directorate's predecessors. Foreign and military intelligence had proven of increasing use to policymakers, who then forced its centrality within the Army's hierarchy from 1904 onwards. The growth in the Directorate's power between 1904 to 1910 enabled DMO Wilson and the Directorate to successfully influence the direction of military strategy. While Wilson took an interest in some of the minutiae of Army affairs,⁸⁵² it was in the realm of higher strategy that he and the

⁸⁴⁸ Jeffrey noted sardonically the irony that Wilson, "who held distinctly reformist ideas of modern military organisation, should in the Irish case find himself championing, with a kind of atavistic fervour, the cause of the most hidebound and reactionary elements in military and political life." (Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, p.125) Wilson privately encouraged the leader of the mutineers Brigadier-General Hubert Gough. On 25 March 1914 he wrote in his diary how he told Gough "to stand like a rock," as the fallout continued to shake Asquith's government. ('March 25, 1914', *The Diaries of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, 1 January-31 December 1914, HHW 1/23 (DS/MISC/80 Reel 5), IWM, London, UK, p.84, p.374)

⁸⁴⁹ Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, p.126

⁸⁵⁰ In his diary, on 14 August 1911, Lieutenant-Colonel Grant Duff claimed that Wilson was enthused at the chance to direct military policy. He was "only too glad of the opportunity to get our military arrangements into proper order." ('14 August 1911', *Photocopy of a Diary*, AGDF 2/1, CCA, pp.87-88)

⁸⁵¹ For instance, in 1911 Wilson and several fellow officers reconnoitred the Franco-Belgian-German frontier. (Jeffrey, *MI6*, pp.5-6)

⁸⁵² This included querying the range of artillery pieces. ('Henry Wilson to Major C.E.D. Budworth (31 August 1910)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK)

Directorate remained most invested. He shared similar views to Grierson and Ewart about the necessity of sending British troops to fight alongside France.

Through 1911 DMO Wilson was determined to ensure that both he and the Directorate played a leading role in military policy formation. Even with the great progress that had been made, Wilson remained concerned about the Army's preparations for a future conflict. On 12 January 1911 he wrote to CIGS Nicholson and warned that:

the present state of affairs in regard to the Expeditionary Force is so unsatisfactory, incomplete, and confusing that as far as my judgement goes it is not possible to make any accurate forecast of when the Army would be ready to take the field.⁸⁵³

Wilson argued that his Directorate was best placed to sort through the chaos and remedy the situation. Rather than hand matters to other senior soldiers he asserted that the work should be concentrated within his Directorate.⁸⁵⁴ On 16 August 1911, writing again to Nicholson, he claimed that:

As the head of the Branch which is responsible to you for all plans of operation connected with the Expeditionary Force it is essential that I should be possessed of detailed information in regard to all matters of personnel, horses and materiel connected with that force.⁸⁵⁵

This displays the centrality of intelligence to the Army's command structure by the 1910s. It also reveals how the past success of Britain's intelligence

⁸⁵³ 'Henry Wilson to CIGS (12 January 1911)', HHW 3/7, IWM, p.3

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid, pp.3-4

⁸⁵⁵ 'Henry Wilson to CIGS (16 August 1911)', HHW 3/5, IWM, p.1

organisations allowed the DMO to expand his remit into military organisation and planning.

In charge of the Army's strategic hub DMO Wilson was able to position the Directorate as the key organ in military policy formulation. Studies inaugurated by Wilson argued that the decisive clash would be on or near the left flank of the French Army. In a detailed study from 20 September 1911 the Directorate argued that "the decisive place will be either in or somewhere in the neighbourhood of, the Ardennes, and that the decisive time will be between the fifteenth and twentieth day after mobilization has been ordered."⁸⁵⁶ In a memorandum from 30 October 1911 Wilson argued that, in light of the high likelihood of a German invasion of Belgium, the "advantages of placing the British force in northern Belgium were considered to outweigh all other possible courses of action."⁸⁵⁷ Using the Army within Belgian territory represented a departure from previous operational plans and was not popular with some senior soldiers, including CIGS Nicholson.⁸⁵⁸ Despite this, the Directorate's efforts in these years largely shaped Britain's military policy during the First World War. The BEF operated within Belgium and formed the left flank of the Franco-British force through the whole of the conflict. This illustrates the success that the Directorate achieved in shaping military policy and its significant influence within the Army by this period.⁸⁵⁹ It also evinces the value of foreign intelligence to strategic planning in this period. Despite years of resistance by 1910 to 1914 the Army's leadership came to accept the importance of intelligence. This enabled the DMO and his Directorate to ascend within the Army's hierarchy.

⁸⁵⁶ 'Appreciation of the Political and Military Situation in Europe (20 September 1911)', *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.10

⁸⁵⁷ 'Memorandum by DMO Wilson (30 October 1911)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁸⁵⁸ 'Memorandum by W.G. Nicholson to Henry Wilson (1 September 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, p.2

⁸⁵⁹ John Gooch argues that Wilson's "drive, enthusiasm and complete conviction about the necessity to render effective land support to France were to provide the stimulus to move military strategy on from the period of consideration...to that of detailed planning for action." (Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.289)

Into 1912 the BEF's state of preparations remained an issue for DMO Wilson. On 3 April he wrote to Nicholson's successor as CIGS Sir John French insisting that "The present margin of safety...can only be maintained, under the circumstances which obtain in Europe to-day, by our Expeditionary Force being complete in all details."⁸⁶⁰ By 1913, however, Wilson felt much more comfortable with how arrangements had progressed. In April he reported to French that, thanks largely to the efforts of the Directorate, "all the deficiencies & weaknesses...have been remedied and made good." He also noted that, "it is I am glad to say now clearly understood in the [War Office] that no addition or alteration of any kind to the Regular Forces can be made without the knowledge of M.O.1."⁸⁶¹ This exhibits again that Wilson sought also to use the issue of the BEF's preparations to secure the position of the Directorate within the Army. He was acting again outside the bounds of a pure intelligence officer. By 1913 intelligence was intimately paired with strategic planning and this enabled DMO Wilson to operate as a military organiser, rather than as purely an advisor.

DMO Wilson pressed for military reorganisation to secure further benefit to the Directorate. He contended that the Imperial General Staff should "be recast in some important and some unimportant details: - (a) Home Defence to be moved from Military Training to Military Operations Directorate...(e) Q.M.G.2. (Movements) to be affiliated, but not transferred, to, Military Operations Directorate." Although he may have listed some of them as "unimportant," these changes would have seen a consolidation of authority and planning within the Directorate of Military Operations. This would have increased its position within the Army. Finally, he asserted that "I think the D.M.O. should be the Chief of the Staff to the Expeditionary Force."⁸⁶² These proposed changes denote again that the Directorate was no longer an exclusively intelligence agency. It was an organ

⁸⁶⁰ 'DMO to CIGS (3 April 1912)', HHW 3/7, IWM, p.1

⁸⁶¹ 'Minute to C.I.G.S. reporting progress on scheme of E.7. (April 1913)', Ibid, p.5, p.6

⁸⁶² 'Secret Memorandum by DMO (6 April 1914)', HHW 3/5, IWM, p.1, p.2

devoted to military organisation, planning, and strategy alongside intelligence collection and dissemination.

Since the establishment of the Directorate in 1904, it had been agreed that the DMO was to be one of the chief officers working under the CIGS. This connection was important for imbuing the Directorate with greater authority and position within the Army. The relationship had been mostly harmonious between DMOs Grierson and Ewart and CGSs Sir Neville Lyttelton and Sir William Nicholson. The relationship between DMO Wilson and Nicholson, however, proved tense.

The animosity started early. Adrian Grant-Duff reported, on 18 October 1910, that Wilson was heard to have told Nicholson “that if he didn’t look out he would find his head rolling in the waste paper basket.”⁸⁶³ In his diary on 17 December 1910 Wilson stated that Nicholson was “really rather useless.”⁸⁶⁴ The latter found Wilson to be insubordinate and resented Wilson’s attempts to circumvent his authority. For instance, on 30 August 1911 Nicholson complained about Wilson’s private communications with Home Secretary Churchill, over the potential for defensive alliances between Britain, Denmark, and Belgium. Nicholson delivered a strong rebuke to Wilson stating that:

it would have been better if, before writing privately to Mr. Churchill on official matters in your capacity as D.M.O., you had awaited permission to express your views and had ascertained that those views were concurred in by superior authority...We cannot have the Cabinet advised by you through the Home Secretary in one sense, and by me as the responsible military adviser of the [Secretary of State] for War in another sense.⁸⁶⁵

⁸⁶³ ‘18 October 1910’, *Photocopy of a Diary*, AGDF 2/1, CCA, pp.13-14

⁸⁶⁴ ‘December 17 1910’, *The Diaries of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, 1 January 1908-31 December 1911, HHW 1/19 (DS/MISC/80 Reel 4), IWM, London, UK, p.351

⁸⁶⁵ ‘W.G. Nicholson to Henry Wilson (30 August 1911)’, *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, p.3

Wilson expressed contrition and promised to follow procedure moving forward.⁸⁶⁶ He continued, however, to hold Nicholson in low regard, feeling that his performance as CIGS left much to be desired. On 6 September 1911 he raged in his diary that, during a discussion over the BEF's preparations, Nicholson "blustered a good deal & talked absolute rubbish, disclosing an even greater ignorance of the problem than I had credited him with."⁸⁶⁷

On 15 March 1912 Sir John French replaced Nicholson as CIGS. Wilson felt much more favourably towards French, although sometimes he wished that French, "had more brains & more knowledge."⁸⁶⁸ Despite this, the two developed a good working relationship until French's resignation on 6 April 1914, due to the Curragh incident. Wilson found French "extremely receptive to his strong views on a host of issues, from intervention on the Continent to conscription to the rights of Ulster."⁸⁶⁹

Even with Wilson's tense working relationship with Nicholson, the connection between the DMO and the CIGS was never seriously impeded. There was a continual stream of communication between the two. Nicholson sanctioned Wilson to conduct his "exhaustive study of the powers of concentration of the French & German Armies & the part the Expeditionary Force might have to fulfil" in Autumn 1910.⁸⁷⁰ The sanction of the CIGS allowed Wilson to meet with important figures, including senior soldiers and naval figures, to resolve important

⁸⁶⁶ 'Henry Wilson to W.G. Nicholson (31 August 1911)', *Ibid*, p.1. Yet, Wilson carried on with his insubordinate ways. On 1 January 1912 he wrote to the Commandant of the New Zealand Military Forces again expressing his private opinion, although it could again be taken to represent official military policy. ('Henry Wilson to Major-General A.J. Godley (1 January 1912)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.7)

⁸⁶⁷ 'September 6, 1911', *The Diaries of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, 1 January 1908-31 December 1911, HHW 1/20 (DS/MISC/80 Reel 4), IWM, London, UK, p.250

⁸⁶⁸ December 2, 1912', *The Diaries of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, 1 January 1912-31 December 1914, HHW 1/21 (DS/MISC/80 Reel 5), IWM, London, UK, p.337

⁸⁶⁹ Williamson, *The Politics of Grand Strategy*, p.301

⁸⁷⁰ 'Memorandum by DMO Wilson (1913)', HHW 3/7, IWM, p.10

issues around preparations for the BEF.⁸⁷¹ The DMO was often asked by the CIGS to investigate and resolve certain issues. For instance, Nicholson asked Wilson on 27 August 1911, to converse with the DNI and the Naval Director of Transport over the issue of the BEF's transportation to France.⁸⁷² That same month on 30 August Nicholson pressed Wilson to postpone his European travels due to the Agadir crisis.⁸⁷³

This evidence reveals two separate strands. On the one hand, the relationship between the DMO and the CIGS remained important for imbuing the former with authority. Yet, it was clear that the DMO, and the Directorate, possessed a significant enough level of authority and power that they were not solely dependent upon the CIGS. When the relationship between the Commander-in-Chief and the DMI had faltered in the 1890s, the ID's ability to share information was damaged. Between 1910 to 1914 a rocky relationship between the DMO and the CIGS did not significantly affect the Directorate's inter-departmental functions, or its ability to influence and direct military policy. This was a clear sign of the Directorate's elevated position within the Army's leadership. It also denotes how the CIGS facilitated the intelligence, operational, and planning duties of the Directorate, displaying the importance all three to the Army's leaders. This cemented the rise in status of intelligence work.

The Directorate continued to supplant governance principles into the military sphere. The three heads of the major departments of the Imperial General Staff, the Directors of Military Operations, Staff Duties, and Military Training met collectively to discuss pressing issues. This ensured that there was a good level of

⁸⁷¹ 'Henry Wilson to CIGS (15 March 1911)', *Ibid*, p.1. 'Henry Wilson to CIGS (6 July 1911)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁸⁷² 'W.G. Nicholson to Henry Wilson (27 August 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, pp.3-4

⁸⁷³ 'W.G. Nicholson to Henry Wilson (30 August 1911)', *Ibid*, p.4

intercommunication between the three departments.⁸⁷⁴ It was another sign of the importance of inter-departmental communication to state governance, revealing how this principle had permeated into the military sphere thanks to the efforts of the Directorate's predecessors. This reveals the continued importance of political and administrative culture, but how it now aided the Directorate's relationship within the Army. It again demonstrates the role of military intelligence in promoting governance concepts within the military establishment.

Through this period the Royal Navy continued to post strong resistance to the Army's strategic schemes. Britain's naval leaders did not approve of the plans for the BEF's wholesale deployment to France. They continued to advocate for the Army to be used in a supporting role to the Royal Navy's actions, mainly in launching attacks upon the German coast.⁸⁷⁵ Under DMO Wilson the Directorate continued to combat the Royal Navy's strategic concepts. In a memorandum from 20 September 1911, Wilson categorically stated his belief in the importance of the BEF being sent to the Continent to aid the French Army. He viewed operations to support naval actions as pointless diversions.⁸⁷⁶ This assessment showed Wilson acting as an intelligence head. It contrasted sharply with previous intelligence evaluations in which lip-service had been paid to the Royal Navy's superiority. This denotes how far the Directorate had become ranged against the Royal Navy, in sharp contrast to the ID's position through the 1880s to 1890s. Wilson was scathing of what he perceived to be the Navy's deficiencies.⁸⁷⁷ On 20 October 1910 he grew exasperated about DNI Bethell, who refused to provide an official confirmation

⁸⁷⁴ *General Staff Directors Meetings: Records of proceedings*, 10 January 1913-15 July 1914, WO 106/296, Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies, NAUK, Kew, London, UK

⁸⁷⁵ 'The Military Aspect of the Continental Problem. Remarks by the Admiralty on Proposal (B) of the Memorandum by the General Staff (21 August, 1911)', 101-132, CAB 4/3, NAUK

⁸⁷⁶ 'Appreciation of the Political and Military Situation in Europe (20 September 1911)', *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.10. The Directorate supported its chief's opinion, claiming that operations against the German coast "can lead to no ultimate beneficial result, and in effect would involve a useless dissemination of force." (*Special Military Resources of the German Empire*, WO 33/579, NAUK, p.56)

⁸⁷⁷ He told Grant-Duff that the North Sea Fleet was "thoroughly frightened." ('7 October 1910', *Photocopy of a Diary*, AGDF 2/1, CCA, p.7)

that the Royal Navy could safely transport the BEF to the Continent.⁸⁷⁸ The tension between DMO Wilson and DNI Bethell stood in stark contrast to the cooperation that had existed between previous intelligence heads and DNIs.

Even in this atmosphere of hostility and recrimination the Army and the Royal Navy remained able to cooperate. The Directorate once again proved the perfect structure to enable this. It was around intelligence that the Army and the Royal Navy perhaps worked the closest through the Directorate and NID. Despite Wilson's occasional frustrations with Bethell the DMO and the DNI continued to cooperate. In December 1910 they collaborated on modifications to the scheme for the BEF's disembarkation on the Continent.⁸⁷⁹ In March 1911 the two collaborated over the formation of a Press Bureau, designed to control the flow of official information to the Press during wartime.⁸⁸⁰ The Directorate continued to facilitate the exchange of information between the Imperial General Staff and senior naval officers.⁸⁸¹ The Directorate even undertook intelligence collection on behalf of the Admiralty. During the Agadir Crisis, Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonogh, head of MO 5, explained that "The present crisis has necessitated our spending a very considerable sum of money above that for which we estimated, chiefly for the purpose of obtaining information for the Admiralty."⁸⁸² The Directorate was utilised to meet and work out details with the Admiralty. CIGS Nicholson asked DMO Wilson, on 27 August 1911, to "consult the D.N.I. and the Naval Director of Transport" on the BEF's transport to the Continent.⁸⁸³ Even the Admiralty requested to meet with the DMO to arrange details. On 29 August 1911 First Sea

⁸⁷⁸ '20 October 1910', Ibid, pp.16-17

⁸⁷⁹ 'Memorandum by DMO Wilson (1913)', HHW 3/7, IWM, p.10

⁸⁸⁰ 'Henry Wilson to Rear-Admiral the Hon: A.E. Bethell (3 March 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK

⁸⁸¹ 'Henry Wilson to Rear-Admiral the Hon: A.E. Bethell (4 May 1911)', Ibid

⁸⁸² 'Lieutenant-Colonel G.M.W. Macdonogh to Lord Cranley (29 July 1911)', *Secret intelligence: correspondence on financing, organisation and staffing; includes minutes of 1st meeting of Secret Service Bureau, 11 May 1910*, FO 1093/108, NAUK, p.1

⁸⁸³ 'W.G. Nicholson to Henry Wilson (27 August 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, p.3

Lord Sir Arthur Wilson wrote to CIGS Nicholson asking to meet with the latter and DMO Wilson.⁸⁸⁴

This illustrates that the potential for inter-service cooperation remained and that the Directorate was again best placed to facilitate it. Yet, between 1910 to 1914 inter-service tension was at such a height that it had subsumed the Directorate. Again, it sacrificed its ability to lessen inter-service antagonism to champion the Army's interests. The Directorate's promotion of Army interests helped to reduce the previous apathy and hostility displayed by Army leaders.

Another sign of its elevated position was the number of officers who sought to gain employment within the Directorate. This had been a recurrent problem for its predecessors. From 1910 to 1914, however, with the Directorate forming a key part of the Imperial General Staff it became an attractive place for employment. This was borne out by the volume of correspondence that DMO Wilson received from those either seeking employment, or advocating others for posts, at the Directorate. For instance, on 12 September 1911, Colonel G. Cockburn wrote to Wilson that "I trust you will remember that I am available for any sort of work being one of those who can turn his hand to anything."⁸⁸⁵ DMO Wilson was also perceived as a person with a great deal of influence. He received a good deal of correspondence from people asking for his help to secure certain positions and results. On 24 November 1910 Colonel E.M. Perceval wrote to Wilson to ask for his assistance in helping a Royal Engineer officer acquire leave to travel in Russia, to improve his linguistic skills. Fuller felt that the officer's case would be helped if Wilson wrote to the Royal Engineer authorities stating that, "you are anxious to have some more interpreters in Russian."⁸⁸⁶ This illuminates the continued connection between intelligence work and the Royal Engineers. This evidence

⁸⁸⁴ 'W.G. Nicholson to Henry Wilson (27 August 1911)', 'Arthur Wilson to W.G. Nicholson (29 August 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, p.3, p.2

⁸⁸⁵ 'Colonel G. Cockburn to Henry Wilson (12 Sept. 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.2

⁸⁸⁶ 'Colonel E.M. Perceval to Henry Wilson (24 November 1910)', *Ibid*, pp.1-2

reveals the increased importance and prestige attached to intelligence work, especially after it had been paired with operational work.

Finally, the Directorate continued to work towards increasing the professionalism of the Army. Through this period the Imperial General Staff took an interest in the education of Army officers.⁸⁸⁷ A lot of the discussion over professionalism involving the Directorate centered around the SIB's work. Although employment in the service of the SIB's constituent parts, the Security Service and SIS, offered some advantages it remained a risky endeavour for many. On 2 August 1911 an individual identified as H.H., who was a soldier, wrote to Mansfield Cumming, Head of SIS, about his potential employment within SIS. In his letter H.H. laid out the cost of working as an intelligence agent:

The work involves close and continual attention as well as a good deal of unavoidable unpleasantness. All idea of personal distinction must be laid aside. Patriotism may serve as the balm to be laid to one's soul for undertaking some of the work which has to be done.⁸⁸⁸

This signifies the continued conflict that many soldiers felt about intelligence work. They struggled to square the nature of this work with the values that were attached to being an Army officer. A conservative military culture lingered continuing to impose obstructions to intelligence work. Cumming illuminated the difficulties that he faced in attracting suitable candidates:

The Service is an extremely difficult one and it may be accepted as an axiom that it is of no use whatever to enlist in it any but first class men...Such men are however very hard to find, and harder still to persuade

⁸⁸⁷ 'The Education of Officers at the Staff Colleges, (23 May, 1911)', Nos. 41-89, CAB 5/2, NAUK

⁸⁸⁸ 'H.H. to C. (2 August 1911)', *Secret intelligence: correspondence on financing, organisation and staffing; includes minutes of 1st meeting of Secret Service Bureau, 11 May 1910*, FO 1093/108, NAUK, p.1

to join, as the inducements offered are not great while the disadvantages are very apparent.⁸⁸⁹

This reveals how intellectual ability and intelligence work remained intrinsically linked, as they had been since the Northbrook Committee's report in 1871. The Directorate did what it could to aid the efforts of the SIB. On 7 May 1913 DMO Wilson supported a proposal by Cumming to "employ a certain Marine Officer, who possessed special qualifications" to act on the continent. Wilson approved stating that "It was impossible to get a perfect man for the appointment, but he knew that the officer referred to was keen on his work, a good linguist and an artist in Secret Service."⁸⁹⁰

The Directorate remained the hub of knowledge within the Army, disseminating information through its documents and through lectures. For instance, on 24 March 1911 Lieutenant-Colonel H.B. Williams asked Wilson, "Would you honour the officers of the Eastern Command Intelligence Class by coming and addressing them - and incidentally telling us about the frontier [the Franco-Belgian-German frontier]." Williams continued that "if you would be so kind as to come down, I am sure it will buck up our fellows and show them that Intelligence work is appreciated."⁸⁹¹ Again the Directorate remained the best placed organisation to promulgate intellectualism and professionalism throughout the Army. Although it had assumed other duties, the Directorate's role in continuing to promote professionalism exhibits that it functioned similarly to its predecessors. The Directorate retained the focus on intellectualism and professionalism that had characterised military intelligence since the 1870s.

⁸⁸⁹ 'Letter likely from Mansfield Cumming (3 August 1911)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁸⁹⁰ 'Minutes of a Meeting held at the Foreign Office on the 7th May, 1913', *Secret Service Bureau: Minutes of Meetings*, FO 1093/25, NAUK, p.2, p.3

⁸⁹¹ 'Lieutenant-Colonel H.B. Williams to Henry Wilson (24 March 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.1 (emphasis in original)

From 1910 to 1914 the Directorate secured its prominent place within the Army's leadership. It was an integral cog within the Imperial General Staff which enabled it successfully to influence military policy formation. Its position was so secure that even animosity between the DMO and the CIGS could not obstruct the Directorate's efforts. Again, the Directorate sacrificed its ability to lessen inter-service tension as it continued to challenge naval strategic plans. Finally, it remained the reservoir of knowledge within the Army through this period, helping to propagate intellectualism and professionalism through the Army. While the Directorate had other duties outside of intelligence, its rise in prominence within the Army's hierarchy evidences the increase in stature and prestige assigned to intelligence by this period.

Involvement in Policymaking

Between 1904 and 1910 Britain's international relationships had witnessed a remarkable reversal. The traditional enemies of the Victorian era France and Russia had become Britain's erstwhile friends. While the partnership with the latter remained relatively shaky, the 'Entente' with France was strengthened from 1904 to 1914. German attempts to disrupt the new 'Entente' in 1905 failed and France and Britain drew closer in the aftermath. Germany made one last attempt to split the Entente in 1911, the Agadir crisis, but again it failed. Britain went to war alongside its new allies in 1914.

While there remained suspicions about French and Russian intentions, British foreign policymakers were convinced of which nation represented the greatest threat. There was a significant rise in Germanophobia within Britain's foreign policy elite. There remained those who preferred an Anglo-German settlement to an Anglo-Russian one, but they were outnumbered by those who viewed Germany as the real enemy. At the head of this latter group stood Foreign Secretary Edward Grey, who "acted on the assumption that Germany was the main

threat to the peace of Europe.”⁸⁹² The growth in Germanophobia was not limited to government and state officials. During the 1900s and 1910s there was an exponential growth in ‘invasion literature’. Between 1901 and 1914 over three hundred such books were published and most chose to position Germany as the antagonist. For some scholars this trend was responsible for the evolution of Britain’s intelligence machinery in this period.⁸⁹³ The evidence presented in this thesis elucidates that this is a fallacious argument, one which disregards the importance of the late nineteenth century in the evolutionary process. It is important, however, to highlight the climate of general Germanophobia that had swept across Britain by this period.

There have been numerous studies upon the origins of the First World War and the reasons why Britain decided to join the conflict. It is outside the purview of this thesis to examine these issues. The relationship between Britain’s foreign intelligence organisations and the nation’s entry into the War could, and deserves to, form its own study. Therefore, this section focuses upon the role of the Directorate of Military Operations in foreign policy formation in the years before the outbreak of war.

Scholars have been divided over whether continental or imperial affairs were given precedence by British policymakers during this period. Some, like John Darwin, have asserted that continental affairs were the priority. The argument is that, as the governing elite of the late Victorian era gave way to their Edwardian successors, there came a new vision of the world and the British Empire’s place in it. The cornerstone of Edwardian diplomacy was the belief that Britain’s interests “could best be protected by the strenuous exercise of Britain’s influence in European politics, with the right to be consulted, and the capacity to intervene,

⁸⁹² Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, p.87

⁸⁹³ Richard Aldrich and Rory Cormac contend that, this “wave of popular Edwardian ‘invasion literature’ forced Herbert Asquith...to take notice of foreign espionage.” The result, they argue, was that “Asquith set in train a course which would fundamentally alter the landscape of British intelligence forever.” Their conclusion, therefore, is that “Fiction paved the long pathway to the creation of a modern British intelligence service.” (R. Aldrich & R. Cormac, *The Black Door: Spies, Secret Intelligence and British Prime Ministers* (London: William Collins, 2016), p.23, p.22)

if the continental balance were at risk.” This meant that imperial defence relied on the maintenance of the balance of power on the Continent,⁸⁹⁴ an apparent sign of how imperial affairs had been subordinated to continental issues. Other scholars, such as Keith Wilson, have challenged this idea. They have contended that imperial security matters, especially the defence of India, continued to dominate over those of any continental policy. This issue, they claimed, remained the highest priority for British policymakers until 1914, constituting a primary reason for Britain’s entry into the War. The need to secure the colonial arrangements with Russia was viewed as paramount.⁸⁹⁵ Both these approaches can be supported by the available evidence. An examination of the Directorate in this period reveals that its priorities lay squarely with continental concerns.

By 1910 work relating to foreign policymaking was central to the Directorate absorbing a large amount of its time. When he became DMO in August 1910 Henry Wilson stated that, “I conceived it to be my most important duty to continue” on with the work of Grierson and Ewart in planning for war alongside France against Germany. Wilson praised his predecessors’ work claiming that they “had gained the invaluable result of our having obtained the necessary permission to study, & work at, this problem in conjunction with the French General Staff.”⁸⁹⁶ That Wilson’s first act as DMO was “to hang an immense map of the frontiers of France, Belgium and Germany on the wall of his room at the War Office,” illustrates that his priorities lay in the same direction as those of his

⁸⁹⁴ Darwin, *The Empire Project*, p.269, p.272

⁸⁹⁵ Wilson argued “That Russia might dominate Europe as Germany had done...was less material than that Britain remained an Imperial Power, and on good terms with the only Great Power that could threaten India directly or indirectly.” (Wilson, *Empire and Continent*, p.164)

⁸⁹⁶ ‘Minute to C.I.G.S. reporting progress on scheme of E.7. (April 1913)’, HHW 3/7, IWM, p.1. Interestingly, during Ewart’s tenure as DMO it is generally stated that discussions and planning with the French slowed down, as Ewart instead focused his Directorate’s attentions on organising and training the BEF for service overseas. Fergusson claims, however, that without this “the strategic planning of Grierson and Wilson would have been meaningless.” (Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence*, p.208)

predecessors.⁸⁹⁷ Wilson was so dedicated to this task that it resulted in a major reorganisation of the Directorate.

Following Grierson's lead, DMO Wilson focused the work of the Directorate on "a great strategical War Game of the European Powers" from August 1910 to January 1911. To facilitate better the completion of this exercise Wilson decided to reconstitute his Directorate. For the purposes of the war game Wilson "recast" the work of MO 1, MO 2, and MO 3. MO 1 became, "The [Expeditionary] Force Section in which were included India & the Dominions, i.e. the whole of the military forces of the [Empire?] except the [Territorial] Army." MO 2 became a section devoted to "The Dual Alliance (France & Russia)," while MO 3 became devoted to "The Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria & Italy)."⁸⁹⁸ This change was temporary, only lasting until January 1911, but it was an important development. The fact that the Directorate's three most important sections were completely reconstituted, around the subject of a continental war, evidences the importance that Wilson attached to this issue. Therefore, it is strange that this reconstitution has received relatively little attention.⁸⁹⁹

The object of the war game, "was to determine how the Great Powers would go to war with each other, what forces they would employ and when & where these forces would [meet?]."⁹⁰⁰ DMO Wilson's own conviction was that if:

the Government of the day determined to take part in such a campaign it should be able to place our [Expeditionary] Force alongside the troops of our Allies for the first great clash of arms where it is quite possible

⁸⁹⁷ Gooch, *The Plans of War*, p.118

⁸⁹⁸ 'Minute to C.I.G.S. reporting progress on scheme of E.7. (April 1913)', HHW 3/7, IWM, p.2

⁸⁹⁹ Jeffrey did reference it in his biography of Wilson. (Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, pp.87-88)

⁹⁰⁰ Memorandum by DMO Wilson (1913)', HHW 3/7, IWM, p.12

a decision affecting the whole campaign might be reached.⁹⁰¹

This denotes the precedence that Wilson assigned to military action on the Continent. He had a clear agenda in undertaking this war game. He hoped to use it to demonstrate the need for British military action on the Continent to support France. This extended war game was also an illustration of the rapid growth of a continental viewpoint within the Directorate. It was also a sign of how intelligence had become integral to operational planning. Through much of the late nineteenth century the Army's leadership had held intelligence at arm's length. By the 1910s, however, foreign intelligence work was critical to both military planning and policymaking.

Responding to appeals from the General Office in Command DMO Wilson wrote to CIGS Nicholson, on 8 May 1911, about the defence of Egypt. He highlighted potential invasion routes through the Sinai Peninsula that the Ottoman Empire could use to invade Egypt, an endeavour that the Ottomans would successfully carry out in 1915. To ensure the effective defence of Egypt he urged that the garrison should be increased.⁹⁰² This was not the only area of concern for Wilson. On 23 May 1911 he wrote again to Nicholson about the dangers of railway projects in Persia which would allow foreign troops to mass near the Indian border.⁹⁰³ The Directorate continued to enjoy a hands-on role in the study of imperial defence. DMO Wilson was made a member of the CID's 'Overseas Sub-Committee'. Its functions were "To discuss, advise on, and work out details of questions of defence relating to the Oversea Dominions, Colonies, and Dependencies in which the Admiralty, War Office, Colonial Office, India Office, Foreign Office, and Treasury are individually or collectively concerned."⁹⁰⁴ Wilson also remained a key member of the CDC, affording another avenue for the

⁹⁰¹ Ibid

⁹⁰² 'Henry Wilson to Sir William Nicholson (8 May 1911)', HHW 3/5, IWM, p.3

⁹⁰³ 'DMO to CIGS (23 May 1911)', Ibid, p.1

⁹⁰⁴ 'Overseas Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, (29 April 1911)', Nos. 41-89, CAB 5/2, NAUK, p.3

Directorate to influence imperial policy. This again shows how inter-departmentalism and participation within the 'committee system' continued to facilitate the Directorate's involvement within imperial policymaking.

The Directorate remained linked to the Empire through this period. As a key constituent of the Imperial General Staff the Directorate was involved intimately in imperial affairs. With its name change in 1909, the Imperial General Staff began to focus upon the coordination of the disparate military forces of Britain and the Dominions.⁹⁰⁵ The Directorate was involved in this process due to its prominent role within this institution. An example of this was how it enabled the exchange of military personnel across the Empire, by affording employment to officers serving in the armies of Britain's colonies and the Dominions. For instance, in a letter to Captain F.G. Marsh, from 3 November 1911, DMO Wilson mentioned how an Indian Army officer had been appointed recently to MO 3.⁹⁰⁶ The Directorate also undertook, by December 1911, to "correspond semi-officially with all General Staff officers in the Dominions."⁹⁰⁷ This reveals again how the Directorate had transitioned from being a pure intelligence organisation, like its predecessors, to become a multi-purpose establishment with operational, planning, administrative, and intelligence duties.

The most important imperial link remained with India. Through this period the Directorate was in close communication with the newly established Indian General Staff.⁹⁰⁸ Throughout his tenure DMO Wilson liaised frequently with the Chief of the Indian General Staff Douglas Haig. The two collaborated on the decryption of Chinese ciphers in August 1910, with it being decided that the Indian

⁹⁰⁵ 'The Progress of the Imperial General Staff and the Development of its Functions (19 May, 1911)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁹⁰⁶ 'Henry Wilson to Captain F.G. Marsh (3 November 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.1

⁹⁰⁷ 'Note from MO 1 (c) to Henry Wilson (30 Dec. 1911)', *Ibid*, p.1

⁹⁰⁸ Lord Kitchener, the Commander-in-Chief in India, was influenced by the establishment of the General Staff within Britain and sought to create a similar structure within India. (T. Moreman, 'Lord Kitchener, the General Staff, and the Army in India, 1902-1914' in *The British General Staff*, p.62)

General Staff would shoulder the bulk of the burden.⁹⁰⁹ On 16 March 1911 Haig inquired of Wilson about plans being drawn up in Britain dealing with potential conflict with the Ottoman Empire. Haig asked Wilson, "In order that we here may be able to back you up, and be able to meet possible requirements, I hope you will let me know what is proposed."⁹¹⁰ Haig even communicated Wilson's information and opinions to the Indian government, but Viceroy Lord Hardinge did not concur always with his views.⁹¹¹ There were some moments of strain in the relationship. At a meeting of the Imperial General Staff Directors, on 29 August 1913, DMO Wilson referenced a proposal for MO 1 (d) to collect information about India. This proposal was rebuffed "In view of the fact that the C.G.S. in India was understood not to be in favour of the proposals."⁹¹² This was an anomaly, however, and relations between the Directorate and the Indian General Staff were mostly harmonious. This exemplifies both the importance of the communication between the two establishments, and how critical the Directorate was in facilitating imperial communication for both the Imperial General Staff and the British government. Intelligence sharing remained a key component engendering cooperation between Britain and India.

As in Britain the Indian General Staff positioned its intelligence machinery as a major component of its constitution, establishing its own Directorate of Military Operations.⁹¹³ The Indian DMO was A.H. Gordon. He communicated regularly with Wilson, continuing the trend that had begun with the formation of

⁹⁰⁹ 'Henry Wilson to Lieutenant-General Sir Douglas Haig (19th August 1910)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.1

⁹¹⁰ 'Douglas Haig to Henry Wilson (16 March 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, p.2

⁹¹¹ 'Douglas Haig to Henry Wilson (29 June 1911)', *Ibid*, p.2

⁹¹² '109th General Staff Directors' Meeting. 29th August 1913', *General Staff Directors Meetings: Records of proceedings*, WO 106/296, NAUK, p.1

⁹¹³ The Anglo-Russian Convention caused considerable problems for India's Directorate of Military Operations, as Russia was the enemy that they had geared themselves to tackle. With the détente between Britain and Russia it was forced to re-orientate its efforts. (Ferris, 'Before 'Room 40'', p.451)

the Indian IB in the 1880s. There was also a continued exchange of personnel. In a letter, on 8 March 1911, DMO Gordon told DMO Wilson that:

Your friend V. has been doing excellent work in connection with Persia and the arms traffic. If you want him about the end of this year, I won't stand in the way, but...it must be on the distinct understanding that you let me have an equally good man in exchange from home.⁹¹⁴

This reveals both the continuing system of personnel exchange and the reliance of the Indian Directorate upon its British counterpart. While there was a close working relationship, it was clear that the British Directorate was the superior agency. In the same letter, DMO Gordon related the Indian Directorate's efforts in developing strategical schemes against the Ottoman Empire. He related how:

naturally our work is mainly from the point of view of India. We have much to say, but we cannot help touching on...the Imperial aspects of the question. This however is your business, and hence our wish to know your views.⁹¹⁵

This illuminates how the Indian Directorate respected the greater purview of the British Directorate and sought to align its views with the latter. Both Directorates also collaborated upon strategical schemes. On 10 January 1912, the two discussed strategic plans revolving around the Persian province of Seistan.⁹¹⁶ There also remained a steady interchange of information and schemes. On 1 February 1912

⁹¹⁴ 'A.H. Gordon to Henry Wilson (8 March 1911)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1911*, HHW 2/70, IWM, p.3

⁹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.1

⁹¹⁶ 'A.H. Gordon to Henry Wilson (10 January 1912)', *Miscellaneous Correspondence 1912*, HHW 2/71, IWM, p.1

Gordon thanked Wilson for sending papers, “dealing with the arrangements for the despatch of reinforcements from England to India.”⁹¹⁷

There was a closeness about the communication between DMOs Wilson and Gordon, that singles it out from similar previous communication between British and Indian intelligence heads. On 10 January 1912, while discussing strategical schemes about Seistan, Gordon argued to Wilson that “it is quite clear that we must rely for the present on private correspondence to settle the details of the schemes.” Gordon queried “Whether we ought to call the attention of Govt. to the probable strategical effect of their policy, and suggest alternatives.”⁹¹⁸ Wilson also favoured this close correspondence. On 1 February 1912 he told Gordon that:

We agree that there is great value in informal references on this subject, as it is impossible to keep pace with the changes in both Home and Indian organization, when the only method of official consultation between the War Office and India, is through the cumbersome medium of official despatches.⁹¹⁹

This reveals a close connection between the two DMOs. Both were willing to cooperate without reference to other authorities. The link between the two structures served a necessary purpose for the Indian Directorate. On 14 February 1912 DMO Gordon wrote to DMO Wilson about his fears that people in Britain might think the Indian Directorate, and General Staff, were negligent in providing information. Gordon pleaded that “I hope you have let it be known that we have been muzzled out here.”⁹²⁰ This is perhaps the most forthright illustration of how dependent the Indian Directorate had become upon its British counterpart. The latter afforded the former a greater voice, just as the great civilian departments

⁹¹⁷ ‘A.H. Gordon to Henry Wilson (1 February 1912)’, Ibid, p.1

⁹¹⁸ ‘A.H. Gordon to Henry Wilson (10 January 1912)’, Ibid, p.1, p.2

⁹¹⁹ ‘A.H. Gordon to Henry Wilson (1 February 1912)’, Ibid, p.1

⁹²⁰ ‘A.H. Gordon to Wilson (14 February 1912)’, Ibid, p.1

had once done for the IB and the ID. The retainment of important imperial links ensured that the British Directorate remained involved in imperial affairs.

There remained a wariness within the Directorate, through this period, about the potential threat posed by Russia. DMO Wilson wrote to CIGS Nicholson, on 23 May 1911, about new railways being constructed in Persia. He stated that these foreign projects posed serious threats to India. In his analysis Wilson singled out the threat posed by Russia and the Ottoman Empire, “the only two European Powers which can keep an unlimited number of troops on a distant frontier in time of peace.”⁹²¹ Wilson posited these views nearly four years after the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907. His views on Russia were almost certainly shared by other state and military officials. It signals the uneasy relationship that existed between Britain and Russia, even after they had allegedly solved their colonial disputes. It also signifies how the Directorate continued to produce assessments that ran contrary to the direction of British foreign policy.

The Directorate continued to show concern for imperial security through this period. On 21 July 1911 it created a memorandum about the importance of secure telegraph communication across the Empire. The Directorate argued that a new cable should be constructed from Gibraltar to Sierra Leone, which would allow for “the transmission of messages by an all-British route to the Cape, Aden, and India.” This was particularly important because it meant that “All landing places between the United Kingdom and India by the new route can be protected.” Interestingly, the Directorate commented that “Our communications with India are of particular interest, because our greatest military responsibilities are centred in that country.”⁹²² This all displays that there remained a level of concern

⁹²¹ ‘DMO to CIGS (23 May 1911)’, HHW 3/5, IWM, p.1

⁹²² ‘Proposal for cable from Gibraltar to Sierra Leone (21 July 1911)’, *Papers: various*, WO 106/47, NAUK, p.2

over imperial security within the Directorate. It lends some credence to Keith Wilson's arguments about the priority of imperial over continental affairs.

DMO Wilson, like Grierson and Ewart, helped to drive the growth of the 'continental school' within the British Army. Wilson was a vocal advocate for Britain sending military aid to France if it faced war against Germany. On 15 August 1911 he argued that a "war between Germany on the one hand and France and England on the other, with Russia of course playing her part, might, I think, end in the defeat of Germany." To achieve this Wilson insisted that Britain had to mobilise its forces at the same time as France, ensuring that the details for their transport to France were worked out in advance.⁹²³ In 1913 Wilson laid out all the work that he had undertaken to organise the BEF for action on the Continent and to support the French. This included attending conferences with the French General Staff in Paris, to discuss the BEF's transportation to France and where it was to be concentrated.⁹²⁴ In fact, by this time, France and Britain had entered an intelligence sharing relationship. This was driven by both the Directorate and the SIB.⁹²⁵ This reveals that intelligence continued to play an active role within alliance politics.

Henry Wilson's tenure as DMO illustrates how central the post had become to the process of foreign policymaking by the 1910s. Wilson had hoped to make a prolonged trip to the Continent in Summer 1911, but this was frustrated by the Agadir crisis. He took an active role in the discussions between government officials and senior soldiers during the crisis. On 8 September 1911 he wrote to Chief of the Indian General Staff Douglas Haig articulating how:

the situation in Europe has gone on and become rather more strained every day with the result that I find myself

⁹²³ 'The Military Aspect of the Continental Problem, (15 August 1911)', 101-132, CAB 4/3, NAUK, p.6

⁹²⁴ Memorandum by DMO Wilson (1913)', HHW 3/7, IWM, p.12

⁹²⁵ Jeffrey, *MI6*, p.31

working from morning until evening with very little time with which to do things that are not absolutely necessary.⁹²⁶

This comment illustrates how deeply involved Wilson was in official discussions. This fact, and that it was considered essential for the DMO to remain in London during the crisis, demonstrates the importance of the Directorate to foreign policymaking and state governance by 1911. It was considered a crucial cog within the state's apparatus. While Wilson was acting more as a head of operations than as a pure intelligence chief, the Directorate's foreign intelligence work continued to facilitate his seat at the top table.

Wilson's views, as with those of his predecessors, made a clear impact upon Britain's military and political leadership. On 13 August 1911 Home Secretary Winston Churchill asserted that the "decisive military operations will be those between France and Germany," and that the BEF's "value to the French would be out of all proportion to its numerical strength."⁹²⁷ DMO Wilson had several private communications with Churchill during that time. There was a concurrence in opinion between the two. Wilson remained forthright in his views. He concluded one letter to Churchill, on 29 August 1911, by stating that:

In my opinion a war between ourselves and Germany is as certain as anything human can be...There is only one way to victory and that is to see to it that our foreign policy and our strategy go hand in hand and that sufficient force is available to carry out the policy which has been previously determined.⁹²⁸

⁹²⁶ 'Henry Wilson to Lieutenant-General Sir Douglas Haig (8 September 1911)', *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, p.1

⁹²⁷ 'Military Aspects of the Continental Problem. Memorandum by Mr. Churchill (13 August 1911)', 101-132, CAB 4/3, NAUK, p.2

⁹²⁸ 'Henry Wilson to Home Secretary (29 August 1911)', HHW 3/5, IWM, p.10

While he was in some respects preaching to the converted, Wilson's views no doubt helped to form Churchill's own foreign policy opinions. The former's opinions continued to permeate through the Imperial General Staff. By 9 May 1912 it stated that, "In the event of war breaking out...the decisive operations must take place on land between France and Germany and their allies on the Franco-German frontier or in Belgium."⁹²⁹ As one of its chief members, DMO Wilson's opinions would have carried significant weight within the Imperial General Staff. The concurrence of views reveals how successful he was in influencing military opinion towards intervention on the Continent in support of France. The expanded involvement of its predecessors in imperial and foreign policy formation led to the increased influence of the Directorate within policy decisions. Wilson's ability to network and forthright personality, along with mounting imperial and international concerns, and the support of the Asquith government all contributed to the Directorate's expanded involvement and influence within policymaking. However, it was again the influence of political and administrative culture which continued to direct this growing participation and influence in policy formulation.

While it showed concern for imperial defence matters, these issues continued to lessen in importance for the Directorate. In its report on the 'Special Military Resources of the German Empire' the Directorate downplayed the threat posed by German's African colonies, which did not "constitute a menace to any British colony."⁹³⁰ This illustrates the decreasing priority accorded to imperial defence by the Directorate. As Germany became the primary threat the focus on imperial defence waned. This was because Germany was not in the same position as France or Russia to threaten Britain's vital imperial interests.

DMO Wilson was as candid in his discussions over foreign policy with Secretary of State for War Seely. On 21 October 1912 he asserted to Seely that "the friendliness of the Belgian people, the active cooperation of the Belgian Army

⁹²⁹ 'Committee of Imperial Defence. Papers prepared by the General Staff - 1. The Attack on Malta by Italy. 2. The Defence of Malta against Deliberate Invasion. (9 May 1912)', Nos. 90-130, CAB 5/3, NAUK, p.1

⁹³⁰ *Special Military Resources of the German Empire*, WO 33/579, NAUK, p.65

and the maintenance of the Belgian fortresses are matters of great, perhaps of vital, importance to the success of our arms.”⁹³¹ This illuminates that Wilson remained forthright with the expression of his views to senior Cabinet Ministers. A benefit that he enjoyed was how he possessed closer relationships with senior government officials than any of his compatriots on the Imperial General Staff.⁹³² Wilson took full advantage of this to promote his opinions especially upon foreign policy. His vocal protestations were a sign for how DMO Wilson had fully developed the trend that had begun with Colonel Robert Home in the 1870s, becoming a chief advisor to the government upon foreign policy issues. The course of British foreign policy, from 1904 to 1914, exemplifies that the Directorate was successful in promoting its stances. In August 1914 the BEF was transported to France to support the French and Belgian Armies taking its position on the left flank of the French forces, just as the Directorate had advocated for continually.

The position of the Directorate within foreign policymaking, by 1910 to 1914, allows for one final comparison with France’s intelligence machinery of this period. As evidenced above the Directorate had become an integral part of foreign and imperial policymaking within Britain by the start of the First World War. Intelligence had played a significant role in French foreign policy formation in the 1890s. During the Fashoda crisis of 1898, French Foreign Minister Théophile Delcassé received a decrypt from the Quai d’Orsay’s Cabinet Noir which allegedly revealed a British ultimatum to France to withdraw its force from Fashoda. This information turned out to be false, but Delcassé used it as a pretext to withdraw the French force and end the crisis in Britain’s favour. Intelligence reports were sent to government ministers and military leaders throughout the years leading to 1914. For instance, Foreign Minister Justin de Selves received decoded German telegrams that showed how Prime Minister Joseph Caillaux was secretly

⁹³¹ ‘Henry Wilson to Secretary of State for War (21 October 1912)’, HHW 3/5, IWM, p.1. Wilson was equally as frank with his military compatriots. In a letter to Major-General G. Barker, from 24 October 1910, Wilson stated famously that “there are many other problems that are probably of more interest to regimental officers than the topography of a funny little country like Belgium, although most of them may be buried there before they are much older.” (‘Henry Wilson to Major-General G. Barker (24 October 1910)’, *General H. Wilson, Director of Military Operations Indexed*, WO 106/59, NAUK, pp.1-2)

⁹³² Jeffrey, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, p.107

negotiating with Germany during the Agadir crisis.⁹³³ Yet, no French intelligence head possessed the same authority as DMO Wilson to discuss policy with senior statesmen. No French intelligence agency occupied the same privileged position as the Directorate did within policymaking. While the British and French intelligence communities were not exact copies of each other in this period, it remains an interesting comparison. This difference resulted from the differing governance principles of France and Britain, and the resulting variance in intelligence culture. France's fragmented intelligence culture resulted in its intelligence organisations lacking the Directorate's involvement and influence over policymaking. This again highlighted the importance of political and administrative culture to the evolution of both nation's intelligence machinery from 1870 to 1914.

From 1910 to 1914 the Directorate formalised its position as an important player within foreign and imperial policymaking. While it retained imperial links and remained involved in imperial affairs, it continued to place greater precedence upon continental matters. Foreign policy continued to absorb a great deal of the Directorate's attentions and DMO Wilson was central to foreign policymaking. Wilson remained as committed to promoting a continental strategy as his predecessors had. He was successful in persuading both senior soldiers and government officials of the necessity of this plan. This all reveals how crucial to foreign policymaking the Directorate had become by 1914, completing the process begun in the 1870s by the IB. It also was a final demonstration of how political and administrative culture drove the Directorate's expanded involvement within policymaking.

Conclusion: The End of the First Phase

⁹³³ C. Andrew, 'France and the German Menace' in Ernest R. May (ed.), *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984) p.129, p.130

1910 to 1914 saw the culmination of the trends that had directed the evolution of British foreign intelligence since the 1870s. The Directorate of Military Operations continued to evolve along the lines of its predecessors, under the overriding influence of political and administrative culture. It enjoyed a far more positive relationship with the Army's leadership, but the Directorate continued to become further assimilated into the civilian sphere. This led to its greater involvement within imperial and foreign policy formation. By 1914 it was central to the policymaking process.

The influence of political and administrative culture remained dominant upon the evolutionary process. The Directorate remained intimately involved within the 'committee system', particularly upon the CID and its sub-committees, which continued to facilitate the Directorate's participation within state governance. Inter-departmentalism remained an underlying principle for the Directorate's work, as it facilitated communication and cooperation across the breadth of the state's apparatus. There remained a close connection between the Directorate's inter-departmental functions and its involvement within the 'committee system'. This persistent focus upon these concepts ensured that the Directorate continued to achieve a level of consensus. Again, this was accomplished by providing unified assessments. The system of 'integrated control' continued to hold sway within Whitehall and the Directorate remained a prominent part of it. As one of the chief military advisors to the government DMO Wilson, and his Directorate, continued to gain influence and prominence through this system. This all reveals the persistent dominating effect of political and administrative culture.

1910 to 1914 saw the Directorate secure its prominent position within the civilian sphere. The DMO's position as a chief military advisor to the government, under the system of 'integrated control', facilitated the Directorate's connections to civilian officials and within state governance. DMO Wilson built up significant connections with government and state officials including Home Secretary Churchill. The link to the Foreign Office retained its prominence for the Directorate with regular communication, while the former turned to the latter for

aid in foreign policy matters. The Directorate looked to the Foreign Office for access to information and continued financial support. Cracks began to appear in this relationship, but the connection remained of immense utility to the Directorate. DMO Wilson possessed a fluctuating relationship with Prime Minister Asquith through this period. Despite the lows this connection again served to draw the Directorate into the highest echelons of policymaking. It also continued to secure its place within the highest levels of the War Office preventing the isolation that plagued its predecessors. By 1914 the Directorate was an integral part of the civilian sphere and state governance. It was a trend that remained expedited by political and administrative culture.

As had been the case in the previous period, from 1910 to 1914 the Directorate retained a favourable relationship with the Army's hierarchy. Its prominent place within the Imperial General Staff afforded it significant authority and prestige. From this position the Directorate was able to influence strategy and military policy. One consequence of this was that the Directorate transformed from being a purely intelligence agency. It became an organisation with significant responsibilities for strategic planning and military administration. This was a direct result of the utility of the Directorate's predecessors to civilian policymakers. DMO Wilson continued to press for the adoption of a continental strategy. From January 1911 into 1914 the Directorate worked towards preparing the BEF for employment on the Continent. Wilson utilised its position as the hub of strategic planning and military information to press for the Directorate to be principally responsible for the BEF's preparations. The fractious relationship between DMO Wilson and CIGS Nicholson did not damage the Directorate's position. It reveals the change in reception towards it by senior soldiers. The Directorate cooperated with the NID and the Admiralty through this period. Yet mostly it sought to criticise naval strategic plans. Although it remained best placed to reduce inter-service tension, as the Directorate's position grew within the Army's hierarchy it focused less upon this goal. From 1910 to 1914 the stigma around intelligence and staff work was beginning to crumble and employment at the Directorate was viewed more positively. Finally, the Directorate retained a professional and intellectual character and promoted these qualities within the

Army. It was fortunate that these qualities were better regarded by this time, despite the persistence of a conservative military culture within Britain.

Its continued integration into the civilian sphere facilitated the expansion of the Directorate's involvement within imperial and foreign policymaking. This was again aided by its inter-departmental functions and involvement within the 'committee system'. It continued to promote pressing imperial defence issues and retained a wide array of imperial connections. Yet, foreign policy issues, especially continental affairs, remained the priority over imperial concerns. During this period work relating to foreign policymaking remained central to the Directorate's operation. DMO Wilson determined to carry on the work of his predecessors in committing the government and the Army to action on the Continent alongside France. He continued to promote the growth of the 'continental school' within the Army and the government. He argued for close cooperation with France, in case of war with Germany, and pressed on in discussions with senior French generals. The Agadir crisis demonstrated the centrality of the Directorate to foreign policymaking. The Directorate proved successful, once again, in championing its views. In August 1914 the government and the Army adopted the strategy proposed by DMO Wilson, his predecessors, and the Directorate. As was the case since the 1870s this process was expedited by the impact of political and administrative culture.

By 1914 the evolutionary process had reached its apotheosis. The Directorate had built upon the work of its predecessors driven by the same evolutionary trajectory. It had fully absorbed British political and Whitehall's administrative culture. The principles underpinning its operation resembled those that underlay the practice of British state governance. It had become fully incorporated into the civilian sphere forming an integral component of it. The Directorate had achieved significant authority and prestige within the Army. Finally, it was central to the business of foreign and imperial policymaking. These other stages remained facilitated by the influence of political and administrative culture.

Conclusion

In his study of intelligence and government in Britain and the United States, Philip H.J. Davies claims that “the First World War was the event that gave the UK’s intelligence machinery much of its future shape.”⁹³⁴ While the War was undoubtedly important in shaping the development of Britain’s intelligence community, this judgement ignores the crucial importance of the period from 1870 to 1914. This thesis argues that this interval was critical to the evolution of British foreign intelligence. It has illuminated the existence and influence of key elements of British intelligence culture, inter-departmentalism, and committee culture, in the decades preceding the outbreak of war in 1914. It has argued that these cultural reflexes were the product of the wider political and administrative culture that shaped the evolution of British government during this period. Further development beyond 1914 took place within a framework that had been established in the preceding decades. The period 1870 to 1914 was the formative phase of Britain’s modern intelligence community, setting in motion the developments that were to come.

Epilogue: Beyond 1914

The Directorate of Military Operations continued to operate through the First World War, renamed the Directorate of Military Intelligence. Several new sections were added during the War. The Directorate briefly subsumed the SIB into its section MI 1(c), but it was a change of name rather than anything substantial. From 1915 to 1917 a serious battle developed within Britain’s intelligence community. The War Office, the Directorate of Military Intelligence, and the Army made concerted efforts to absorb the work of SIS, originally a component of the SIB. The Foreign Office stepped in to defend SIS and ensure that it remained an independent institution. As Jeffrey asserted it marked “a significant moment in confirming the institutional autonomy of [SIS] and consolidating the

⁹³⁴ Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States*. Volume 2, p.79

interdepartmental role, under Foreign Office supervision, which was to remain a central characteristic of the organisation as it developed during its first forty years.”⁹³⁵

Several major changes to Britain’s burgeoning intelligence community were inaugurated in the aftermath of the War. After 1918 five Secret Service Committees were established in 1919, 1921, 1923, 1925, and 1931 to formalise the shape of Britain’s intelligence community in the post-war world.⁹³⁶ This reveals the continued importance of the ‘committee system’ to the evolution of British intelligence. Through the 1920s and 1930s SIS, MI 5, the Directorate of Military Intelligence, Scotland Yard’s Special Branch, the NID, and the Government Code and Cypher School formed the British intelligence community. This latter agency was created in 1919, when David Lloyd George’s government decided to amalgamate military and naval cryptography efforts. By 1936 the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) was composed of military, naval, air force, and civilian code-breaking sections. The creation of GC&CS was yet another illustration of the interdepartmental reflexes of British political and administrative culture.⁹³⁷ Through the 1920s and 1930s GC&CS was under Foreign Office control. Again, this shows the continued importance of the Foreign Office and ties with the civilian sphere for British foreign intelligence.⁹³⁸ In fact, direct civilian participation in intelligence continued to grow. Civilians took on leading roles within Britain’s foreign intelligence collection systems, while ministers and

⁹³⁵ Jeffrey, *MI6*, p.50, p.49

⁹³⁶ Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States. Volume 2*, p.79, p.81. Also see V. Madeira, ‘No Wishful Thinking Allowed: Secret Service Committee and Intelligence Reform in Great Britain, 1919-23’, *Intelligence and National Security* 18/1 (2003)

⁹³⁷ Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States. Volume 2*, p.79, p.84. Ferris asserts that the Government Code and Cypher School’s “personnel and work were interdepartmental and interdisciplinary, more than any other department in Whitehall.” (Ferris, *Behind the Enigma*, p.84)

⁹³⁸ Ibid, p.74. In April 1921, Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon argued that GC&CS was a political organisation. It “existed to break the cyphers of opposing powers in order that Britain might gain political advantage over them.” (S. Ball, *Secret History. Writing the Rise of Britain’s Intelligence Services*, Kindle edition (Montreal & Kingston, London & Chicago: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020) p.49. GC&CS, and its modern equivalent the Government Communications Headquarters, have worked on behalf of both Britain’s political and military leaders.

civil servants continued to oversee the work of the intelligence agencies.⁹³⁹ This latter trend was a perpetuation of a tendency that had begun from 1870 to 1914.

Another important intelligence body was created in 1936. This was the Joint Intelligence Committee, designed to act as “a central control” mechanism over Britain’s intelligence community.⁹⁴⁰ In the years before the outbreak of the Second World War, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) achieved little of note and did not even represent the whole intelligence community, with MI 5 and SIS having limited involvement. Attempting to raise the profile of the JIC Neville Chamberlain’s government turned to the Foreign Office to chair JIC meetings.⁹⁴¹ This again reveals the significant influence of the Foreign Office over the evolution of Britain’s intelligence community. Soon after he became Prime Minister in May 1940, Winston Churchill assigned the JIC to act “as the central body responsible for producing operational intelligence ‘appreciations’.” In 1941 the Joint Intelligence Staff was founded with the role of “coordinating, assessing and disseminating the administration and policy of the intelligence community as a whole.”⁹⁴²

The creation of the JIC illuminates the persistent importance of inter-departmentalism, the ‘committee system’, cooperation, and consensus within both the British system of governance and the nation’s intelligence community into the twentieth century. The JIC continues to operate to this day. Comprising both intelligence heads and senior policymakers, it “sits in a unique position within Whitehall [that] crosses the intelligence producer/consumer divide.”⁹⁴³ This

⁹³⁹ Ibid, pp.44-45. In the 1920s there appeared to be a level of disengagement between Britain’s armed forces and intelligence community. (Ibid, p.55)

⁹⁴⁰ R.J. Aldrich, ‘The 100 billion dollar brain: central intelligence machinery in the UK and the US’, *International Affairs* 91/2 (2015) p.396

⁹⁴¹ M.S. Goodman, ‘Creating the Machinery for Joint Intelligence: The Formative Years of the Joint Intelligence Committee, 1936-1956’, *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 30/1 (January 2017) p.68

⁹⁴² Andrew, *The Secret World*, p.617, p.618

⁹⁴³ M.S. Goodman, ‘The Dog That Didn’t Bark: The Joint Intelligence Committee and Warning of Aggression’, *Cold War History* 7/4 (2007) p.530

represents a more modern version of how the IB, the ID, the DMML, and the Directorate of Military Operations acted as bridges between the military and civilian spheres.

The Influence of Political and Administrative Culture

The impact of political and administrative culture upon the evolution of British foreign intelligence was both predominant and lasting. Its influence was evident from the report of the Northbrook Committee in 1871 up to the Directorate of Military Operations' considerable participation on the CID in the 1910s. The T&S Department, the IB, the ID, the DMML, and the Directorate all absorbed the concepts behind state governance in Britain. This included inter-departmentalism, a 'committee-style approach', and the importance of consensus. What is fascinating about the evolutionary process of British foreign intelligence in this period is how quickly these principles were adopted and then formalised. For instance, by the 1880s inter-departmentalism was a defining principle of the IB's character. The process of embracing these tenets was hastened by the various intelligence chiefs of this period, especially DMIs Brackenbury and Ardagh, DGMI Nicholson, and DMO Wilson.

A major reason for the adoption of these governance principles was the utility that they provided for Britain's foreign intelligence agencies. Inter-departmentalism facilitated the burgeoning links and cooperation between these intelligence organisations and various important civilian and military departments. Involvement within the 'committee system' gave the former establishments an expanded profile within state governance. The mutually supporting facets of inter-departmentalism and a 'committee-style approach' enabled Britain's intelligence structures to cooperate with other departments. They sat at the heart of information exchanges across the state's apparatus, while also achieving a level of consensus through the creation of unified reports. The application of these governance precepts enabled for an expansion in the ability of the foreign intelligence institutions to collect intelligence, while also enabling

said organisations to effectively disseminate information to policymakers. This increased the influence of foreign intelligence within policymaking practices. Another important factor in this process was how the intelligence agencies became critical parts of the system of 'integrated control'. This again afforded these organisations an expanded role within state governance.

One of the major impacts of political and administrative culture was how it promoted connections between intelligence officers and the civilian sphere. Compared to the apathetic and often hostile atmosphere of senior soldiers, state and government officials provided a receptive audience for intelligence. From the mid-1880s until 1906 Britain's foreign intelligence structures were situated close to important Whitehall departments such as the Foreign, India, and Colonial Offices. The physical locations of the intelligence agencies represented the close working relationships that they possessed with these state offices. The Foreign Office proved especially crucial to the development of foreign intelligence, providing important financial, material, and moral support. This connection also drove the development of the analytical functions of Britain's intelligence agencies. Intelligence officers also quickly began to develop close links with important government officials and civil servants. The intimate relations between Colonel Robert Home and Prime Minister Disraeli, DMI Ardagh and Sir Thomas Sanderson, and DMO Wilson and Home Secretary Churchill were all critical in driving the development of foreign intelligence.

These examples also reveal how quickly and intricately Britain's intelligence establishments became assimilated into the civilian sphere. The most successful of intelligence chiefs in this period were those who could work effectively alongside state and government officials. DMIs Brackenbury and Ardagh and DMO Wilson all were able to accomplish this, and it ensured that their respective structures were further integrated into the civilian sphere. The acceptance of policymaking elites was crucial to the selection of intelligence heads throughout this period. Rapidly the key role of Britain's foreign intelligence institutions became to provide information for policymakers, solidified by DMI Brackenbury's example, rather than just for the Army's leadership. These

intelligence agencies quickly became reservoirs of knowledge from which policymakers could draw. The efforts of state officials often proved to be important in driving the development of foreign intelligence. For instance, the work of the Esher Committee provided the impetus for the formation of the Directorate of Military Operations as a key component of the new General Staff. By 1911 foreign intelligence was crucial to the business of state governance and highly prized by policymakers and civil servants. This was clear during the Agadir crisis.

This growth in ties with the civilian sphere was directly driven by the influence of political and administrative culture. Britain's foreign intelligence organisations' inter-departmental functions, 'committee-style approach', ability to achieve consensus, and role within the system of 'integrated control' provided a level of conformity with state government practices, while also ensuring that these agencies were of immense use to policymakers. By 1914 foreign intelligence was fully incorporated into the civilian sphere, acting as a bridge between it and the military sphere. This all highlights the extreme importance of political and administrative culture to the development of British foreign intelligence in this period. They also guided the other parts of the evolutionary process.

The Influence of the Military Establishment

Through the late nineteenth century, the Army's leaders displayed little concern for the work of the T&S Department, the IB, and the ID. Any impetus to reform usually came from intelligence heads, state officials, or government ministers rather than from senior soldiers. The existence of a conservative military culture also served to hinder the further development of foreign intelligence. The focus on field service, to the detriment of staff work, plagued the British Army through much of this period. It made it challenging to encourage recruitment for the intelligence staff until the late 1900s. There was a perceived conflict between the qualities needed for an intelligence officer and the values that were attached to being a Victorian officer. The regimental system also served to cause problems for

intelligence officers who were not freed from their laborious duties outside of their intelligence work. Intelligence officers were forced to defend the necessity of their role to a military leadership who evinced either apathy or animosity towards intelligence work. The connection of many intelligence chiefs and officers with military reformers also served to provoke the ire of the traditionalists, who controlled the Army's senior positions in the late nineteenth century.

Although it was soldiers who mostly staffed the foreign intelligence bodies, they formed a distinct group compared to most of the Army. Royal Artillery and Royal Engineer officers comprised most of the intelligence staff. These men gave these intelligence institutions a different ethos, defined by intellectualism and an emphasis on scientific and professional study. These values were anathema to the traditionalists engendering further hostility. These principles were reinforced by selective hiring practices that were exercised by several intelligence heads in these years, starting with DMI Brackenbury. It meant, however, that the IB and the ID remained isolated within the Army. The IB and the ID, along with the DMML, were often treated as poor relations to the other important military departments. Another factor that caused the persistent apathy of senior soldiers was how both agencies began to propagate civilian governance principles into the military sphere, illustrated by their inter-departmental cooperation with the NID. On some occasions other military departments even tried to hinder the inter-departmental functions of the foreign intelligence organisations.

The Second Boer War and its prelude showed the danger of the Army leadership's ennui. Commander-in-Chief Wolseley's poor performance hampered the ID's inter-departmental functions, obstructing the flow of information to civilian policymakers. Yet, 1901 to 1904 showed signs of an improvement in the relationship of foreign intelligence to the Army's hierarchy, but animosity still existed between the DMML and other senior soldiers. The 1900s and 1910s saw the disintegration of the close inter-service cooperation between military intelligence and the Royal Navy. This signaled the tighter ties between intelligence officers and the Army. From 1904 to 1914 the Directorate of Military Operations enjoyed a positive relationship with the Army's leaders. The hostility and apathy of the

past was absent. Its foreign intelligence work and strategic planning became valued services, while officers started to actively seek employment there.

The improvement in the relationship was aided by the Directorate's position as one of the key pillars of the General Staff. This served to afford the Directorate greater authority than its predecessors, ensuring that it gained more influence over military policy. It also denotes the lessening influence of Britain's conservative military culture. The Directorate retained the professional and intellectual ethos of its predecessors, but it was fortunate that these values had become prized assets for senior soldiers. One significant transformation, inaugurated by this change, was how the Directorate moved from being a purely intelligence agency to being an institution with strategic planning and military administrative responsibilities. This was a direct result of the utility of the Directorate's predecessors to civilian policymakers, who then pushed for the elevation of intelligence within the Army's hierarchy.

The impact of political and administrative culture upon the T&S Department, the IB, the ID, and the DMML, which all propagated civilian governance principles into the military sphere, engendered animosity among many senior soldiers. Yet, as its inter-departmental and other functions became valued, the Directorate enjoyed a positive relationship with the Army. It reveals how the influence of political and administrative culture continued to shape the reaction of the Army's leaders to Britain's foreign intelligence organisations. Importantly, the apathy and hostility of the Army's leadership through the late nineteenth century proved beneficial for British foreign intelligence. Faced with disinterest from senior soldiers, intelligence officers turned to the civilian sphere. Here they found a receptive audience who helped to raise the prominence and importance of intelligence. This allowed intelligence officers to become important players within policy formation.

Involvement in Policymaking

The growing ties with the civilian sphere, expedited by political and administrative culture, helped to lead the IB, the ID, the DMML, and the Directorate of Military Operations into the realms of foreign and imperial policymaking. These agencies served as reservoirs of expert knowledge affording them a role within policy formation. Both policy realms offered opportunities for these intelligence organisations to influence state governance, while broadening their scope from narrow military concerns. The inter-departmental functions of these structures enabled them to effectively collect and disseminate information, which proved useful for policy formation and facilitated their cooperation with state departments. This again highlights the importance of political and administrative culture. The late 1880s onwards witnessed foreign intelligence pursuing an active role within policy formation. By the 1890s the ID gained significant participation within foreign and imperial policymaking, while, starting in the early 1900s, foreign policy work became as integral to the work of intelligence institutions as strategic planning. By the 1910s the Directorate possessed pronounced influence over the direction of foreign policy. Its involvement in alliance politics and during high-level foreign policy debates demonstrate how important a player the Directorate was within this realm by 1914. Through its imperial connections, Britain's foreign intelligence institutions helped to reinforce the central supremacy of the metropole over its colonial possessions. These intelligence establishments also served to focus the attention of military leaders and policymakers upon continental affairs to the detriment of imperial concerns.

Individual, international, imperial, and institutional factors were all important to the expanded involvement and growing influence of Britain's foreign intelligence structures within foreign and imperial policymaking. Yet, this final stage of the evolutionary process was also driven by the overriding influence of political and administrative culture. The inter-departmental character of Britain's foreign intelligence agencies, their involvement within the 'committee system' and system of 'integrated control', and their focus upon cooperation and consensus all facilitated their considerable participation within foreign and imperial policy formation.

Conclusion: Political and Administrative Culture and Intelligence Culture

The evolution of British foreign intelligence from 1870 to 1914 was driven by a process of three stages: the influence of political and administrative culture; the apathy of the military establishment; and involvement within policymaking. The latter stages were expedited by the effect of the former. Inter-departmentalism, involvement within the ‘committee system’, cooperation, and achieving consensus were, to varying degrees, the defining principles of the T&S Department, the IB, the ID, the DMMI, and the Directorate of Military Operations. These principles served to impel the indifference of the Army’s leaders, while facilitating the intelligence institutions’ involvement with the civilian sphere and policymaking.

Britain’s intelligence organisations rapidly adopted British political and Whitehall’s administrative culture through this period. Although they all were mostly staffed by soldiers, the character and operations of these agencies was rapidly informed by state governance principles. The result was that these intelligence establishments resembled the political and administrative culture within which they operated. By 1914, building upon the work of its predecessors, the Directorate had been assimilated into the civilian sphere. It acted like a bridge situated in both the civilian and military spheres, acting as a conduit for information. Although their evolutionary journeys from 1870 to 1914 shared certain similarities, including a distinct character and important imperial influences, the impact of British political and administrative culture meant that Britain’s foreign intelligence establishments evolved to take a markedly different form than their French counterparts. The latter’s intelligence community remained fragmented through this period and beyond, while Britain’s intelligence community developed around ideas of cooperation and consensus, not that these goals were always achieved. This thesis reveals how important an influence a nation’s political and administrative culture can play upon the evolution of its intelligence agencies. Political and administrative culture continued to shape the evolution of Britain’s intelligence machinery post-1914. The period from 1870 to 1914 laid the foundations for the shape and character of Britain’s modern

intelligence community, establishing principles and an intelligence culture that persist to this day. The critical impact of political and administrative culture began in this period and has informed the evolution of Britain's intelligence community ever since.

This critical element, along with the importance of the period from 1870 to 1914, has been largely ignored within the current historiography. Therefore, this thesis has served to fill this crucial gap. It also reshapes our understanding of the development of British foreign intelligence by underscoring the predominance of civilian influence. This greatly explains the current character and shape of Britain's intelligence community, exploring the importance of institutional and cultural factors to the community's evolution. An examination of the development of Britain's intelligence machinery in this period also reveals the larger trends that were occurring across the British state and Empire. The role of foreign intelligence in foreign and imperial policymaking adds to our understanding of international relations and imperial history. Therefore, this thesis has added relevance to the disciplines of international, imperial, and political history. The influence of political and administrative culture is a theme which is growing within the area of intelligence studies. This thesis has done its part to shed greater light upon this crucial facet.

Further Research

There are several further avenues of research leading out from this project. The approach taken in this thesis would lend itself well to comparative studies. References were made to the French case throughout this thesis, but it would be fascinating to undertake a full comparative study of the evolutions of different nations' intelligence machinery, with special reference to the effect of political and administrative culture. A study such as this would also help to illuminate the dynamics that underpin governance in different nations and under various regimes. It would help our understanding of policy formation, civil-military relations, and bureaucratisation across national divides while also aiding our

understanding of international relations. A comparative study could focus on the period from 1870 to 1914, but it would be just as profitable to examine other periods. It would depend on the current state of research for each period and nation, along with the availability of sources, but it remains a profitable avenue of research with relevance to several disciplines.

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