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INTERVENTION AND NON-INTERVENTION

The Whig dilemma over foreign policy, 1830-1834.

by

W.M. CORIN

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at the University of Durham

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ABSTRACT

This study in the formation of foreign policy explores the difficulties encountered by Earl Grey's Whig administration (1830-1834) in reconciling the desire to promote 'the cause of liberty all over the world' with an equally strong attachment to the principles of retrenchment and non-intervention in foreign affairs.

It is demonstrated at the outset, by particular reference to the opinions of Grey and Lord Holland, the elders of the party, that the equivocations over foreign policy of the Whigs in office were foreshadowed by inconsistencies in their attitude towards intervention and non-intervention whilst in opposition. After a discussion of the developing diplomatic situation in 1830 and the formation of Grey's heterogeneous administration, the Cabinet debates over the wisdom or necessity of intervention abroad are considered in the context of four theatres of diplomatic conflict - the Netherlands, Poland, the Near East and Portugal. Study of these areas shows that for all their traditional sympathies, many ministers were loath to sanction threats to intervene by force in the cause of national self-determination, still less in the pursuit of British strategic interests. When the contradictions implicit in the Whig approach precipitated a major Cabinet crisis, such as occurred over intervention in Portugal, natural caution and constitutional inertia prevailed. In conclusion, the Whig reluctance to embrace a view of foreign policy which was both dynamic and ideological is re-emphasised. The strength of the hostility towards such an approach is demonstrated by reference to the efforts made to exclude Lord Palmerston from the Foreign Office in subsequent Whig administrations.

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PREFACE

I have attempted in this study to reconstruct, mainly from primary sources, the Cabinet debate underlying specific issues in foreign policy during the period of Grey's Premiership. To this end, I have concentrated on the private papers of members of Cabinet rather than the official records of the Foreign Office. The latter have been authoritatively interpreted by Sir Charles Webster in *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston* and the extent of my reliance on this source will be obvious. The most serious difficulty involved in tracing ministerial attitudes is that presented by the lack of a consistent source of information as to the opinions expressed and the decisions taken at Cabinet meetings. William IV's papers have been destroyed and although some Cabinet minutes and a body of Royal Correspondence survive among Palmerston's papers, we are dependent for the most part on private material for information. Fortunately, the extent and accessibility of these sources affords considerable compensation. Of the major figures in the administration, the papers of Lansdowne and Durham alone are at present unavailable for consultation. Amongst the available sources which I was able to consult in the limited time at my disposal, the papers of Grey and Palmerston and in particular the Journal of Lord Holland were indispensable.

It is a pleasure to be able to acknowledge the help I have received from archivists and librarians in the course of my research. I am particularly grateful to Dr. J. Fewster, Mrs. J. Drury and Miss M. McCollum of the Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic at the University of Durham, who guided and encouraged my extensive researches amongst the Grey Papers. Miss Felicity Ranger and the staff of the National Register of Archives showed great tolerance and kindness during my study of the Broadlands Papers. I am indebted to the Trustees of the Broadlands Archives for allowing me to use this invaluable source. The late Rt. Hon. the Earl Spencer was kind enough to allow me, at very short notice, to consult the Spencer Papers at Althorp and to give me the benefit of his extensive knowledge of the life and times of his ancestor the Third Earl. I would also like to thank the staffs of the British Museum, of the university libraries of Durham and Cambridge and the D.M.S. Watson Library at University College, London. The kindness shown to me at so many institutions serves to throw into sharp relief the rudeness and inefficiency of some members of the staff of the Public Record Office.

My work has been supervised by Dr. David Sweet, who has been unfailingly patient and constructive in guiding the studies of an inexperienced and frequently perplexed research student. I am also indebted to Mr. Graham Brook for allowing me to see drafts of relevant chapters of his Cambridge Ph.D thesis on Britain and the Concert of Europe, and to Mr. Michael Brock, Dr. C.J. Bartlett and Mr. R. Mackworth-Young, who answered my queries about the location of rare secondary material. I am most grateful to my mother and to Mrs. Marjorie Millas for their expert typing of the first and final drafts respectively. I owe most to my fiancée Miss Anne Rabjohns, without whose constant support this thesis would never have been finished.

The value of political liberty and the cost at which it is to be obtained constitute the nicest balance and one which only those immediately interested in the calculation are competent to decide.

CANNING

CHAPTER ONE

THE WHIG OPPOSITION AND NON-INTERVENTION, 1815-1830

When Talleyrand was asked to explain the real meaning of the term 'non-intervention', he replied:

C'est un mot métaphysique et politique, qui signifie à peu près la même chose qu'intervention.¹

Certainly non-intervention was a doctrine more often propounded than explained.* Politicians on both sides referred to it as a great, even a sacred principle, whilst recognising that no nation, least of all Britain, with her wide-ranging strategic and commercial interests, could be indifferent to events in other countries. Confusion and disagreement arose when any attempt was made to prescribe situations in which a departure from the letter, though not the principle, of non-intervention could be justified. In the years following the Vienna settlement, such calculations were complicated by Britain's position as one of its principal architects and guarantors, which tended to implicate her in the actions taken by her continental allies to defend the European *status quo*.

The response of Castlereagh and Canning to the problem of defining British foreign policy in the post-Napoleonic situation may conveniently be deduced from the State Paper of 5 May 1820, drafted by Castlereagh and subsequently published by Canning, which demonstrated their fundamental

* Throughout this study I have used the terms 'intervention' and non-intervention' rather than 'interference' and 'non-interference', because of the pejorative overtones which 'interference' has acquired in modern usage. Though Palmerston deplored the introduction of Gallicanisms into the language, he never suggested that there was any difference in meaning between 'interference' and 'intervention'.

identity of view. Their difference in methods has been confused with a difference in aims. Castlereagh favoured a collective allied approach to European problems, but emphasised that the Quadruple Alliance justified its post-war existence through the need to protect the dynastic and territorial settlement in France.² It was France that he had principally in mind in January 1816, when he wrote in a despatch circulated to all British ambassadors abroad that, in the event of a breach of the peace, it was Britain's duty

to combine the powers of Europe against that state whose perverted policy or criminal ambition shall first menace the repose in which all have a common interest.³

He did not see it as the business of the Four Powers to correct the 'internal eccentricities' of France. The most effective way for the Alliance to combat the possible danger of acts of external aggression arising from domestic upheaval was 'the silent force of its own inactivity'.⁴ Castlereagh always allowed that, while intervention as an abstract principle was unjustified, a country could legitimately intervene in another country's affairs if its own interests and security were threatened.⁵ However, in general terms, Britain's watchword should be 'non-intervention pushed to an extreme'.⁶

Any of the above statements could have been made by Canning, but the different methods he was to employ appeared to mark a change in British policy. Canning never shared Castlereagh's proprietorial interest in the Quadruple Alliance and he deplored the use of the Congress System as a vehicle for what he was to characterise as the 'Areopagitic Spirit'. In 1818 he was at odds with the rest of the Cabinet on the eve of the

Congress of Aix-la-Chappelle in refusing to accept that the Quadruple Alliance of 20 November 1815 sanctioned a permanent Concert of Europe as opposed to the short-term supervision of France. He maintained that disengagement would protect Britain from embarrassment on the Continent and allow her to pursue a non-interventionist policy the more easily.⁷ The dissolution of the European Concert, which was already apparent at the beginning of Canning's tenure of the Foreign Office, meant that new techniques would be required for the conduct of British diplomacy. Whereas Castlereagh had relied heavily on his personal intimacy with Alexander I and Metternich in advancing the causes of peace and non-intervention, Canning adopted a more extrovert diplomatic style in pursuit of the same goals, making the most of his flair for oratory and publicity. He was particularly adept at forcing his opponents into a corner and making them declare their hands. An early example of this was the episode of the Polignac Memorandum in which the French were lured into making categorical statements about their intentions with regard to Spain.⁸ At home he used this technique with unflinching skill to highlight the inadequacies and inconsistencies of the Whig alternatives to the government's foreign policy after 1815. Though he encountered strong opposition to his policies both from his colleagues and the King, he was not effectively challenged in Parliament during his tenure of office.

The Whigs had a foretaste of what they could expect from him in a speech he delivered during the Commons debate on the disturbances in Naples in March 1821. In response to calls from the opposition benches for the government to embrace the cause of the Neapolitan rebels, Canning in his turn insisted that the Whigs declare their hand. If it was right to

break alliances and make war against the 'oppressors' with a view to furthering the progress of liberty, that policy should be avowed clearly:

Let there be no mistake about it; let the country be told: "although you are already heavily burdened, you must prepare for new exertions and new sacrifices. True, England is saved, but that is not enough. Europe must be regenerated, and at your expense." If this was to be done at all, it must be done openly and avowedly . . . away with the distinction between war and armed negotiation!⁹

He went on to deride such romantic notions and to urge neutrality between 'the two contending principles' so that Britain could preserve her resources

until the period should arise, if ever, when we might exercise our only legitimate right to interfere, from being called to quell the raging floods that threatened to distract the balance of Europe.¹⁰

Although this speech was delivered before Canning rejoined the Liverpool administration, it already contained all the essential arguments with which as Foreign Secretary he defended his policies against criticism, and in the face of which opposition usually wilted. It touched upon most of the weak points of the Whig position. The state of disarray in which the Whigs found themselves after 1815 was more marked in foreign policy than in any other area. In home affairs, a measure of common commitment to the cause of Roman Catholic relief and a degree of common sympathy for the cause of parliamentary reform provided some political cohesion for a party otherwise held together by social connection, habit and the memory of Charles James Fox. In foreign affairs the Whigs were seriously compromised by their record of equivocation over the British campaign in Spain and subsequently the Allied campaigns in Europe.

Throughout the 1820's when the question of intervention was discussed, government speakers could refer to Whig attitudes towards the Peninsular War as a stick with which to beat their opponents. When Canning asserted that 'nations cannot afford to be chivalrous where their own interests are not directly involved,'¹¹ his acknowledged authority was none other than Lord Grey in a speech on Spain in 1810.¹² Among leading Whigs, only Lord Holland could boast undeviating support of the Spanish cause, which he advertised by conducting parties of Whigs round the battlefields himself.¹³ In general, the Whigs tended to misjudge Britain's strategic and political interests in the struggle with France, partly because they could not divest themselves of their Foxite traditions and partly because they could not reconcile their belief in self-determination with the requirements of British self-interest. The cautious and conciliatory attitude towards France that was shown by Grey and Holland after 1813, with strong emphasis on the principles of peace and self-determination, contrasted strongly with the view of the Grenvillite Whigs. Since the collapse of the 'Talents' ministry, the followers of Fox and Grenville had maintained a measure of agreement in home affairs, although Grenville, admittedly, seemed to value dynastic connection more highly than a common commitment to reform and Catholic relief. However, in foreign affairs there could be no compromise. When he joined with Fox in 1806 to fill the vacuum left by Pitt's death, Grenville made it clear that his was a war party and so it remained. According to Grey, the only cause of real disagreement between himself and Grenville was over the legitimacy of Britain's entry into the war against France in 1792,¹⁴ but this was a crucial difference in discussions about how the vanquished French should be treated. Only a timely prorogation in 1813

prevented the split from becoming fully apparent; in any case it clearly emerged in the debates on the spring campaign in 1815.¹⁵ Grenville supported the policy of Castlereagh and Wellesley, regarding the overthrow of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons as essential to European peace. The more radical of the Whigs, most notably Samuel Whitbread, had long advocated peace on the basis of a French return to her original boundaries, and by 1814 Grey and Holland had taken up this cause. For them the expulsion of Napoleon and his replacement with Louis XVIII was not only unnecessary: it showed a blatant disregard for the sentiments of the French people. Sir Robert Adair, an old friend of Grey's and a former ambassador to Vienna, was a useful source of information in Paris and assured Grey that the people were strongly Bonapartist in spite of the burdens of a renewal of war which Napoleon's return might precipitate.¹⁶

Even when Napoleon did re-appear and looked set to resume his accustomed military activity, Grey continually urged restraint. Not least amongst his motives was the fear of Allied defeat. As he had shown while Foreign Secretary in the 'Talents' ministry and was to show as Prime Minister, his caution and pessimism over military matters amounted to an obsession. In April 1815 he urged that the Allies should pause before 'hurrying in' against France: quite apart from the doubtful validity of a war undertaken purely to remove the Emperor, he feared that defeat was a very real possibility.¹⁷ Luckily for Grey, Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo before he could deliver another pacific speech¹⁸ and he was thus saved from a recurrence of the embarrassment he had suffered through his lukewarm response to Wellington's victory at Talavera five years earlier.¹⁹

Had the Whigs shown a more consistent attitude towards the prosecution

of the war and the peace settlement we would be able to accept Dr. Mitchell's characterisation of their policy as 'Palmerstonian before Palmerston' in that they 'urged the twin principles of national independence and national self-determination.'²⁰ Such a description dignifies the Whigs - as it does Palmerston - with a coherence they never displayed. Just as it had been impossible to combine Foxite tenets with a realistic strategic attitude during the war, so, equally, it was ingenuous to criticise the Vienna settlement purely in terms of morality and abstract principles. The desultory debates in both Houses on the 1815 Treaties testify to the inability and disinclination of the Whigs to mount an attack in ideological terms. The Foxite and Grenville Whigs could not agree on the issue of legitimacy and self-determination, but in any case the universally recognised need for retrenchment and guarantees against renewed aggression blunted the radical attack.²¹ The union of Belgium with Holland, an object of much retrospective criticism in 1830, was never directly attacked. Mackintosh, the best informed of Whig speakers on Foreign policy in the Commons, delivered a series of tirades against the forced union of Genoa with Piedmont without pointing the parallel of the Netherlands.²²

His indignation was genuine enough:

To unite a people by force to a nation against whom they entertain a strong antipathy is the most probable means to render the community unhappy and make the people discontented and the sovereign tyrannical . . .²³

but it was never channelled into a coherent critique. The reason was clear: in the Netherlands British strategic interests were directly involved, which made national self-determination an impracticable policy. Grey realised the weakness of the Whig position all too clearly and characteristically declined to make the four-day journey from Howick to London for the Vienna debate.

He knew that his main objection to the settlement was weak in parliamentary terms, for he accepted the need for strategic guarantees, but deplored the form they took. He regarded the measures taken against France as expensive and ineffective, the standing army and the restoration of the Bourbons being positive incitements to internal disorder. In wider terms, by partitioning Europe without reference to natural geographical divisions, the Allies, he believed, had acted 'on a false and dangerous principle . . . inconsistent with the ancient principle of the Balance of Power'.²⁴ Even after the revolutions of 1830, his criticism of the settlement was still couched in the same terms:

instead of acting on the principle of the Balance of Europe which would protect the weak against the strong, we have departed from that principle and formed alliances upon principles of confiscation and division . . . these transfers have never allowed to Europe an hour's security . . . no man can regret more than I do the separation of Flanders from Holland but I imagine they cannot be united except by means the most vicious and unjust.²⁵

He went on to deny that this breach of the Treaty of Vienna was a legitimate object for intervention, though for reasons of military prudence rather than sympathy with the Belgian cause.²⁶

In such cases, the advantages of justifying a prudent non-intervention by reference to Foxite principles of international morality were clear, but in general Grey recognised that such universal and binding principles could not in practice be applied. In a most instructive correspondence with Holland in the winter of 1816-17, he attempted to lay down guide lines for Whig policy for the next session. Holland urged a categorical commitment to non-intervention in France and everywhere else,²⁷ but Grey recognised

that France's strategic importance made such a policy impossible. No abstract principle could be laid down, and quite apart from the possible damage which such a declaration might do to British diplomacy, it would antagonise the Grenvillites irreconcilably.²⁸ Criticism of government foreign policy would have to be centred on the expense of the standing army in France to avoid a split.²⁹ Holland's reaction was typically forthright:

Better to part company than sail in a convoy that has no determinate object. Retrenchment and recovery are mighty good things, but they really are too indefinite, not to say contemptible objects to bind together a large body of men without any stronger tie. Hopes of power and an intention of exerting that power for some clear and definite object of public policy are the principles on which a party must be kept together.³⁰

However, there was no alternative to Castlereagh's policy: even in 1820, by which time the activities of the Holy Alliance invited Whig condemnation, and the final split with the Grenvillites had unmuzzled the followers of Fox, Grey's advice to Holland (delivered as usual from the depths of Northumberland) was 'to observe the old opposition maxim of doing nothing.'³¹

The dilemma that the Whigs faced was that Foxite traditions in foreign policy could not be adapted coherently to the post-war situation. There was, in the words of Professor Davis, 'the deeply rooted belief of a Foxite Whig that strong language which is not supported, and cannot be supported, by armed action is enough to intimidate a wary and sagacious opponent.'³² As joint guardians of the memory and traditions of Fox, Grey and Holland were the chief offenders in the adoption of this ingenuous approach to foreign affairs. Thus, opposition speeches in Parliament attacking the Holy Alliance

tended to degenerate into mere name-calling, prompting Canning on one occasion to wonder whether such 'flowers of Billingsgate' served any useful purpose. Indeed it was unlikely that 'those on whom they have been lavished have not been utterly unsusceptible of feelings of irritation and resentment.'³³ This was of course the intention, as most Whig speakers made it clear that they did not advocate actual intervention and had to settle for vigorous protests. Non-intervention was still the accepted principle, justified by extensive quotations from Vattel or Bynkershoek, then the acknowledged authorities on international Law, or by a ritual reference to a speech by Fox. Whig speakers did occasionally venture beyond the pale to urge the government to take direct action to frustrate the designs of the Holy Alliance and to offer assistance to European liberal movements. Unfortunately, such a stance was even more fraught with contradictions than the Foxite approach, as it was not consonant with those most fundamental Whig principles of peace and retrenchment. Tierney, the nominal leader of the Whigs in the House of Commons from 1817 to 1821, illustrated this predicament perfectly in his reply to the Speech from the Throne at the beginning of the 1821 session. He congratulated the government on its 'expressions of peace in view of the financial embarrassments of the country', but went on to affirm that

ministers would not be doing their duty if they stood by in a neutral attitude and did not prevent the great powers from exercising acts of aggression.³⁴

Whenever the opposition attempted to blur the line between neutrality and intervention, government speakers unfailingly observed that the only alternative to neutrality was a determined and expensive intervention. Canning's riposte

has already been quoted; in 1823, Palmerston, in an unaccustomed role as a speaker in a foreign affairs debate, emphasised the hollowness of the Foxite 'moralist' approach. He deplored the use of threats without the backing of armed force, and in any case

of what use is it to dwell upon abstract principles with those who are accused of measuring right by power and of ruling their conduct by expediency and not by justice? One must apply one's arguments to principles which they recognise.³⁵

It was in the context of these ideological inconsistencies that the Whigs had to mount their attack upon the Holy Alliance and the government's policy in the debates on Naples, Spain and Portugal in the period of unrest after 1820. To borrow Dr. Holbraad's terminology, the Whigs implicitly accepted territorial conservatism while opposing the dynastic conservatism that was its necessary counterpart.³⁶ In his 'Letter to Lord Holland on foreign politics' which gained considerable currency during the 1820's, Lord John Russell attacked the 'compact of feudal lords' which had determined the shape of Europe. The worst aspect of the settlement in his view was the possibility of Britain being bound to go to war to support the Bourbons and indeed to intervene in the internal concerns of every state in Europe. He deplored the passing of the balance of power system and the deprivation of the rights and security of the weaker nations.³⁷ Even so, it was only after the revolutions of 1830 that the Whigs really attacked the territorial settlement. The Government's attitude of non-intervention, support for the territorial *status quo* and neutrality as between the contending principles was more consistent.

Castlereagh's association with the autocratic powers abroad and with

repressive legislation at home led to a series of attacks on his personality and policy which did his critics little credit. The pioneering work of Professors Temperley and Webster has served to emphasise the underlying continuity of policy between Castlereagh and Canning. In March 1821, Castlereagh was bitterly attacked in both Houses for his inactivity in the face of Austrian repression in Naples. Quite apart from the French naval threat that could result from the disruption of the Neapolitan *status quo*, Castlereagh could justify non-intervention on the grounds that Naples was the domestic concern of Austria. Canning struck boldly in his defence by advocating strict neutrality on the dynastic issue and questioned the efficacy of foreign example, let alone foreign arms, in fostering constitutional governments. Perhaps the Whigs really wanted war? - but here he was drowned by shouts of 'no, no' from the benches opposite.³⁸ The Whigs, then, were for strong language but nothing more. Castlereagh's weakness was not that his language was insufficiently strong, but that he was disinclined to raise his tone in the House of Commons. Lord Salisbury was to write of him:

If only he had constructed a few brilliant periods about nationality of freedom, or given a little wordy sympathy to Greece or Spain . . . the world would have heard much less of the horrors of his policy.³⁹

However, Castlereagh was not given to public expression of his feelings. His condemnation of the Troppau Protocol was unequivocal⁴⁰ and his instructions for the Congress of Verona (which Canning passed on to Wellington unaltered) show that he was coming to realise that it would be necessary to recognise the Spanish-American colonies and to allow for the

possible emergence of an autonomous Greek government.⁴¹ By their very nature, such communications made no parliamentary impact; it was left to Canning to reap their political rewards.

Canning was immediately faced with the French invasion of Spain, the logical outcome of the Verona Congress. The invasion was undoubtedly a resounding diplomatic defeat for Canning and seemed to be an opportunity for the Whigs to tax the government with a failure to take a stern moral tone towards the Holy Alliance. Grey wrote to Holland in his most elevated Foxite vein. A declaration should be made to the Holy Alliance:

"Your principle is unjust and subversive to the independence of nations. Your attempt, if it succeeds, must bring Spain under the influence and power of France. We not only cannot approve but must resist measures founded on such principles and leading to such consequences. If you go to war therefore, you must expect to find England not a member of the Confederacy but the ally of Spain."⁴²

This attacking impetus was not translated into parliamentary reality. Grey himself declined to come to London to organise the attack at the beginning of the session and it was clear that little support would be found for war.⁴³ Some Whigs were prepared to press for a bigger increase in the navy than the government proposed - in itself an unexpected turn of policy⁴⁴ - but, like the attempt to swell the Spanish rebel force by getting the Foreign Enlistment Bill repealed, the initiative came to nothing. Individual speakers did make bold attempts to offer an alternative to government policy; indeed Grey, for the only time in this whole period, advocated force in the shape of naval action to sweep French commerce off the seas and to deprive France of her remaining island colonies.⁴⁵ Significantly, on this one occasion when

he deviated from a non-interventionist stance, Grey's motives were strategic rather than ideological, based, as Canning's secretary and biographer was to point out, on an overestimate of the power of France and the vulnerability of Britain's interests and institutions.⁴⁶ Only Hobhouse, the radical member for Westminster, was prepared to fix his colours to the mast:

Englishmen would be happy to afford the utmost support to a government bent on the preservation of the institutions of freedom . . . in the event of any war against the tyrant kings of Europe.⁴⁷

There was no support for such a crusade in either House. Lambton, Grey's son-in-law, and Sir Robert Wilson, the foremost Whig authority on military affairs, were full of fighting talk, but only to each other or to their respective constituents.⁴⁸ Russell commented on the disarray of the Whigs:

We do nothing but abuse one another - the violent laugh at the moderate and the moderate look grave at the violent.⁴⁹

Canning took full advantage of the Whig confusion and his speeches, not for the first time, swept the ground from under his opponents' feet. Using the sort of language that alarmed European diplomats and frequently embarrassed his colleagues, he attacked Louis XVIII's Speech from the Throne and the subsequent invasion of Spain. He 'earnestly hoped' that Spain 'would come triumphantly out of the struggle.' However, he would not deviate from neutrality purely to support the democratic principle: Britain's role was to assume 'the attitudes and the attributes of justice, holding high the balance and grasping but not unsheathing the sword.'⁵⁰

By ruling out intervention and appealing to the principle of neutrality, he invited a resolute alternative from the Opposition which only Hobhouse was prepared to provide. Canning made it clear that there were only three situations in which he would consider intervention: if the French occupation of Spain was permanent; if any attempt was made to help Spain recover her colonies, or if France invaded Portugal.⁵¹ It was never clear whether the Whigs objected to Canning's refusal to intervene, or his acquiescence in French intervention, and problems of definition bogged down most of the speakers. Lord Folkestone's speech on the repeal of the Foreign Enlistment Bill (a motion which had been enlarged into a criticism of British neutrality over Spain) was described by Canning as displaying 'all the various contortions of the Sybil without her inspiration.' Such a description was applicable to not a few opposition speeches at this time. The Tory *Annual Register* described Whig attitudes still more pointedly:

It was not easy to gather what was the precise nature of the charge against the ministry. Their voice was not for war, and yet it was not for peace. War was to be avoided, but we had not gone sufficiently near to it; peace was to be maintained by us, but we had not sufficiently endangered it.⁵²

Canning's success in the Commons over the Spanish issue was one of his greatest oratorical triumphs.⁵³ Indeed his superiority was such that he feared too much encouragement might have been given to the Holy Alliance. Brougham, Canning's only rival as a Commons orator,⁵⁴ withdrew an amendment critical of government neutrality over Spain and praised the Foreign Secretary for his condemnation of the French action.⁵⁵ Gratifying as this capitulation must have been, we are told that Canning 'actually prevailed upon some of his Whig acquaintances, whom he saw quitting the

House in disgust, to remain behind and vote against him'.⁵⁶ His description of himself as 'a liberal, nay a Radical minister'⁵⁷ was too plausible for the comfort of most Whigs. By comparison, Castlereagh had been an easy target.

The debates on Spain in 1823 were the last attempts at a frontal attack on government foreign policy until the era of Wellington and Aberdeen. Between 1823 and 1827 the Whigs lost their identity as an opposition. Hobhouse tells of a meeting of the Whig Spanish Committee in June 1823, at which Grey expressed the opinion that the cause was hopeless and he discouraged others from making sacrifices for its sake. He was in despair at the political situation at home and abroad and wished 'he never had to put his foot in the House of Lords again'. Hobhouse aptly comments that Grey was 'always desponding unless he thinks he is riding the winning horse'.⁵⁸ There was no hope of his being in that position while Canning was alive. As strategic considerations brought British policy more in line with liberal sympathies, Canning began to win new friends on the opposition side. His growing determination to prevent French intervention in Portugal and the Spanish American colonies, though propounded still within the confines of neutrality between 'the contending principles', was expressed in such a way as to suggest, but never overemphasise, his own liberal sympathies. Lord Holland and Sir James Mackintosh, two of the most influential voices on foreign policy, quickly warmed to him as Brougham had; Wilson praised Canning for inaugurating a new era in British foreign policy.⁵⁹

There was some attempt to revive the Spanish issue at the beginning of the 1824 session in terms of criticism of the government's alleged failure to hold sufficiently strong language to the European powers. The debates

seemed to lack any urgency. Lord John Russell brought forward a motion on the subject but admitted that the debate could only be of historical value as the time for action had long passed. He borrowed a verse from Addison to characterise his ideal of British foreign policy:

"Tis Britain's care to watch o'er Europe's fate,
To hold in balance each contending state,
To threaten bold, presumptuous kings with war,
And answer each afflicted nations's prayer."⁶⁰

He admitted that the sense was better than the poetry, but the real shortcoming of his conception of Britain's role was that it was too close to Canning's own. In 1826 Canning characterised Britain as Aeolus, the arbitrating God of Winds described by his beloved Virgil.⁶¹ On this occasion he brushed aside Russell's criticisms with ease, making great play with the emptiness of the opposition benches, noting that this was their normal state when such motions were debated. He reaffirmed Britain's neutral stance and emphasised the impossibility of an alternative. Certainly it was not to be found in the confused anti-government motion of the corpulent Lord Nugent,⁶² whom Canning described as 'an enormous breach of neutrality.'⁶³ Unlike the Whigs, he was not prepared to make threats without naval and military backing. He believed that 'a menace not intended to be executed is an engine that Great Britain could never condescend to employ'.⁶⁴ He preferred to provide for war before threatening it⁶⁵ and never relied on unsupportable assertions. The Monroe Doctrine was an excellent example of the Foxite moral statement, and as such was welcomed by the Whigs.⁶⁶ However, they were to learn in office that, in the context of European politics, an assertive foreign policy required expensive naval and military support.

As Canning moved into the attack, first over the recognition of the Latin American colonies and then over Portugal, Grey removed himself completely from the debate on foreign policy. From May 1823 to April 1827 he did not speak on the subject, confining his attentions to Ireland on the rare occasions when he visited the Lords. For the most part he remained at Howick, sometimes wintering in Plymouth for the sake of his wife's health, all the time nursing his implacable hatred of Canning. He had inherited from Fox the notion that it was more important to maintain the purity of party principle than to compete for office. Canning's career seemed to Grey to embody the very opposite philosophy, so that he could never countenance supporting him as Foreign Secretary and was never fully to forgive those of his colleagues who supported Canning's administration of 1827. Grey's high principles, which had definite substance in other areas of his political life, were in this matter a cover for a hatred which was largely based on social snobbery. As far as the head of the recently ennobled Grey family was concerned, the fact that Canning's mother was an actress in itself constituted a disqualification from the Premiership.⁶⁷ However, Canning was becoming difficult to attack. For example, Grey complained to Holland that Canning lagged far behind Monroe in formulating an enlightened policy with respect to the autonomy of the Spanish American colonies, but he was reluctant to attack Canning for fear of encouraging the supporters of the Holy Alliance.⁶⁸ The Whigs drifted leaderless in Parliament, with Grey absent and Lansdowne unsure as to his role and authority;⁶⁹ in the Commons there was no successor to the discredited Tierney. In any case their growing accord with the government over domestic as well as foreign policy loosened habitual party ties. Tierney himself set the seal on the new

situation in 1826, when he declared that 'we are certainly to all intents and purposes a branch of His Majesty's Government.'⁷⁰

Not the least of the factors in this accord was Canning's preparedness to take more resolute action in response to the changing strategic situation in Spain and Latin America mentioned earlier. He had hoped in 1823 to leave the sword in the sheath, but when the interventionist methods and despotic ideas that had triumphed in Spain threatened to envelop the New World as well, it was time for Britain to change, in Canning's words 'from an umpire into an adversary.'⁷¹ Thus, in 1825 and after, his influence was paramount in effecting the separation of Brazil from Portugal. He encouraged the Portuguese people to accept the constitutional charter bequeathed by Dom Pedro on his abdication from the throne, thereby hoping to forestall foreign intervention. The same motive had led him to extract a self-denying ordinance from France over Portugal.⁷² When it was clear in 1826 that Portugal's peace was threatened by the actions of supporters of the usurping Dom Miguel on the Spanish border, he responded to the calls for assistance on the basis of treaty obligations. It was time to unsheathe the sword and 'fly to the aid of Portugal.' Canning's speech in the Commons on 12 December 1826 was arguably his greatest parliamentary triumph. He defused the intervention versus non-intervention debate by dressing up a decision based on strategic necessity⁷³ and moral obligation in crusading language which was bound to appeal to the Whigs. He chose his words carefully however: he was acting in defence of Portuguese independence and not as the champion of the new constitution. Furthermore, he had 'called the New World in existence' as a direct diplomatic counter to possible French ambitions. The correct interpretation of this speech⁷⁴ was

to be keenly disputed in the context of Wellington's subsequent Portuguese policy, but at the time it found approval in all parts of the House. Canning noted with satisfaction that the disposition of Parliament was now towards 'active exertion' in contrast to the 'passive neutrality' of 1823.⁷⁵

Canning's speech won acclaim from the Whigs in Parliament. Holland and Lansdowne expressed unqualified support for intervention, while in the Commons Brougham talked of 'principles worthy of our best times expounded by the Foreign Secretary with unprecedented energy, fervour and effect.'⁷⁶ There were a few dissenting voices: Hume, always a stern advocate of retrenchment, doubted the existence of a true *casus foederis* and his amendment was supported by Henry Bright and John Wood for the same reason.⁷⁷ From a distance, Grey also expressed his misgivings, though for less clear-cut reasons. He expressed to Princess Lieven, the wife of the Russian Ambassador and his chief source of political intelligence, his confusion as to the exact function of the troops to be sent to Portugal, particularly in the event of the Constitutionalists being repulsed. He harked back to the error of acquiescence in the French invasion of Spain as the root cause of Britain's equivocal position on the Iberian Peninsula.⁷⁸ Here once again he was displaying his caution together with a belief in the arbitrating force of moral declarations.

Little heed was paid to these views. While Grey was content to remain sulking in his tent at Howick, his opinions were received with understandable irritation by his colleagues in London.⁷⁹ The most influential Whigs were to join Canning in open or tacit collaboration in 1827 and whole-heartedly approved his foreign policy. Shortly after Canning became Prime Minister, Grey delivered a bitter attack on him in the Lords. Canning was deeply

wounded by it and considered taking a peerage to reply.⁸⁰ It was a clever but disingenuous speech, repeating previous criticisms of Canning with respect to the French invasion of 1823, his delayed recognition of the Latin American colonies and his tardiness in giving Portugal effective diplomatic support.⁸¹ He was unable to resist recalling the boast about calling the New World into existence and setting it alongside Canning's earlier statement that he had done nothing to promote Latin American independence. This was a quibble: by 'calling into existence', Canning had meant the act of diplomatic recognition.⁸² Grey clarified his views on Portugal in a more penetrating speech a month later, in which he doubted the wisdom of interference on the pretext stated, while showing himself aware of the strategic issues involved:

interference might be justified on the broader grounds of policy which rendered it necessary for us to take measures to prevent France from obtaining . . . power and preponderance over the Peninsula.⁸³

He also gave a timely warning, directed more at the radical elements than the government, of the dangers attending too ready an assumption about the aspirations of the people of Portugal. The French had been similarly embarrassed in Spain:

By some singular fatality it is found necessary by the French to continue an army in Spain for the support of the absolute monarchy to which [allegedly] the people are so much attached; while we are supposed to maintain an army in Portugal under the apprehension that, if it were withdrawn, the constitutional government of which the people are so fond would be immediately overthrown!⁸⁴

In this speech Grey divested himself sufficiently of his prejudices to give a glimpse of the moderation and intelligence with which he was to approach foreign affairs as Prime Minister after 1830.

For the time being, however, he was isolated from the mainstream of political activity. He described himself in a letter to his son as being 'separated from almost all my old friends . . . I stand aloof from all parties, acting upon my own principles'.⁸⁵ His correspondence with Holland and Lansdowne seems to have stopped completely until 1830 and his friendship with them never fully recovered. He was dependent on Princess Lieven* for information on foreign affairs. Grey's weakness for female flattery, together with Mme. Lieven's reputation as a *femme fatale* and political intriguer in the European courts, have focussed the attention of amateur and professional historians alike on their relationship and its effect on Grey's foreign policy when Prime Minister.⁸⁶ Phrases from his letters to her, such as 'there are objects, particularly one, for which I would risk everything - happiness, reputations, even life itself',⁸⁷ led one commentator to cast Grey as Antony to Princess Lieven's Cleopatra.⁸⁸ The balance can easily be redressed by an examination of their letters to other correspondents - Grey to his son and the Princess to her brother - which show that they both moderated their true political feelings to maintain their friendship.

At this time the Princess was a source of information for Grey on the developing situation in the Near East. The Whigs had long nurtured a sympathy for the cause of Greek independence, together with a corresponding antipathy to the Turkish *régime*. In 1822 Grey had urged a benevolent attitude towards Greece as one of the principles of British foreign policy.⁸⁹ A year later the Greek Committee was formed by Hobhouse, who had been

*Prince Lieven was Russian Ambassador in London from 1812 to 1834.

a close friend of Byron's, and an influential group of radical M.P.'s. By the beginning of 1824 it numbered Brougham, Lord John Russell, Lambton and Mackintosh among its 85 members.⁹⁰ The Committee attempted to support the Greek cause unofficially by sending money and arms rather than pressing for direct British intervention. It foundered badly in 1825 and 1826 after inept, and possibly corrupt administration of the loan that had been raised on behalf of the Greek rebels. This initiative was in essence non-parliamentary, even non-party: Grey, Holland and Lansdowne were never associated with it. Grey preferred to look at Greek Independence in its wider European dimension, as a welcome consequence of the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. Like Fox before him, he was prepared to countenance Russian expansion as the necessary cost of Turkish collapse.⁹¹ He wrote to Holland in 1826:

'It seems likely that a Turkish war will be courted by Russia . . . in that case I shall strictly adhere to the lesson learnt from your uncle . . . the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, *quocunque modo*, I shall think a great good. I am much less afraid of the extension of the Russian Empire on that side than towards Germany . . . At all events, the establishment of an independent Greece may afford us a means of providing a barrier towards the Mediterranean.'⁹²

Apart from wishing Britain to have a voice in any settlement of Eastern Europe consequent upon a Turkish defeat,⁹³ he wanted to see events taking their course in the Near East without British intervention. Like most English statesmen of the time, he was to change his attitude towards Russia and Turkey, but at this stage his ideas coincided with government policy, at least after Canning persuaded the Tsar to look more favourably on the Greek cause in 1825.

However, when Canning moved to the offensive against the Turks in 1826 and 1827, impelled by strategic considerations and a measure of sympathy towards the Greeks, Grey objected, just as he had done over Portugal. He did not accept that a departure from the principle of non-intervention was justified to enforce the Treaty of London upon the Turks. He disliked this Treaty with its apparently unenforceable demands: given his dislike to open-ended diplomatic commitments, he would have been shocked by the secret articles which, while not leading directly to the Battle of Navarino, at least made arbitration by force a possibility.⁹⁴ Grey was not convinced that the cause of Greek independence was best served by Anglo-Russian intervention against Turkey, not least because he was beginning to grow suspicious of Russian ambitions with respect to Greece. One month before Navarino he wrote to Princess Lieven that he was not satisfied as to the expediency of a combined naval operation and looked with jealousy upon possible Greek dependence on Russia.⁹⁵ He was again isolated: most Whigs applauded the joint action at Navarino as the triumph of the highest principles of British policy, as Holland and Brougham maintained. Admittedly, some speakers, notably Lansdowne and Althorp, whose caution over foreign affairs rivalled Grey's, were uneasy at the apparently unauthorised action of the allied admirals, but they did not equal Grey for scepticism. He endorsed Wellington's description of the battle as 'an untoward event'⁹⁶ and deplored the use of arbitration by force. The Greek cause could be endangered through Turkish reprisals. Actually, there was no alternative in practical terms but for Britain to join with Russia in the Near East if the Greek cause was to prosper and European peace was to be maintained, but Grey advocated a high moral tone in preference to 'preventive intervention', for

fear of Britain being trapped in 'entangling alliances'.

To his credit, Grey was prepared to countenance decisive action once the intervention had been undertaken. This was his concern in the case of Portugal and pre-eminently in the case of Greece, in connection with which he scored an almost accidental success in 1829. He had found something to praise in Wellington's foreign policy, not least the Duke's apparent reversal of Canningite attitudes in favour of peace and withdrawal.

Wellington and Aberdeen were Turkish sympathisers and as such were inclined to dissipate the fruits of Navarino by inaction. This Grey was prepared to accept.⁹⁷ However, they wished to prevent the expansion of Russian influence in Greece by limiting the frontiers of the new state to an extent which would make its independence only nominal. Greece was to be confined to the Morea and Athens left in Turkish hands. Although he believed the main cause of the government's difficulties was Canning's undue encouragement of the Russian ambitions through the Treaty of London, Grey feared that Wellington's wavering would prompt the Turks to go back on their undertaking to accept the Protocol of March 1829, which had granted dependent status to Greece.⁹⁸ He wrote to Adair in Paris in September 1829 suggesting a compromise between the Arta-Volo boundaries laid down in the Protocol and favoured by Austria, France and Russia, and Wellington's Morean boundary.⁹⁹ Adair transmitted this proposal to Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian ambassador in Paris, and it later became the basis of modifications agreed to in the Protocol of February 1830.¹⁰⁰ Grey noted:

I little thought that living here at the bottom of Northumberland I should be marking out the frontiers of new kingdoms.¹⁰¹

It was indeed surprising, but it revealed, for all his idleness and factiousness, a practical concern that was to serve him well as Prime Minister.

It was to need more than the government's mismanagement of Greek affairs to bring Grey back to full participation in politics. His indecision as to whether to oppose the Wellington ministry over foreign affairs generally had been noted in 1829,¹⁰² and while he deplored the conciliatory attitude towards Dom Miguel's usurpation in Portugal,¹⁰³ he was inclined to forgive much on account of the previous 'rhodomontade' policy of Canning. His equivocal attitude was shared by his old associates, particularly as the experience of office and the passage of Roman Catholic Emancipation had softened antagonisms.¹⁰⁴ Even Grey was irked by the apologetic tone of some of the opposition motions,¹⁰⁵ and Wellington's vacillation seemed too often to go unchallenged. However, in the face of a growing fear of Russia, it was difficult to attack the government's pro-Turkish line. As Grey remarked to Holland in 1830:

To hate Turkish oppression is very well: but to express that feeling in a way to create a belief that you are comparatively indifferent to the interests of your own country or the security and peace of Europe is another matter.¹⁰⁶

The most decisive opposition to the Wellington ministry was to be centred in its mishandling of Portuguese affairs and was to come not from the Whigs, but the Canningites. Huskisson and Palmerston had argued bitterly in Cabinet with Wellington and Aberdeen over policy towards Portugal and the Near East, and the continuation of the struggle in Parliament after the split of 1828 changed the whole complexion of the opposition to Wellingtonian foreign policy.

Palmerston's speech of 1 June 1829 on British policy towards Portugal has been exhaustively described by his biographers, not least because it was their subject's first important pronouncement on foreign affairs after twenty years of unremarkable diligence at the War Office.¹⁰⁷ However, Palmerston's contribution has been studied at the expense of those of other speakers in that debate, which, taken as a whole, displays an array of attitudes from which the foreign policy of the Grey ministry was to emerge.¹⁰⁸

Mackintosh introduced the motion on the government's attitude towards Portugal as set down in the king's speech. His was a classic statement of the Whig position in so far as it teetered between non-intervention and sympathetic neutrality. His passion for peace inclined him against making any territorial guarantees, particularly in connection with the Ottoman Empire, but he felt that Britain's alliance with Portugal demanded a more resolute stance. He denied that neutrality implied an insensitivity to right and wrong and maintained that it was a line rather than a point, allowing a government to take up a variety of positions upon it while remaining true to the principle. He accused the government of going too far in acquiescing in the 'base, feeble despotism' of Dom Miguel at the expense of the 1826 constitution, of which he wrongly regarded the British as guarantors. Like other speakers in this debate, he attacked the government not for failing to intervene, but for intervening on the wrong side.¹⁰⁹ Brougham, whose attitudes on foreign policy were formed by a combination of his high philosophical approach and Quaker pacificism, enlarged on this theme. He asserted that non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states was 'a sacred and inflexible principle of policy' from which the government had departed in connection with the Miguellite tyranny. He concluded:

I would counsel strictly and vigorously non-interference with reference even to Dom Miguel; not that I hate his tyranny less but I love peace and the principles that lead to it more.¹¹⁰

The speeches of Mackintosh and Brougham taken together provide a fair summary of Whig attitudes throughout the 1820's. Peel, whose performances in the Commons in foreign affairs debates always suffered through comparison with Canning's, replied solidly. He maintained that the principle of non-interference was distinctly recognised in sending a force to Portugal in 1826, an action taken 'not only in conformity with the spirit of ancient treaties, but of wisdom and sound policy.' While deploring Dom Miguel's 'lapses' he denied both that Britain was a guarantor of the constitution and that there was any ground for adopting a principle of interference. He would not allow British ports and arsenals to be used to equip the forces supporting Donna Maria, the legitimate Queen, and her Regency of Terceira.¹¹¹ Such a reply was sufficient to meet Whig criticism, but less effective against the attacks of Peel's former colleagues, who challenged his interpretation of Canning's Portuguese policy. Huskisson's speech was characteristically indecisive, but he did say that Dom Miguel's crimes demanded 'the highest disapprobation of the country and the government.' It was not necessary for him to say what Miguel deserved, he added - thus leaving the House in the dark as to his real opinion.¹¹² Palmerston was by contrast unequivocal, in a speech that was a thinly veiled bid for the Foreign Secretaryship in any future administration. His inspiration was Canning, although as his ideas developed he was to diverge from the Canningite tradition in word and deed.¹¹³ Certainly his assertions that the moving power of political affairs was public opinion and

that 'those statesmen who know how to avail themselves of the passions, of the interests and of the opinions of mankind are able to gain an ascendancy' were the essence of Canningism. Palmerston believed that in attacking the withdrawal of troops from Portugal and the government's recognition of Dom Miguel, he was reasserting the true Canningite line over Portugal. He may have had in mind Canning's remark in 1825 that 'Portugal has been and always *must* be English so long as Europe and the world remain in anything like their present state.'¹¹⁴ However, in a speech that showed nothing of the conciliatory tone towards the administration displayed by some Whigs, he rode roughshod over his master's careful formulations of neutrality and non-intervention to establish an attitude wholly his own:

Time was, and that but lately, when England was regarded as the friend of liberty and civilisation, and therefore of happiness and prosperity in every land; because it was thought that the selfish interests and political influence of England were best promoted by the extension of liberty and civilisation.¹¹⁵

This went far beyond anything Castlereagh, Canning or their opponents had professed. In rebuking Peel for his interpretation of non-intervention with respect to Portugal, he formulated a doctrine which assumed crucial importance after 1830. After bestowing on the principle of non-intervention its conventional adjective 'sacred', he continued:

If by interference is meant interference by force of arms such interference, the government is right in saying, general principles and our own practice forbid us to exert. But if by "interference" is meant intermeddling, and intermeddling in every way short of actual military force, then I must

affirm that there is nothing in such interference which the law of nations may not in certain cases permit.¹¹⁶

We only have to recall Canning's rebuke 'Away with the distinction between war and armed neutrality!' to see how far Palmerston had strayed.

The baroque vigour of his denunciations of Dom Miguel attracted more attention than his formulations of non-interventionist policy. The speech, copies of which Palmerston had printed and circulated to M.P's and the newspapers, won him favour among radicals but showed him to be out on a limb. In his assertions that Britain should not stop at strong remonstrances if they were ignored, and that 'selfish interests were best promoted by the extension of liberty', he was no Whig. He had gone further than they would ever have dared or the government dreamed. The distinction drawn between intervention and intermeddling was both novel and crucial. The debates of the 1820's had for the most part revolved around the accepted principles of neutrality and non-intervention. The most radical of opposition speakers in the Commons were content generally to blur the line of neutrality without proposing 'intermeddling' as a principle. Moderate men were firmly opposed to it, as Melbourne confirmed in 1830 when he disapproved of the 'species of interference which has been manifested by the people of this country on behalf of the revolutions on the Continent' as being liable to incite civil disorder.¹¹⁷ Palmerston's idea of promoting British interests together with liberty and civilisation through 'intermeddling' was liable to provoke the sort of distrust in European courts that all but the most extreme elements wished to avoid. That Palmerston's doctrines, when applied in office, tended to conflict with the treasured principles of peace and retrenchment is

amply demonstrated by the reluctance of his colleagues to see him return to the Foreign Office in Melbourne's 1835 ministry.¹¹⁸ Brougham wrote that he highly disapproved of Palmerston's foreign meddling.¹¹⁹ During the Grey ministry, Palmerston's conception of Britain's role led him into that struggle between the contending principles which Canning had hoped Britain, Aeolus-like, would avoid. In so doing, he was at one with Whig sympathies but at odds with Whig principles of peace, retrenchment and non-intervention.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CRISES OF 1830 AND THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

In retrospect, events on the continent and in Britain in 1830 assume a pattern that encourages sweeping explanations. The revolutions in France, Belgium and Poland, which ended once and for all attempts to base a permanent states system on the Vienna settlement, coincide neatly with the collapse of the post-war political system in Britain through which a succession of Tory coalitions had neutralised agitation for reform. Yet however much events on the continent were interrelated, the emergence of a predominantly Whig administration at home was the culmination of a domestic process whereby the obstacles barring the path to office were finally removed. Far from smoothing the way for Grey and his colleagues in November 1830, the French and Belgians together posed the most serious threat to European peace since 1815 and presented the Whigs with the dilemma of intervention or non-intervention in a most dangerous form. The union of Belgium with France was traditionally inimical to Britain, yet even in this case it will be seen that the Whigs were reluctant to shed the luxury of an impractical attitude.

It had been clear for some time that the attitude towards Belgium expressed by French liberals could put their British counterparts in a quandary. The Whigs were well informed of their views through their extensive contacts in Paris. Holland, Brougham and Russell were frequent visitors there, while Grey enjoyed extensive correspondence with Sir Robert Adair and the Comtesse Flahault, the leading hostess in Parisian liberal society, who, as Margaret Mercer Elphinstone, had been the confidante of

Princess Charlotte. The Whigs clearly recognised the character of the Polignac administration, but they were alarmed by the aggressive tone of the opposition. Grey expressed this concern in a letter to Lord John Russell in 1829:

My wishes must naturally be in favour of liberal principles and opinions.....[and I hope] the present struggle will be favourable to the liberty of France, and, I must add, the peace of the world. Here I must confess is my great fear. There appears to me from all I have read in their.....papers and all I have heard from others including Adair, to be so much violence on the part of the liberals and a spirit of such hostility to this country that I cannot help dreading the result of their obtaining the power of the government.

For Grey, peace was still the most sacred principle of all:

I am a friend, in the words of the old Whig toast, "to the cause of liberty all over the world", but my first care must be for England, and if the accession of the liberals is likely to be attended with the renewal of all the evils of war, I must wish for Polignac and even the devil himself in preference to them.¹

He dreaded the prospect of Britain being drawn into war for the sake of Belgium. Russell was also worried about French ambitions. He copied the following passage from Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Française* (1828) into one of his notebooks:

Les Pays Bas étaient en effet une acquisition importante pour notre patrie..... *La Hollande tombait sur l'influence immédiate de la France dès qu'elle n'en était plus séparée par les provinces autrichiennes. Alors la ligne Française s'étendait non pas seulement jusqu'à Anvers, mais jusqu'à Jexel et les rivages de l'Angleterre étaient enveloppés par une ceinture de rivages ennemis.*^{2*}

* Italics Russell's.

Palmerston, whose growing reputation among Whigs at this time is clear from his frequent appearances at Holland House,³ was less worried. He visited Paris twice in 1829 and made the acquaintance of the Flahaults and the most important opposition figures - Casimir Périer, Sebastiani and Guizot - together with Talleyrand, Pasquier and Benjamin Constant. He perceived the weakness of the Polignac government and hinted at the possibility of an Orleanist coup⁴, but trusted in the power of the propertied classes to ensure that any new *régime* would be rationally liberal.⁵ After one visit he travelled back to London with Hobhouse, who noted that 'he talked liberal just as well and as freely as if he had played the part all his life.'⁶

French liberals were at pains to allay fears of a renewal of aggression, and to judge by Grey's changing attitude in 1830, they had some success. Grey confided to Princess Lieven in March that he had changed his mind about the international repercussions of a liberal upsurge:

My fears of a revolution are not very great, but if the war openly declared against the chambers should lead to that calamity I do not see why the other powers should suffer by it . . .⁷

In June Comtesse Flahault wrote to reassure Grey of the good intentions of the French liberals, particularly if the English government was to be sympathetic:

If you were to be at the head of a new administration to-morrow, you would immediately reap the fruits of your long-established reputation for liberal principles and turn the scale in favour of England, before you had even time by your acts to manifest the conciliatory spirit which would govern your commands.

She attempted to put Grey's mind at rest over the threat of reunion with Belgium:

The English alarmists have made a great bug bear of the Netherlands which they imagine is the . . . object of France to regain - so it might be if there was a declaration of hostilities because it is well known that the whole country would rise . . . it is equally true that every Belgian wishes to be restored to France and that every Dutchman to get rid of his anti-nationalist neighbours . . . but be assured . . . that nobody here thinks of war or wishes to make new conquests.⁸

When the July Revolution did break out, there was no thought of the threat to the Netherlands to lessen the enthusiasm which seems to have been very widely expressed in England. The parallels with the events of 1688 were obvious, while the absence of the excesses which had shocked many into condemnation of the previous French revolution greatly impressed observers.⁹ Grey recognised that violent resistance had been justified:

I lament every act of violence attended with loss of life. But the unjustifiable and atrocious attempt of Charles X and his ministers to extinguish . . . the liberty of France . . . could only be resisted by force and I must rejoice that the resistance has so far been successful.¹⁰

Wellington, the days of whose administration could, according to Palmerston, be measured 'by algebra if not by arithmetic',¹¹ acted with commendable restraint in the face of this direct violation of the Treaties of Paris of 1814 and 1815. At the very least, the events in France justified an international congress under the terms of the Quadruple Alliance of 20 November 1815.¹² However, the speed of events in France did not allow for protracted discussions on the issue of intervention such as had been a feature of the immediate post war period. In addition, Wellington

probably had no liking for congresses after his experience at Verona in 1822¹³ and still less enthusiasm for a war in which he might have had to take a leading part.¹⁴ Fortunately for him, the idea of the Concert of Europe was no longer an effective rallying call for the Four Powers. Wellington's supposed patronage of Polignac as Prime Minister led the opposition to underestimate his rôle in preventing a conflict by his quick recognition of the Orleanist *régime*. He thereby cut the ground from under the feet of the autocratic powers, among whom Russia in particular was tempted to mobilise in the face of expected border disturbances in Spain and the Netherlands.* In the event the three powers quickly agreed to refrain from intervention although their diplomatic recognition of France followed only slowly. Wellington could argue that Charles X's violation of his coronation oaths and his desertion of the throne absolved the Allies from their obligation to consult formally.¹⁵

Wellington and his foreign counterparts were in all probability prepared to see the situation in France stabilised, even at the cost of legitimacy, in order to concentrate the more fully on the revolution in Belgium, which was a graver threat to the European balance. In the Treaty of Paris of May 30 1814, the Allies made no secret of the fact that they sanctioned the institution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the interests of the Balance of Power.¹⁶ Thus as the disturbances in Brussels at the end of August ripened gradually into the formation of a Belgian provisional government at the beginning of October, the Allies deplored not so much the violation of legitimacy but the threat to European peace. In contrast to the July Revolution, the Belgian cause struck few chords of sympathy

*Grey later paid tribute to Wellington's rôle in preventing war: *Hansard*, 3rd series, XI, 311 (16 March 1832).

in England. Hobhouse arranged for a loan of 100 guineas to be sent to the insurgents¹⁷ and Cobbett offered some encouragement to the Belgians amidst his praise for the French and denunciation of the English borough-mongers,¹⁸ but in general, support for the radical cause in France did not extend to Belgium. The Belgians had no strong national tradition of the sort that had attracted English radicals to support the cause of Greece, Poland or the Italian States. Furthermore, had not Napoleon, incongruously the most effective patron of Belgian nationalism, talked of Antwerp as 'a pistol aimed at the heart of England'? Where the Tories and the beneficiaries of the Anglo-Dutch trading relationship were furious with the Belgians, the Whigs at very least were embarrassed. Holland's attitude was representative:

Joy in France I accept - but I see nothing to rejoice at or approve of in Belgium and I think nothing could have occurred more calculated to embarrass the well-meaning either in or out of France or to furnish the ill disposed with plausible reasons for engaging in negotiations of remonstrances that may lead to war. I believe France does everything in her power to prevent such a result and to prove her sincerity in abstaining from interference.¹⁹

Holland, whose energetic and often indiscreet Francophilia was often to be a cause of irritation to Grey and Palmerston, was concerned about a possible revival of the 'spirit of 1792' in the face of unrest and radical agitation at home:

Meetings and public speeches are hazardous and uncontrollable and they may very unreasonably, but not on that account less mischievously, raise an alarm that would furnish the ill-disposed with a handle to involve us in war and arbitrary measures.²⁰

The prospect of intervention and war was a major worry for both government and opposition. Grey, still at this stage complaining that he had no political correspondents save Holland,²¹ was anxious to discover whether Britain had any obligation, as opposed to a right, to intervene.²² On receiving the relevant documents he was relieved to discover that there was none.²³ Both he and Holland were heartened by the King of the Netherlands' promise to the rebels to consider the case for administrative separation, and they expected the Prince of Orange to become Viceroy in Brussels, thus preventing the threatened intervention by the Tsar on behalf of the King his son-in-law.²⁴ But no one had much time for the Belgian revolutionaries, certainly not Lord John Russell in Paris:

It is a curious fact that the present [Francophile] party in Belgium would have been ready to proclaim Charles X and only object to join France on account of her Charters.²⁵

Holland called the Belgian insurrection 'foolish and unreasonable.'²⁶

Such comments were rapidly being overtaken by events. King William of the Netherlands called for the assistance of the Allied Powers on 5 October, not because he was incapable of crushing the revolt, but through the need to preserve a united front against France if force was used. The request for help was parried by the Powers. Talleyrand, newly installed as Ambassador in London, encouraged Wellington to set up a conference in London to forestall any unilateral action. The Five Powers agreed to meet at the beginning of November. Grey had already been considering the problems of intervention in the light of a permanent estrangement of Belgium and Holland, and it led him to some heretical statements in view of Whig principles and the traditions of British foreign

policy. Remembering what he had been told by Comtesse Flahault in June, he was anxious that the 'spirit of suspicion and jealousy in France' should not be aroused:

We should not be diverted from this even if a civil war [in England] should break out as long as we could hope to keep France quiet.²⁷

He returned to the charge in a letter to Holland three weeks later:

To speak plainly (but this to you only), being convinced that Belgium will ultimately belong to France, my policy would be to prevent the aggravation of that misfortune *if it be one* by the expensive losses of a war undertaken to prevent it.^{28*}

His remarks were not 'to you only': he repeated his thoughts in a long letter to Adair the next day. After reaffirming his belief that there was no obligation for Britain to intervene even if Prussia or Russia should advance,²⁹ he went on to discuss the possibility of French intervention in Belgium. A wanton invasion would justify British intervention according to the Vienna agreements, but if the Belgians pressed for union, this was another matter:

The reestablishment of the sovereignty of the King of the Netherlands appears to me to be impossible. I therefore would be willing to accede to any arrangement which would not give this country to France. To the objection that it could not exist in a state of nominal independence without being virtually subject to the influence of France . . . my answer is, better this than worse. Such an arrangement would at least give us time with all its chances; if we might acquiesce in it without dishonour the consequence we apprehend might not follow and if it did it would be less dangerous than if we had exhausted ourselves in a vain effort to prevent it.

*Italics mine.

In conclusion, he placed the blame for the situation on Pitt's declaration of war after the French invasion of the Scheldt in 1792, which he and Fox had denied to be a true *casus belli*,³⁰ and 'what was called the settlement of Europe by Metternich, Castlereagh, Wellington and Co.'³¹

This letter has been quoted at length to point the contrast between Grey's cavalier attitude whilst in opposition and his practical concern for maintenance of the Balance of Power when Prime Minister. Fox's observation that Grey was 'artless, hasty and imprudent in a private room but discretion personified in public debate'³² is borne out by his private letters at this time. Here he puts his concern for peace above Whig respect for national self-determination and concern for the maintenance of the independence of the Low Countries, a principle unchallenged from Marlborough's time. At least he was consistent in his disregard of the importance of establishing Belgian independence as a first priority - during his first months of office he was prepared to support the Prince of Orange as sovereign of the new state³³ - but he was to bring his policy towards French domination of the Low Countries more into line with tradition in backing Palmerston's uncompromising attitude towards the possible election of the Duc de Nemours to the Belgian throne.

Grey's days of idleness and political self-indulgence were numbered, as opposition began to solidify against the Duke and the reform issue ripened. Although he had described himself six months earlier as 'altogether unequal to the discharge of the duties of any laborious office',³⁴ and regarded his attendance at the beginning of the Session in April as an unprofitable necessity, the death of the King had altered the situation radically. Grey no longer had to contend with George IV's implacable

opposition to his taking office³⁵ and enjoyed the attentions of William IV, whose accession marked, according to Princess Lieven, 'a new dynasty'.³⁶ Soon afterwards he declared against the Duke, ending two years of speculation as to whether he would join the government.³⁷ He thereby found himself at the head of an informally linked opposition group³⁸ which included the leading Canningites - Huskisson, Melbourne, Palmerston and the Grants - as well as the Foxite 'old opposition'.³⁹ Wellington repeatedly sounded out the Canningites during the summer on the possibility of their joining the administration but they always insisted that Grey be brought in also, presumably in order to neutralise the 'ultra' element in the government.

It was at this point that the General Election and the French revolution had impinged upon the political situation. It is now generally agreed that the election was not directly influenced by events on the continent.⁴⁰ Most of the contests were decided before news of the French outbreak reached England, and extensive study of public attitudes in the constituencies which polled subsequently suggests that the debate about reform was couched in domestic terms. As for events in France, the prevalent attitude was expressed by the *Leeds Mercury*: 'why, we had *our* Glorious Revolution a hundred and forty years ago'.⁴¹ However, some members of the opposition sought to make capital out of the July revolution by attempting to establish that Wellington was the power behind the promotion of Polignac the previous year. It was alleged that he was kept informed of all the plans of the French government through unofficial correspondence with Lord Stuart de Rothesay, the Ambassador in Paris, who had pronounced 'ultra' leanings. Sir James Graham, who was quickly acquiring a reputation as a radical following his break with Canningism, was anxious that Brougham should go to Paris and make use of his political

contacts to discover the truth.⁴² Some of Graham's remarks - such as 'your presence in Paris would be most useful to us' - almost persuade us to believe that he wished merely to remove the volatile Brougham from the political scene at a delicate time. Certainly, since his triumph in the Yorkshire election, Brougham had displayed an uncompromising and proprietorial attitude towards the Reform issue that boded ill for any Whig-Canningite coalition. However, as Graham was genuinely critical of the government's handling of the French and Belgian crises we must presume that his desire to incriminate Wellington was real. He feared that the Belgian crisis would precipitate a war if Aberdeen remained at the Foreign Office, whilst rejoicing at the prospect of revolutions in half the courts of Europe, sufficient 'to make the hand of our chronicler dizzy'.⁴³

Graham's colleagues tended not to express such enthusiasm, preferring to press the Duke on domestic issues rather than inflaming feeling abroad. Grey's political position had been strengthened unwittingly by the death of Huskisson, for whom he had never much cared.⁴⁴ The tragedy at Parkside Station had, in Professor Aspinall's words, 'lowered the value of Canningite stock'⁴⁵ and Palmerston and Melbourne began to respond to offers of a more formal junction with the Whigs as they moved towards an appreciation of the need for parliamentary reform as well as retrenchment.⁴⁶ By the end of October, agreement was reached on a reform motion, and although Brougham spoilt the initiative by arrogating to himself the responsibility of presenting it, his mistake was dwarfed by Wellington's declaration against reform in the Lords on 2 November.⁴⁷

For our purposes however, the Duke's observations on the perfection of the British Constitution take second place to the discussion of the Belgian situation. In the King's Speech the Belgians were described as 'revolted

subjects' and His Majesty's Government promised that Allies would make every effort to restore them to the Dutch crown.⁴⁸ In his reply Grey displayed the extent to which he moderated his views for public consumption. As we have already seen, he deprecated the revolt but opposed any attempt to reunite the two countries by force. He placed emphasis on his hopes for Belgian independence rather than on his willingness to see Belgium reunited with France for the sake of peace. He warned the Government that Britain would find herself in an awkward, indeed potentially a dangerous position *vis à vis* France and a newly independent Belgium in view of the king's promise to restore 'such tranquility as may be compatible with the welfare and good government of the Netherlands'. He enlarged on the problem of relations with France and the issue of intervention with one eye on the London Conference that was to meet for the first time two days later:

I believe that if the Duke applies to France for her co-operation in interference on the principles implied in that part of the address, he will find France soon falling off from negotiation and the measure leading to the result which it is his wish to avoid.⁴⁹

Needless to say he pressed for a declaration of non-intervention and Hume was anxious that Britain's treaty obligations be laid on the table as a proof that intervention was unjustified.⁵⁰ A week later Lansdowne urged Aberdeen to state categorically that Britain would not intervene; sensibly enough, the Foreign Secretary's reply was non-committal, but he promised that any intervention would be 'amicable'.⁵¹ This was the only plausible attitude the government could take, as the reunion of Belgium with France, either voluntarily or by force, would almost certainly provoke a warlike response from the Eastern Powers. In his last week of opposition Grey must have realised this, as well as the fact that the Conference was a diplomatic

necessity rather than an attempt to revive the Holy Alliance, which was irrelevantly attacked by almost every Whig speaker in parliament at this time. The Conference had met on only two occasions when the Wellington government was brought down, appropriately enough, on a vote to refer Civil List expenditure to a select committee.⁵² The Duke resigned on 16 November and Grey became Prime Minister at the age of sixty-six. The situation he faced in foreign affairs was especially difficult for a man of high Whig principles in that he often had to justify the role of the Conference, whose status and terms of reference were far from clear, in dictating to the Belgians the form of their independence. The terms of reference for the intervention versus non-intervention debate had to change now that the Vienna settlement had been torn apart and the Whigs were in office.

In many respects Grey, an ageing, arrogant and embittered man, was ill-suited to the highest office at a time of profound unrest at home and crisis abroad. Above all, he lacked the will to govern resolutely. The most cursory examination of his papers reveals his diffidence:

I am quite determined never again to attempt anything like a lead in politics. The motives which have induced me to form this resolution are chiefly personal but they have been confirmed by my reflections of the political situation.

This passage dates not from the 1820's but from 1802 and is addressed to none other than Charles James Fox.⁵³ By this time he had overcome his initial dismay at the prospect of living in Northumberland⁵⁴ and was increasingly loath to forsake the delights of family life in the country so sympathetically described by Trevelyan.⁵⁵ The remoteness of Howick and Grey's reluctance to leave it were a chronic irritation to those who looked

to him for a lead. Tierney wrote to him in October 1809:

Which of your ancestors it was who purchased or seized an estate in Northumberland I do not know, but I wish with all my heart he had been knocked on the head for choosing such an out of the way spot for the residence of his descendants. There are a thousand things which it would be most desirable to talk over. No good can be done unless you come to town.⁵⁶

Grey's fund of excuses was inexhaustible, ranging from conventional political explanations to domestic ones - such as his need to supervise a new governess.⁵⁷ Though as Prime Minister he was necessarily bound to London for most of the year, he generally managed to escape to Howick during the long recess, where, to Palmerston's irritation, he was effectively inaccessible in the event of a sudden diplomatic crisis.

Grey was the obvious choice as Prime Minister in 1830 because of the respect that his long attachment to the cause of reform had won him amongst Whigs and the confidence that his aristocratic and conservative mien engendered amongst the Canningites and the Ultra Tories who would form an essential part of his government. However, he was ill-suited to the role of leader. Sidney Smith had remarked on his 'lack of executive coarseness'⁵⁸ and this trait is revealed in his failure to assert himself sufficiently over his colleagues. He had little stomach for a fight and threatened resignation so often that Winthrop Mackworth Praed, the Tory versifier, wrote a poem entitled 'Turn again Lord Grey'.⁵⁹ Brougham talked of his 'low fit . . . once a month he was for resigning'.⁶⁰ Grey tended to rely on others to supply drive and ambition, and his choice of men leads us to one of the most enduring criticisms of him - his nepotism. Trevelyan characterises it as an endemic weakness of Whig governments,⁶¹

but it is significant that Grey came in for criticism from his colleagues as well as from his opponents.⁶² Brougham was irritated by Grey's habit of considering

anything of no value that happens never to have occurred to himself, to Lambton, or to some one of his own family or of the parish of Howick.⁶³

Perhaps the real reason for criticism of Grey among Whigs was the fact that the disloyal behaviour of Lambton* his son in law, and Howick, his son, in Cabinet contrived to give Whig nepotism a bad name. Even Grey's brother, who was translated to the Bishopric of Hereford with help from the Premier, made no secret of his distaste for the Irish Church Bill in the Lords in 1833.⁶⁴ Such reversals pained Grey and helped to give the impression that he would not brook criticism, so sensitive did he become.⁶⁵ The Duchesse de Dino, Talleyrand's constant companion and an acute observer of the political scene, noted:

It is really curious that a man in Lord Grey's exalted position and of such noble nature as he should be so sensitive to small matters and have nerves so childishly susceptible.⁶⁶

Hobhouse complained that Grey was 'always thinking of himself and his failures in life.'⁶⁷

To set against his failings, Grey brought to the conduct of British affairs and foreign policy in particular a wealth of patience and practical concern, together with a moral integrity that was genuine, however arrogantly displayed. Brougham and Holland praised him for his practical sense and tolerance in the face of extreme opinion in his Cabinet.⁶⁸

*Afterwards 1st Earl of Durham.

King Leopold of the Belgians paid tribute to 'something so noble and generous' in his character,⁶⁹ while Palmerston, writing at the time of Grey's resignation in 1834, described him as the possessor of

one of the most statesmanlike minds and one of the noblest natures that have ever appeared in any scene of public affairs.⁷⁰

He had an experience of office which so many of his colleagues lacked, and indeed was Foreign Secretary from September 1806 to March 1807, thus subsequently gaining respect for his views on foreign policy. In truth his record at the Foreign Office was undistinguished, but he worked within narrow limits in prosecuting the war. The Ministry's cautious and half-hearted attitude accounted for his parsimonious support for the Prussian and Russian campaigns in Europe and he was not encouraged by the King's preparedness to let Europe burn provided Hanover's safety was guaranteed. His experience of foreign affairs, however dated, undoubtedly seems to have assisted Palmerston as a newcomer to the conduct of foreign policy. Palmerston was grateful to Grey as 'a guide whose direction was invaluable and whose kindness was unlimited'.⁷¹ Certainly Grey gave Palmerston solid support at times of crisis and in relation to the issues of intervention that particularly concern us, always took Palmerston's part. However, he was very unwilling to overrule the opposition of his colleagues - as we shall see in the episodes involving Portugal and the Near East. His Foreign Secretary was unfettered by a Whig conscience in urging intervention even to the detriment of the Naval Estimates.

Palmerston's tendency to upset the high priests of the Whig party as well as his opposite numbers abroad⁷² goes far to explain why he was never

fully accepted among Whigs. Significantly he was not Grey's first choice for an office of such prestige: Holland and Lansdowne, the two most respected Whig peers after Grey, were approached first. Holland declined, much to his wife's satisfaction, on the grounds that he was physically and temperamentally ill-equipped to meet the demands of office.⁷³ Lansdowne refused for similar reasons and it was he who mentioned Palmerston in connection with the post.⁷⁴ Grey adopted the proposal as soon as he was sure that Lansdowne could not be persuaded. Princess Lieven made extravagant claims to the effect that she had persuaded Grey to appoint Palmerston rather than Lansdowne to the Foreign Office,⁷⁵ but although her intimacy with both men would have made her intervention possible, Palmerston's appointment can be explained in more mundane terms. Grey had been impressed with him for some time and described him as the pick of the opposition side in March 1830.⁷⁶ As early as 1827 Palmerston likened himself to 'Caspar in the *Freischütz* story . . . quite afraid that Lord Grey should come with his long arm and claim me as his own.'⁷⁷ Palmerston was right in stating that Grey sent for him as soon as he was commissioned by the King,⁷⁸ but he was clearly not offered the Foreign Office first as he implies.⁷⁹

The preoccupations of Grey's ministry, first with Parliamentary Reform, and subsequently with Ireland, tended to make foreign policy an object of sporadic Cabinet discussion rather than constant attention. Initially the Belgian Conference took up all Palmerston's time and its complexity was such that Grey, for all his interest in foreign affairs, was unable to offer much beyond general advice or suggestions as to the wording of despatches. Too much has been made of Lord John Russell's exaggerated claim that

Grey revised every despatch that Palmerston wrote:⁸⁰ Bell claims that Palmerston was 'the pupil of the circumspect Earl Grey'.⁸¹ Foreign diplomats soon discovered that Palmerston was the authority as far as foreign policy was concerned: Grey tended to reveal shallowness of knowledge in conversation and appears to have been glad to see a heavy burden borne successfully by his colleague.⁸² Though inexperienced, Palmerston had been preparing for the post since 1828, and had already established his reputation as a hard worker and merciless taskmaster at the War Office.⁸³ His *régime* at the Foreign Office was harsher still. His clerks had their working hours lengthened and their salaries cut and were criticised for bad grammar and poor handwriting.⁸⁴

Palmerston was happy with his relationship with Grey - 'no two men ever went on better together in office and very few half as well' he claimed⁸⁵ - but he faced considerable opposition and hostility in Cabinet. His lack of Whig pedigree and his lukewarm attachment to the cause of parliamentary reform went down badly both with his colleagues in the Cabinet and government supporters in the House.⁸⁶ In the diplomatic sphere his determination to uphold British interests against all comers by 'intermeddling' and threats of intervention by force if necessary contrasted sharply with Whig notions of a pacific foreign policy, sympathetic to the constitutional powers, conducted in a restrained manner. Even Holland, who was alone amongst the leading members of the Cabinet in supporting Palmerston's return to the Foreign Office in 1835, admitted that

his determined stand against French aggrandisement in Belgium coupled with his stand on the reform issue gave rise to suspicions of his lukewarmness in the cause of the party and the ministry to which he belongs.⁸⁷

In Webster's view, Palmerston had to suffer more criticism than any other nineteenth century Foreign Secretary with the possible exception of Canning.⁸⁸ Given the traditional absence amongst Whigs of 'habits of business as ministers of first class', in Brougham's phrase,⁸⁹ the criticisms from his colleagues were often unfair. They tended to underestimate the day-to-day pressure under which Palmerston worked and implied that British interests could be left to assert themselves without the advocacy provided by a strong fleet or an intermeddling minister. Palmerston's colleagues could not complain that he kept them in the dark over policy. He never failed to refer important matters to the Cabinet, and was praised for the toleration and good humour he displayed while his proposals were subjected to rambling and ill-informed discussion.⁹⁰ The Cabinet often met at the Foreign Office and frequently supplemented their daytime meetings with sessions over dinner at Lord Holland's or Lansdowne House. A full attendance was very rare, and the absence of the Prime Minister or important members of the Cabinet at vital meetings contrasts strongly with modern practice. Any minister could summon a meeting and there seems to have been no recognised system for informing ministers of the summons or its pretext.⁹¹ One of Lord Holland's many apologies for absence highlights the slackness of Cabinet arrangements:

My lady says there is a Cabinet to-day but as I have no summons I will spare myself this bad day.

Lansdowne replied to one of Palmerston's summons in equally cavalier fashion:

Were it not for our public county dinner . . .
I should be much tempted to run up again.⁹²

The colleagues with whom Palmerston had to work espoused between them every shade of political opinion, from the Ultra Toryism of the Duke of Richmond through Canningism and Whiggism to the radicalism of Durham and Lord John Russell. Their common bond existed in a belief in the rule of the landed and aristocratic interests which they themselves embraced.

The great weakness of Grey's Cabinet was its lack of executive rigour.⁹³

This showed itself in the discussion of foreign policy, where members often seemed to display either diffidence or an impracticable rigidity of approach.

The latter failing impressed Talleyrand, who complained that they were always comparing the present with the past and citing what Mr. Fox said

on such and such an occasion. He went on to make a more generally

applicable criticism: 'Ils ont l'air de ne pas savoir que la vie d'un homme d'état est une transaction perpetuelle'.⁹⁴ Home affairs dominated cabinet

discussions and ministers had little time and still less inclination to consider individual aspects of Britain's international relations deeply. From the

evidence that remains⁹⁵ it appears that Palmerston usually managed to

obtain agreement on a general policy, although he often had to modify his own position to take account of the Cabinet's dislike for positive action.

As will be shown, the compromises which he had to make are reflected in

the equivocal British attitude towards successive problems of intervention and non-intervention. Cabinet diffidence often hampered Palmerston during

periods of parliamentary recess when he required prompt decisions. The

reluctance of ministers to remain in town prompted Granville, the Ambassador at Paris, to complain:

I am surprised how, at a moment's notice, when questions of vital importance may require immediate solution, questions of war arising out of Portugese

affairs, or Dutch or Belgian, the majority of the Cabinet can retire for months together into the country at a great distance from London.⁹⁶

Palmerston made genuine attempts to keep ministers abreast of developments during recess by circulating digests of despatches,⁹⁷ but accounts of cabinet meetings do not suggest they were much studied. In spite of Palmerston's efforts the traditional criticisms were made of the scarcity of relevant information.⁹⁸

Cabinet attitudes towards successive issues involving possible British intervention abroad will become clear as this study proceeds, but the tendency of members to assume fixed positions, whether out of diffidence or prejudice, allows us to make some useful generalisations. Lord Althorp was pre-eminent among those who wished to avoid the expense and complication of intervention. As Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons, he was an indifferent politician but a man whose integrity made him a popular and important figure in the Grey administration.⁹⁹ His naiveté in foreign affairs was extraordinary. In wishing to cut out all expenditure which he considered superfluous, he suggested to Palmerston in 1831 that Britain's good relations with France rendered a fleet and an army unnecessary.¹⁰⁰ In the same year he expressed his willingness to allow France to annex Belgium if the evils of war could thereby be avoided.¹⁰¹ His passive view often found support, though for differing reasons. Richmond's views on foreign policy owed more to Wellington than anyone and he deprecated any forcible attempt to assist constitutional movements or to frustrate the designs of the autocratic powers.¹⁰² Brougham had more sympathy for the Liberal Movement, particularly in Poland, but his Quaker pacifism and his belief in the need for retrenchment were stronger still. The learned

articles on foreign policy that appear in his *Collected Works* stress the importance of non-intervention as a basic principle.¹⁰³ His detestation of war was shared by Lord Melbourne. Although Melbourne was largely ignorant of foreign affairs, and close to Palmerston¹⁰⁴ personally, he was consistently critical of the Foreign Secretary. Like Stanley, the other leading Canningite in the Cabinet, he was strongly opposed to intermeddling to further the interests of would-be constitutional states.¹⁰⁵ However, the Canningites and even Richmond seem to have been more sensible of strategic issues than their Whig colleagues and supported Palmerston's firm line against French pretensions in Belgium in 1831. Melbourne seems to have enjoyed considerable prestige in the Cabinet: during the Cabinet crisis over intervention in Portugal in 1834, Althorp described his judgment as 'better than all the rest of us put together'.¹⁰⁶ Admittedly, Althorp wrote knowing that Melbourne would follow his non-interventionist line, but the comment, coming from a Whig, is significant. The other Canningites made less impression on their Whig colleagues. Grant at the Board of Trade made little impact in cabinet; Goderich at the Colonial Office applauded the resolute stand against France but his praise of Palmerston was not reflected in any vocal support for his foreign policy.¹⁰⁷

Grey and Lansdowne occupied the middle ground on the issues involving intervention. Both men dreaded the prospect of war, and the memory of what they considered as Britain's precipitant entry into war in 1792 was in the forefront of their minds. Such considerations, together with their consciousness of the government's parliamentary weakness, reinforced their natural caution. However, as the two most experienced observers of foreign affairs, they appreciated the need for a resolute

assertion of British interests even against France, as well as in favour of the constitutional movements in Europe. We shall see Grey's recognition of this need most clearly in his insistence on intervention in Portugal, on pain of his resignation, in 1834.¹⁰⁸ Previously he had shown support for Palmerston's assertiveness but no desire to force his colleagues to accept such a line. Lansdowne's personal view is more difficult to discern: indeed it is remarkable what little impact he made in Cabinet. He was undoubtedly the most respected Whig peer after Grey and played a substantial role, together with Holland, in advising the Prime Minister on Ministerial appointments.¹⁰⁹ Grey clearly tried very hard to persuade him to become Foreign Secretary. We may assume that he offered the post to Holland first out of deference to their long friendship, knowing that he would refuse; it was generally expected that Lansdowne would take the post. When Holland heard of his refusal he predicted that 'it will, if persisted in, annoy very many of our friends'.¹¹⁰ Even as Lord President Lansdowne was expected to make a substantial contribution to foreign policy. Lord John Russell anticipated that 'in foreign affairs a few very good things ought to be hit out by Lord Holland and Lords Grey and Lansdowne',¹¹¹ but the promise was not fulfilled. Although, like Holland, he received all important despatches before their circulation to the rest of the Cabinet¹¹² and had a good grasp of French domestic politics, his voice was not heard often. After one cabinet meeting Holland commented: 'his opinions on foreign affairs were, as usual, right but faint'.¹¹³ Clearly Lansdowne lacked the ability to project his character and opinions. His caution was such that he was described as having been 'born in 1780 at the age of thirty'.¹¹⁴ Twenty five years ago Sir Charles Webster described him as 'a somewhat enigmatic figure'¹¹⁵ and he is likely to remain so while his papers are closed to historians.

Lord Holland's character was anything but enigmatic. He shared the Foxite background of his colleagues, but his identification with liberal causes in Portugal and elsewhere led him to adopt a more trenchant attitude towards the Eastern Powers and to display a greater preparedness to intervene. As he commented to Brougham:

I may be a little less *Quakerish* and *non-interfering* than you, from a persuasion that seasonable interference and even the attitude of war is sometimes the best means of preventing it. I do not believe that the expression of Quakerism in the English Cabinet just now is half so likely to avert . . . war as a persuasion that England . . . is determined to side with France and Liberalism . . .¹¹⁶

Such sentiments were not far removed from Palmerston's, but his views were not consistent. He bombarded Grey and Palmerston with memoranda advocating armed intervention against Dom Miguel's Portuguese *régime* but showed little understanding of the need for Britain to assert her strategic interests in Belgium or the Near East. His indiscreet promotion of French interests made him a difficult colleague. Palmerston commands admiration for restraining himself until 1840 before remarking:

Individual members ought not, as Lord Holland does every day of the week, to speak openly to all who come near them about the policy and measures which the Cabinet . . . is embarked in, just as a member of the Opposition would speak of the policy of an administration which he was labouring to turn out.¹¹⁷

Holland's saving graces were his good humour and a willingness to defer to the superior judgment of Grey and Palmerston on crucial issues of policy. However, he gave Palmerston some difficult moments, not least because of the prestige that his garrulous wife enjoyed in Whig society.¹¹⁸

The radical element in the Cabinet might have been expected to welcome Palmerston's vigorous support of the Liberal Movement after 1832. However, his pragmatic approach and his intermeddling methods, not to mention his wavering attitude towards Reform, had lost him radical support. His firm stand against France and his initial refusal to confront the Eastern Powers over the suppression of the Polish revolt branded him as a reactionary in radical eyes. Russell supported Palmerston over intervention in Portugal throughout 1833*, but personal factors prevented Palmerston from commanding full-hearted support from radical opinion in the crusade against the Eastern Powers. He was viewed with suspicion in that he had served his apprenticeship in the Liverpool administration and his attitude towards foreign affairs owed nothing to the moral and almost philosophical approach favoured by the Whigs in their years of opposition. There was jealousy too: both Durham and Russell seem to have nursed ambitions of occupying the Foreign Office.¹¹⁹

Palmerston's strongest source of support for intervention came from Graham at the Admiralty. This was particularly noticeable after 1832, when the partial settlement of the Belgian question freed the Royal Navy for duties in Portugal and the Near East. He succeeded brilliantly in reducing Naval expenditure while placing at Palmerston's disposal the strong fleet that was the essential adjunct to an assertive foreign policy.¹²⁰ He shared with Palmerston an executive flair not possessed by their colleagues, together with a firm grasp of the strategic considerations that lay at the heart of Palmerston's foreign policy. He was a great admirer of Palmerston and a constant source of moral support in the Cabinet.¹²¹

Among those outside the government, Palmerston found strong

*Durham had resigned from the Cabinet in March 1833.

support for intervention from Sir George Shee, his private secretary and a contemporary at Cambridge.¹²² Although the Foreign Office was not yet structured to allow the two under-secretaries any voice in policy making,¹²³ Shee's personal friendship with Palmerston and his special role of intermediary between the Foreign Office and the Press¹²⁴ made him more prominent than Backhouse, his superior. Shee seems to have been an enthusiastic interventionist. In August 1831, he urged Palmerston not to be swayed from holding strong language towards France by Grey's misgivings,¹²⁵ while over the Portuguese question he was reported by Brougham to be competing with Holland in the vehemence with which he advocated intervention.¹²⁶ The same could not be said of the King, whose acquiescence in the Reform Act should not blind us to his essential conservatism. He entertained a deep suspicion of the French, which was strengthened by the events of 1831 and led him to support Palmerston's firm line and to award him the Order of the Bath in June 1832. However, as the gap between Britain and France and the Eastern Powers became apparent, William was most reluctant to endorse joint action in support of dubious constitutional causes. He had been prepared to see his beloved Royal Navy used to threaten France, but disliked its being brought in to assist France in coercing Holland or advancing the legitimist causes in Portugal and Spain.

Similarly, Palmerston did not enjoy consistent support in Parliament. His dry oratorical style and his High Tory pedigree did not appeal to the Radical element which might have been expected to approve of intermeddling. During his first eighteen months in the Foreign Office, Palmerston's coldness towards Reform seemed to complement his toughness towards France, his reliance upon a resurrection of the Concert of Europe (though

it had been initiated under Aberdeen) and, pre-eminently, his neglect of the Poles. In spite of Palmerston's identification with the Liberal Movement in Europe after 1832, his defence of the Tsar against personal attacks and his failure to forestall Russian intervention in Poland and Turkey outweighed his encouragement of constitutionalism in Germany and Portugal. The Radicals were no clearer than their counterparts of the 1820's about the alternative to non-intervention in such cases; William IV justly remarked that those who were making the loudest outcry about Poland would have refused to grant the supplies necessary to support their cause.¹²⁷ However it was the manner, rather than the policy adopted towards powers such as Russia, which was important to the Radicals, and Palmerston seemed to let them down. The pressure of work at the Foreign Office prevented him from attending Commons debates regularly. Government policy sometimes had to be expounded by Althorp, the Leader of the House. We have already seen the extent to which his naiveté over foreign affairs contrasted with Palmerston's shrewd approach, and his statements on matters of policy were generally brief and rarely informative. Unsympathetic critics attributed Palmerston's frequent absences to his social activities,¹²⁸ unaware of the crushing burdens he carried as Chairman of the London Conference and the conscientious head of an overworked and ill-organised department. Admittedly, Palmerston's dismissive attitude towards the House did not help. He wrote in 1833 that the House of Commons did not 'care a straw for foreign affairs' and that the Government could do as it liked.¹²⁹ Such a statement was not wholly justified, for although within the context of intervention or non-intervention parliamentary debates were often ill-informed and retrospective, the strength of feeling that was occasionally displayed -

for instance over the Government's failure to restrain Russia in Poland - brought home to ministers the fact that the views of members could not be ignored, however belatedly they were expressed.¹³⁰ Palmerston could expect even less co-operation from the Lords, where the Tory majority was a constant threat to the Government. Grey and his colleagues were perpetually on the defensive against charges of intervention or a breach of neutrality with regard to Belgium and Holland or Portugal. Aberdeen and the Marquis of Londonderry were the most insistent critics, but the trump card for the opposition whenever French aggrandisement, whether in Belgium or Portugal, was debated was the presence of the Duke of Wellington, that bulwark against the ambitions of the French in the Low Countries and on the Peninsula. Fortunately for the Government, debates on foreign policy were poorly attended, as they were in the Commons, and divisions were rare. However Wellington did score a major personal triumph in June 1833 by carrying against the Government a motion alleging a departure from the principle of neutrality in the contest for the Portuguese throne.¹³¹

Thus Palmerston could never count on widespread support for his personal view of foreign affairs. He was not primarily a man of principle and system as Castlereagh and even Canning had been.¹³² His opportunism and intermeddling were at variance with the rigid traditions of the Whigs. Viscount Howick, briefly a member of his father's Cabinet and one of Palmerston's severest critics, wrote in 1865:

Palmerston was never an advocate of non-intervention in the sense now put upon the words . . . I do not blame him for this . . . But Palmerston was not satisfied with exercising the power of this country in supporting right and justice . . . but was an

incorrigible meddler . . . and his meddling would not have been confined to words if he had had his own way. He all but broke up my father's government by insisting on sending a force to Portugal . . .¹³³

Howick's view, full of factual errors, reflects his very strong prejudices - he regarded Palmerston as having been 'little more than Head Clerk to my father' on the Belgian Question - but it was widely supported. Grey's brother-in-law, 'Bear' Ellice, sometime Secretary at War, led the unsuccessful campaign against Palmerston's re-appointment in 1835. Their quarrel was with his methods rather than his achievements, but style was as important as content for the Whigs. Despite the crisis situation in November 1830, members of the Cabinet were not prepared for Palmerston's personal brand of what we might now call 'brinkmanship'. The tentative attitudes of his colleagues which had already been displayed in opposition were amplified in government owing to their domestic preoccupations and an over-awareness of parliamentary weakness. Prince Czartoryski, the Polish statesman and President of the Provisional Government of 1830-1831, commented on how the ministry did not seem 'to feel strong or to be conscious that it stands at the head of a great nation capable of exercising a powerful influence on the destinies of Europe'.¹³⁴ If Palmerston's attitude was active, theirs was passive, particularly in regard to the promotion of Britain's strategic interests. The Belgian Question threatened to entail British intervention both on strategic and ideological grounds. On their past record, the Whigs did not seem likely to afford unequivocal support on either count.

CHAPTER THREE

PROBLEMS OF INTERVENTION: THE INDEPENDENCE OF BELGIUM 1830-1832¹

Successive attempts to dominate the European continent, from the times of Louis XIV to the Kaiser, have proved that there has been no more enduring British diplomatic principle than the maintenance of the independence of the Low Countries. In his authoritative State Paper, Castlereagh had restated that principle within the framework of his non-interventionist foreign policy:

The importance of preventing the Low Countries, the military barrier of Europe, from being melted down into the general mass of French power . . . might enable the British Government to act more promptly upon this than perhaps any other case of an internal character.²

It is particularly appropriate to invoke Castlereagh's opinion as a preface to a discussion of Palmerston's policy over Belgium in the crisis years of 1830 and 1831. Though the most prominent Canningite in Grey's Cabinet, his insistence on the primacy of strategic interests over the conciliation of the French, and his belief in a resurrected five power concert as a means to maintain the Balance of Power, are in the best traditions of Castlereagh's diplomacy. Thus Palmerston would never countenance the payment of 'Danegeld' to France:

There is no security for Europe but by standing upon a strict observance of treaties and a strict abnegation of all interested views of aggrandisement. The moment we give France a cabbage garden or a vineyard we lose all our vantage ground of principle.^{3*}

* Italics Palmerston's.

As indicated above, his position entailed explicit approval of the 1814-15 settlement. He wrote to Holland in April 1831 that the Treaty of Vienna,

However objectionable in some of the details of its arrangements is yet with its accessories of Paris and Aix-la-Chapelle the best security of Europe against the inveterately enervating spirit of France.⁴

Such a philosophy accorded ill with the Whig traditions of Francophilia and indifference towards strategic considerations. Grey's irresponsible attitude towards the Belgian crisis while in opposition has already been described, and while he moderated his views in office in supporting Palmerston, his colleagues showed themselves to be less flexible. Lord Holland in particular urged that a more sympathetic attitude be shown towards French aspirations. Holland was foremost among those who seemed prepared to let nature run its course with regard to Belgium despite the concomitant defeat for British principles and the cause of self-determination:

Those damned Belgians are the origin of all mischief. I honestly wish they had been well dismembered and partitioned between France, Holland, Prussia and England sixteen years ago - and when the time comes, as it inevitably will, if I am alive I shall rejoice at it.⁵

Thus it can be appreciated that radical differences of approach and belief lay behind the apparent unity of the Cabinet in resisting successive French-inspired threats to the peace - the election of the Duc de Nemours, Louis Philippe's son, to the Belgian throne, the slow French withdrawal from Belgium in August 1831, and the question of the Belgian barrier fortresses.

Various factors conspired to ensure that the crises of 1830-31 did not constitute a manifestation of the Netherlands problem in the classic form,

such as was precipitated by Napoleon or envisaged by Castlereagh in his State Paper, though it has often been thus described. The question arose in peacetime and the balance of power was upset not by war, but by revolution. The Powers were faced with the necessity of reintegrating the Netherlands into the States system, both on a strategic and a political level. Thus there was the possibility of intervention on two planes - diplomatic intervention to settle the arrangements for the new Belgian State, and intervention by force to prevent its being absorbed into France. Palmerston had to endure criticism in both areas. The ill-defined role of the London Conference - not 'intervenante, mediatrice ou arbitre' as Metternich appreciated⁶ - brought forth charges of intervention in the internal affairs of other states.⁷ On the strategic level, the principle of intervening to prevent the French acquiring Belgium was weakened by the possibility of an unforced union of the two countries taking place at the insistence of the Belgians. Given their support for French liberalism as opposed to Belgian nationalism, Palmerston's Whig colleagues needed much persuading that it was worth threatening France with an expensive and debilitating war to prevent such a union. Palmerston was therefore especially concerned to prevent a direct confrontation with France, and he sought to achieve this by outmanoeuvring her diplomatically, both at the Conference and in Brussels. Thus for example he was prepared to sanction 'intermeddling' in the election of a sovereign in an attempt to prevent the Duc de Nemours assuming the throne and thereby precipitating war.

Such complexities were not anticipated when the Whigs came into office. Molé, briefly the French Foreign Minister in 1830, made an appeal to the Powers to maintain a strict recognition of the principle of non-

intervention in Belgium, which Talleyrand reiterated in his first interview with William IV.⁸ In truth this appeal, which the French claimed was based on the principles of Castlereagh and Canning, was a calculated attempt to forestall any unilateral action by the Eastern Powers and to allow the pro-French element in Belgium full rein. However, Molé's appeal was echoed by Whig speakers in Parliament⁹ and probably encouraged the incoming ministers to believe that the Belgian question could be resolved if Britain and France were to act together to prevent intervention.

Palmerston first chaired the London Conference on 30 November 1830 and he was quickly to discover that the issues of intervention and non-intervention could not be so sharply defined as the Whigs had hoped. Although the very existence of the Conference was a guarantee against unilateral action, the means of ensuring that the Netherlands could continue to perform their traditional barrier function remained to be found. This was a matter in which strategic considerations loomed larger than questions of national self-determination, to the extent that any new political arrangements would have to be approved, if not actually prescribed by the Powers. Palmerston made it clear that recognition of the independence of Belgium, which was agreed by the plenipotentiaries on 20 December, was directed solely towards the restoration of tranquillity in the Netherlands and of the balance of power in Europe as a whole.¹⁰ His colleagues in the Cabinet appreciated that it was necessary for the Powers to mediate between the two parties in the dispute and they shared Palmerston's estimate of the insignificance of Belgian independence *per se*. However, there was some disagreement among cabinet members as to whether it would be legitimate to take this form of diplomatic intervention further in choosing a sovereign for the new Belgian state. The dilemma over intervention or non-intervention,

which was continually to face the Grey ministry, overhung Cabinet discussions at least until the beginning of February, when the crisis over the possible election of the Duc de Nemours was resolved.

Palmerston and Grey had been anxious from the outset that the choice of a Belgian sovereign should not reflect any national bias. It had been assumed that the Prince of Orange would become King or Viceroy of Belgium, as this seemed the best way of preserving peace and avoiding military intervention: Lord John Russell expressed just such hopes to Lady Holland on his first day in office.¹¹ However, the Belgian Provisional Government defied the Conference by passing a vote excluding the House of Orange-Nassau from power in perpetuity. Fortunately for the Belgians, the response which might have been expected from Tsar Nicholas to this insult to his brother-in-law the King of the Netherlands was muted by the outbreak of the Polish revolt at the end of November. Even so, it was clear that the Powers would not allow the Provisional Government to choose a sovereign freely.

Palmerston and Grey cast around widely for suitable candidates should an Orange restoration prove impossible. Their first suggestion was Archduke Charles of Austria, but Talleyrand thought that such a choice smacked too much of a royalist restoration and in any case Metternich made it clear that he would not support the candidacy.¹² Then they approached Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, an obvious candidate from the British point of view and always regarded as a British nominee, although Talleyrand claimed to have adopted him first.¹³ On the same day that the Conference agreed on the independent status of Belgium, Grey told Palmerston in confidence that Leopold was prepared to accept the Belgian throne, following the visit of the two to Claremont the previous week.¹⁴ However, Leopold's candidacy was not seriously considered at this stage, particularly as the Orange party

in Belgium was beginning to appear strong. The reports of Ponsonby, one of the Conference Commissioners in Brussels and Grey's brother-in-law, appeared to reopen the possibility of placing the Prince of Orange on the throne notwithstanding the exclusion vote. Grey was not convinced: in the letter telling of Leopold's willingness to accept the crown, he told Palmerston of his belief that

any attempt to replace the Prince of Orange [at the head of the Belgian people] would produce a civil war and farewell to all hope that the French Government would be able to restrain the party, which is even now almost too strong for them, urging measures that would lead to the annexation of Belgium to France.

Grey's change of tone towards France is apparent here and was noted soon afterwards by Princess Lieven, who was pleased to see that he viewed the July Revolution in a different light.¹⁵ Palmerston shared his scepticism about the Orange candidacy, particularly in view of the Prince's unpopularity in Brussels after his abortive attempt to occupy the city in September.¹⁶ However, by allowing the Prince's claims consideration, Palmerston could be assured of the goodwill of Russia in the continuing deliberations about arrangements for an armistice and the proper political and territorial complexion of Belgium.¹⁷ Furthermore, Ponsonby was convinced that the tenuous basis of Orange support would be strengthened by the possibility that the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, the possession of the King of Holland occupied illegally by the Belgians, might be included in the new Kingdom of Belgium in the event of the Prince becoming King.¹⁸ By the first week in January, Grey and Palmerston seem to have been satisfied that the Orange cause was worth encouragement. Characteristically, Grey set himself against any direct interference, though not ruling out undercover support on

Palmerston's suggestion.¹⁹ He wrote to Palmerston on 10 January:

I think the reasons against the open interference of Ponsonby and Bresson [the French Conference Commissioner in Brussels] obvious. But I wish it could have managed to have a sort of invitation sent from his partisans to the Prince of Orange. A communication made by him, if not very carefully looked after, may spoil everything.²⁰

In the event the Conference plenipotentiaries drafted a letter on the Prince's behalf, soliciting support in Belgium, which Grey revised personally.²¹ At this stage Palmerston shared the conviction of the Plenipotentiaries of the Eastern Powers, that peace could be assured only by the election of the Prince.²²

The complexities surrounding the choice of a monarch and the definition of the Belgian state were little realised and still less understood by the rest of the Cabinet. On the question of the choice of sovereign, Whig opinions as expressed by Holland, Grant and Russell reveal a concern to be done with the Belgian problem with a minimum of interference or offence to France. Suggestions as to suitable candidates were thrown around with abandon. Holland's comments to Grey at the beginning of January give a good indication as to the tone of the debate:

My general view is to attach little importance either to the Prince or to the form of the new Belgian State . . . as either from inclination or weakness it must be virtually French . . .²³

In his new role of statesman, Grey could not agree:

There seems no case but for strong language [towards France] . . . I wished and hoped for better things but whether from insecurity or weakness, things are taking a course in which we cannot acquiesce.²⁴

However, there was support for Holland's approach from an unexpected source. As President of the Board of Control, Charles Grant had no great insight into foreign affairs and the paper on Belgium which he submitted to Grey on 20 January 1831* admitted as much. However, his highly individual approach towards the problem of choosing a sovereign is a valuable guide to a strain of lay opinion in the government. He shared with Holland an impatience for a quick conclusion to the negotiations, which arose from an imperfect grasp of their complexities. There was more to the work of the Conference than the calling of an armistice, the proclamation of Belgian independence, and the exclusion of obviously unsuitable candidates for the Belgian throne. The election could not be too soon for Grant, who rather unfairly blamed the Belgians for the delay. The most fascinating aspect of the paper - and one which may have prompted a rueful smile from Grey - is Grant's opinion as to a suitable monarch. His personal preference for a Bourbon hardly merits serious consideration, but he was not alone in acquiescing in the possible choice of Otto of Bavaria. Otto was unacceptable to Grey and Palmerston in that he was Louis Philippe's nephew and under the tutelage of the Comte de Mérode, the figurehead of the cause of Franco-Belgian union. Grant brushes aside objections to his election, even under Mérode's regency, in terms reminiscent of Holland by maintaining that voluntary union would not justify British interference. Unlike Holland, who always feared the strength of reactionary Francophobe opinion, he did not believe that support for a war over Belgium would be forthcoming in such a situation. His assertion that whoever was chosen could be relied upon to put Belgian interests first can have done little to

*For a full transcript see Appendix I.

allay the fears of French aggrandisement which Palmerston constantly expressed and Grey increasingly came to share.

Grant's opinions are indicative of the state of ignorance among members of the government as the Belgian election approached, the first of the crises involving possible British intervention abroad. Palmerston was normally at pains to keep his Cabinet informed, but at this time the pressure of work relating to the Conference seems to have allowed little time for exposition. The crucial protocol of 20 January 1831, guaranteeing Belgian neutrality,²⁵ took even Grey by surprise.²⁶ The Prime Minister and his cabinet were predictably enthusiastic about the protocol, particularly the pledge of non-interference contained in Article VI. In view of the Cabinet's lack of prior knowledge, the evidence of Lord John Russell's contribution to the idea of Belgian neutrality, contained in his *Early Correspondence*²⁷ and apparently overlooked by historians, is of especial interest. In an undated letter Holland refers to 'the protocol . . . you begot in a corner';²⁸ that the protocol of 20 January is referred to here is confirmed by another letter from Holland of 27 January, urging Russell to use his influence with Grey to moderate the British attitude towards France:

You begot the neutrality of Belgium, beget the peace of the world.²⁹

Thus it seems very likely that Russell was consulted even though Palmerston, normally cited with Bülow, the Austrian plenipotentiary, as the chief architect of Belgian independence,³⁰ was not close to Russell. Certainly Russell's correspondence with Holland during the month of January demonstrates his concern that Belgium should enjoy adequate

protection from attack.³¹ Furthermore, Holland would hardly have written in terms of 'begetting protocols' had the similarity between the views of Russell and Palmerston been coincidental and only retrospectively apparent.

For all his presumed prior knowledge of the neutrality proposal to the Conference, Russell was as slow as the members of the Cabinet* to appreciate the gravity of the situation as two of the unacceptable candidates, the Duc de Nemours and the Bonapartist Duc de Leuchtenberg, came to the fore. The French seemed to be increasingly uncooperative. Talleyrand had already dropped dark hints about the possibility of France acquiring Luxemburg and of the Belgians electing Otto of Bavaria.³² In the Conference he had 'fought like a lion' to have Luxemburg, properly a part of the German Confederation, made neutral, undoubtedly so as to facilitate a possible French annexation of Belgium.³³ Palmerston's success at the Conference had been neutralised by events in Belgium. By the last week in January it became clear that the Prince of Orange's candidacy was doomed, as, quite apart from France's equivocation,³⁴ Ponsonby had misled Grey and Palmerston about the size of the Orange party in Belgium. As a commissioner of the Conference he had compromised his country by his overt championship of the Orange cause.³⁵ However, Ponsonby was justifiably incensed at French criticism of his Orangism,³⁶ as his colleague Bresson was busy canvassing support for the Duc de Nemours (on the orders of Sebastani, the French foreign minister) to prevent the election of the Bonapartist Duc de Leuchtenberg. Grey quickly concluded that there was no virtue in supporting the Prince further,³⁷ although Palmerston, while agreeing

*Russell did not join the Cabinet until June 1831.

that there should be no intervention in the election, stood by the Orange cause throughout so as not to offend the Eastern Powers.³⁸ Palmerston may also have had in mind the necessity of retaining the confidence of the King at a time of domestic and international crisis. William IV's suspicion of French motives had led him to doubt the effectiveness of the neutrality protocol as a safeguard against aggression.³⁹ Palmerston adopted this position partly for the sake of form: he realised better than anybody that British action, in the shape of intervention or non-intervention, was wholly to be determined by the French Government's attitude towards the election of Nemours or Leuchtenberg.⁴⁰

Naturally the Francophiles in the Cabinet, of whom Grant and Holland seem to have been most prominent at this time, put the preservation of peace above the maintenance of the Low Countries barrier. Unfortunately for them, Talleyrand re-opened the question of territorial 'rectifications' and the possibility of making Antwerp either a free or a Hanseatic-type port.⁴¹ Such a proposal was obviously unacceptable to Britain if the Low Countries were to remain a strategic barrier.⁴² Palmerston managed to obtain the Cabinet's agreement to a firm line towards France on this and the Nemours issue on January 25, but there was much uneasiness. In reply to Holland's report of the Cabinet decision, Russell wished for a more conciliatory approach towards France:

The French proposals are ill-timed and unreasonable but can't we leave the protest to Austria and Prussia . . . unless we do something to please them [the French] they will do as the Poles do in their marriages, make a flaw in the contract so that they can afterwards break it. ⁴³

Though Grey was looking to any source to prevent intervention and war, he was not so favourably inclined to France. 'Their conduct in bringing forward this claim for the restoration of the old frontier is very suspicious' he wrote to Palmerston on the 26th.⁴⁴ With the Prince of Orange out of the running in the election, Grey showed a willingness to consider Leuchtenberg's candidacy, which he had earlier dismissed in favour of the Prince of Orange and out of deference to France.⁴⁵ Holland was horrified at the thought. He wrote to Russell:

There seems a malicious sort of pleasure in the prospect of Leuchtenberg's election to the crown of Belgium because it would offend and disappoint the French government! As if it would not be a triumph for the warlike party in France and lead to changes in ministry and dynasty that would indulge them in war.

He urged Russell to use his influence with Grey:

Your word would I know have weight - and I am sure you agree with me in thinking that . . . nothing but direct aggression or positive insult from France should justify us breaking with her.⁴⁶

Russell did write to Grey in these terms,⁴⁷ but his view was soon overtaken by events. The French signature of the 12th Protocol, which set out the financial arrangements to be made between the Low Countries,⁴⁸ had been well received in Cabinet as an indication of French goodwill,⁴⁹ but Talleyrand's independent action in this matter did not reflect the attitude of his government. Palmerston learned from Granville's despatch of 31 January that the French had disavowed the 12th Protocol and the *Bases de Séparation* that were annexed to it, on the grounds that the matters involved were outside Conference jurisdiction.⁵⁰ The previous day Talleyrand had asked

Palmerston about the possibility of Nemours becoming King of Belgium.⁵¹

Palmerston made his famous reply that Britain would never agree to this union of Belgium and France and that he expected a general war to ensue in that event. He summoned an emergency Cabinet meeting for 2 February. The Conference put out a protocol at Palmerston's instigation renouncing any offer of the Belgian crown to princes of their respective countries.⁵² Naturally Talleyrand refused to sign such an overt anti-French statement.

Unfortunately we have no record of the crucial Cabinet meeting of 2 February, beyond Palmerston's report to Granville of the decision to require French fulfilment of the undertaking to refuse the offer of the crown to Nemours.⁵³ It is clear that Holland and the others deferred to Grey's and Palmerston's superior knowledge of the situation in agreeing to confirm that Belgium should be really and not nominally independent. Very probably Palmerston had the support of the Canningites - Melbourne and Graham - in this strong line, together with Stanley and Richmond. If Lansdowne showed his hand, it is no longer visible to us. The statement in Palmerston's letter that 'we are reluctant even to think of war' provides the best clue as to why Francophile opinion in the Cabinet was overruled on this occasion. Fortunately for the waverers, on this occasion, as during all the international crises since 1815, they were never driven to declare themselves either way. Palmerston's mention of the possibility of Prince Charles of Naples' election - the first time he had seriously considered it - suggests that the Cabinet was prepared to go to great lengths to avoid having to threaten France with war.

With the election due on 3 February, such suggestions were too late. The previous week had seen frantic activity in Brussels, with Ponsonby

continuing his efforts to foil the pro-French element, justifying his conduct in hastily composed letters to Grey and Palmerston, aptly compared in a subsequent parliamentary debate to a boarding school girl's letters home.⁵⁴ Ponsonby was accused of canvassing for Leuchtenberg so as to foil Nemours, and was also implicated in the Orange plot to obtain the crown by a *coup d'état*, whose failure greatly embarrassed Grey. In a letter to Princess Lieven who, unlike Ponsonby, was directly involved in the plot,⁵⁵ Grey regretted ever having espoused the Orange cause.⁵⁶ Meanwhile Bresson, whose partisan behaviour eventually convinced even Sebastiani of the need to recall him, had been joined in Brussels by Colonel Lawoestine, a soldier from the Napoleonic era, who 'burned to enter Belgium at the head of his regiment'.⁵⁷ Their enthusiastic reports together with pressure exerted in Paris by De Celles, the Belgian envoy, and Sebastiani, help to explain Louis Philippe's equivocal answers to British requests to renounce the throne on Nemours' behalf. In the event Nemours was elected with an overall majority of one vote. His cause had triumphed because of Sebastiani's instructions to Bresson not to communicate the neutrality protocol to the Belgian Congress. France's adherence to the decision to leave Luxemburg in Dutch hands, if known, would have lost Nemours the 20 votes of the Luxemburg contingent.

Ponsonby's reaction to the vote was predictable: 'The bubble has burst' he told Grey; 'France is mistress of Belgium for as long as her arms are able to keep it'.⁵⁸ Palmerston reflected ruefully on differing French and British constructions of non-intervention, in the light of Sebastiani's various proclamations to the Belgian congress:

It is rather too good for the French government to be objecting to our protocols on intervention, when they officially dictate to the Congress as to the choice of a sovereign and declare that in a given contingency they will march in to unking the new monarch.⁵⁹

Although Sebastiani made an official statement on 5 February that France would not support Nemours, the promise was not immediately fulfilled and the delay aggravated the situation. In truth the French government was in a parlous condition. Talleyrand, increasingly conscious of the danger of war, was acting independently of Sebastiani's instructions. The French government was under severe pressure from extremists not to desert the Belgians, who in the interim had appointed Surlet Chokier as regent. He looked to France to support them in their rejection of the *Bases de Séparation*. While the Cabinet waited anxiously for confirmation of the French attitude, Palmerston became convinced that it was 'blowing up for war'.⁶⁰ At the same time Grey wrote to Flahault urging the French to act honestly towards the Conference, and expressing a willingness to consider any suggestion as to an alternative monarch - even the Neapolitan prince.⁶¹ However, subsequent events showed that Grey and the Cabinet were less prepared to bind France to definite undertakings once the refusal of the Crown for Nemours had been confirmed on 17 February.⁶² The 19th Protocol of 19 February,⁶³ of which Palmerston and the disobedient Talleyrand⁶⁴ were the principal authors, in essence reasserted the demand of the Conference that both Belgium and France accept the *Bases de Séparation*. This remarkable document, which appears in full in Bulwer and Ashley's official life of Palmerston,⁶⁵ contains a lengthy preamble about the sanctity of the treaties concluded in 1814 and 1815 with respect to

Belgium, before going on to reassert the inviolability of the *Bases de Séparation* against all protests from the Belgian Congress and, by implication, the French government. Parts of the preamble were controversial in view of traditional Whig attitudes towards the Vienna settlement:

D'après ce principe d'un ordre supérieur (le grand principe du droit public) les Traités ne perdent pas leur puissance, quels que soient les changements qui interviennent dans l'organisation intérieure des Peuples. Pour juger l'application que les 5 Cours ont faite de ce même principe, pour apprécier les déterminations qu'elles ont prises relativement à la Belgique, il suffit de se reporter à l'époque de l'Année 1814. ⁶⁶

Such sentiments did not accord with Grey's opinion of the treaty arrangements, as expressed three months previously:

[The Powers]....having succeeded in destroying that mighty power by the energies of the peoplethey set about a new division of Europe in which the weak were unceremoniously sacrificed to the strong....and engaged to uphold the new order of things thus established by a forcible suppression of all public opinion. ⁶⁷

Grey made strenuous efforts to secure a revision of the protocol, but he found himself at odds with Palmerston for the first time on a major issue. He confessed to Holland:

I really do not know what I can do more.....the conference adheres to the original form of the Protocol after submission of my corrections*, gone over with Palmerston. I cannot agree with it in this form as Palmerston well knows - what more can I do? It will be a good thing to bind France if we can, but consider, what would be the effect if the War Party came in after we had signed a protocol they might object to on popular grounds? ⁶⁸

* Not found among either Grey's or Palmerston's papers.

Holland shared Grey's anxiety although, significantly, he accepted the main body of the document:

Perhaps Palmerston could be persuaded by Talleyrand, you or me to cut out the first part of the preamble, to curtail the commendations of the 1814-15 treaties with which you and I cannot agree. Then I would press for a speedy signature. Let Palmerston know what you think, for he is, poor fellow, in a great stew.⁶⁹

Palmerston responded to Grey's entreaties but was unable to persuade his fellow plenipotentiaries to adopt the Prime Minister's revisions.⁷⁰ There had been deadlock on the 22 February but the signatures of all five plenipotentiaries were obtained the next day to the Protocol in its original form.⁷¹ Grey must have been anxious as to the French government's response and with good reason. On March 3, Louis Philippe rescinded his previous acceptance of the 19th Protocol, having already protested once again about the protocol of 20 January. Shortly afterwards however, the King seems to have had a change of heart, for he took a firm stand against the violent element in France by making the judicious Casimir Périer Prime Minister on 14 March. At the same time Le Beau, a sensible and moderate man, became Foreign Minister in a reformed Belgian government. In retrospect these appointments mark a clear end to the first phase of the Belgian negotiations. The February crisis had passed with the British government apparently behaving in traditional style with regard to Belgium,⁷² though, as we have seen, prominent members of the Cabinet held heretical views on the subject. The question posed by the *Annual Register* over Whig policy towards the French invasion of Spain in 1823 immediately jumps to mind - would the Whigs have gone to war?

It is unfortunate that so little information on Cabinet views of the crisis can be gleaned from private papers. However, the attitude of Grey towards the 19th protocol, which serves as a pendant to the Nemours episode, shows a reluctance even on his part to face directly the issues raised by the breach of the Vienna Settlement and possible French domination of Belgium. The equivocations of the Whigs in opposition over intervention, whether strategic or ideological in motive, and over the status of the post-war settlement were beginning to be apparent in office.

The crisis arising from the Dutch and French invasions of Belgium in August 1831, to which we must turn next, produced a similarly equivocal response from the Cabinet which, happily, is better documented. It centred around the tardiness of the French army in withdrawing from Belgian territory after the retreat of the Dutch, and appeared to call for an even stronger threat of British intervention than had been required in February. However, Franco-British relations had markedly improved in the interim. Furthermore, a confrontation with France would be prejudicial to the Belgian cause in that the success of the Eighteen Articles,⁷³ a revision of the *Bases de Séparation* in favour of Belgium, depended upon close Franco-British co-operation in breaking down the obstructive tactics of the Dutch. Palmerston and Talleyrand had worked closely together in securing the election of Leopold of Saxe-Coburg on terms acceptable to the Conference, the Belgian Congress and the Prince himself.⁷⁴ The question of the barrier fortresses was the only major source of friction between the governments, as the August crisis was to show, although French notions about the advantages of a partition of Belgium occasionally came to the surface.⁷⁵

In public the government was keen to present a common front over Belgium with France and the Eastern Powers. Grey replied to Aberdeen's criticisms of British policy, as expressed in the debate on the King's Speech of June 1831, by emphasising the concerted nature of Conference decisions.⁷⁶ Aberdeen had attacked the government for departing from the principle of non-interference that the King's Speech acknowledged.⁷⁷ He cited the exclusion of certain candidates from the Belgian throne as instances. This action,

If it was not in fact intervention, it was what our neighbours the French, who were very fond of new words, might very fairly call 'quasi-intervention'.⁷⁸

Radicals criticised the government in similar terms,⁷⁹ but their motive was ideological; the Tories aimed to strengthen the Dutch government, with whom they were in close touch through Falck, the popular Dutch Ambassador.

There was always the possibility that the Reform offensive would fail and bring Aberdeen back to the Foreign Office. Aberdeen criticised the arbitrary manner in which the 'inviolable' *Bases* had been superseded by the Eighteen Articles and said a few uncomplimentary words about the choice of Leopold as Belgian King. In his reply, Grey denied that the principle of non-intervention had been breached, as certain candidates for the Belgian throne were generally agreed to be unsuitable. He put forward the choice of Leopold as an example of the corporate nature of Conference decisions.⁸⁰ Unfortunately, Leopold was not popular in France, where he was seen as a British agent. At the end of July Louis Philippe made an inflammatory speech announcing that the barrier fortresses would be destroyed, and that Belgium would not be a member of the German Confederation if she were

to acquire Luxemburg.⁸¹ The speech, which greatly embarrassed the British government in that it dealt with matters in which France was not to be consulted, drew angry protests in the Lords from Wellington, who throughout the Belgian crisis regarded the barrier fortresses almost as his personal property.⁸² Grey's reply was halting and non-committal.⁸³

Any difference between the French and British governments on these issues was dwarfed by the action of the King of the Netherlands. On 2 August, without prior warning, Dutch troops invaded Belgium - the final answer to repeated Conference requests to adhere to the Eighteen Articles. At mid-day on 3 August⁸⁴ Palmerston, as Chairman of the Conference, received a letter from the Dutch government replying to the request of 25 July to send plenipotentiaries to negotiate a final settlement with Belgium.⁸⁵ The letter, which Palmerston opened at the Conference session next day, contained a hint, but not a definite statement, about the imminent resumption of hostilities. It reminded the Conference of its undertaking to implement the *Bases* and went on:

. . . si cette supposition était démentie par l'événement, il ne resterait au Roi d'autre alternative, que celle de recourir à ses propres moyens et de mettre un terme à des condescences . . . La démarche même ci-dessus mentionnée des Représentants des 5 Cours à la Haye prouve évidemment combien à cette époque la Conférence de Londres était convaincue des Droits du Roi de recommencer les hostilités.⁸⁶

This passage is particularly important in view of subsequent Opposition claims in Parliament that the Dutch had given warning of the resumption of hostilities. In fact the Dutch army was already on the move when the letter was sent, and the British government learned of it independently on the afternoon of 3 August.⁸⁷

This first phase of the crisis was characterised by an unusually rapid and unanimous response from the Cabinet. Palmerston was determined to protect Belgium and her new King, even if no other Power would intervene,⁸⁸ and he received strong support. Grey was able to tell him that those members of the Cabinet who were present at the accustomed weekly meeting over dinner at Lansdowne House on 3 August were unanimously agreed that Codrington's squadron should be dispatched to the Downs.⁸⁹ Graham was to send appropriate instructions immediately, although Codrington (*pace* Navarino?) was not to be told of their object. It could be argued that the speed of the Whig response in this instance was due to the consideration that the dispatch of the squadron was a precautionary measure rather than an act of intervention - and also that the mere movement of ships did not affect the Naval Estimates. However, there must have been other thoughts in the minds of the ministers to account for their resolve. There was the threat to 'the cause of liberty all over the world' posed by the Dutch invasion: also, in view of the rapidity with which parliamentary questions were tabled, there was the threat of a Tory attempt to stop the Reform Bill by compromising the government over Holland.⁹⁰

Almost immediately the Cabinet was presented with the yet more challenging situation arising from the French advance into Belgium. The first hours of the campaign had displayed the superiority of the Dutch army, commanded by the Prince of Orange, over the Belgians and their plight was desperate. Leopold had written to both the French and British governments⁹¹ requesting armed assistance and the French replied immediately, mobilising with ominous haste in the view of those who

believed that they wished for partition.⁹² The next week saw the most frenzied activity on both the diplomatic and political fronts. Uniquely during the term of Grey's ministry, the Opposition were able to bring pressure on the government during a diplomatic crisis rather than offering retrospective criticisms. The movements of the opposing armies could not be concealed as could disagreements in conference. The question of possible intervention in Belgium had re-emerged with a vengeance, and Tories were quick to point the parallel with Napoleon's entry into Belgium in 1815. In response, the Cabinet had to adopt a positive attitude to coincide with that of the Conference while not jeopardising the ripening relationship with France. The auguries were not promising. Brougham, writing before news of the French advance had reached London, was in a non-interventionist mood and seemed to fear the French more than the Dutch:

I cannot help feeling most anxious about France and a little about Prussia. One thing is clear - if we move one inch we give both a pretext to enter Belgium or Holland . . . Surely we could put it to Prussia that her best policy is to be firm and make France abstain from entering Belgium - for if once *on any pretext* she gets possession no French government is strong enough to withdraw.

But as to France - I must say I feel most strongly the necessity of sending a most powerful and important special ambassador to let the King and ministers know our feeling and that of the country against war - *you* [Grey] would do it with most effect but I fear you could not be spared. - Then Lansdowne seems the next best . . .⁹³

Brougham's letter has been quoted at length to bring out its full Foxite flavour - seasoned as it is with his Quaker pacifism. However, events had already overtaken it when it reached Grey who learned (from the

newspapers!) on 6 August of the French advance.⁹⁴ The Conference and the British Cabinet were embarrassed both by the French action and the secrecy which had surrounded it. Palmerston was clearly angry:

The French having taken a wrong step by moving their troops without our concurrence we might remonstrate and pick a quarrel with them about it, but . . . the wiser course is to try to obtain a hold over the future proceedings of the French troops and this I think the proposed protocol effects.⁹⁵

The protocol in question,⁹⁶ which accepted the French *fait accompli* while binding the army to the decisions of the Conference, had been pushed through with difficulty in face of the pro-Dutch sympathies of the Eastern Powers.⁹⁷ Palmerston dutifully withheld his signature to allow the Cabinet, which he had summoned to an emergency session on Saturday, 6 August, to voice its opinion. The Cabinet agreed that the French army should be asked to withdraw as soon as the armistice was re-established. However, the meeting was unsatisfactory, and as such throws light on the nature of decision making in Grey's Cabinet. In the first place, Grey, together with Melbourne and Russell, was not there as he had left London on the Friday for a weekend audience with the King at Brighton. Durham gave him a report of the meeting:

I am very sorry you did not come up - for we have lost 2 good hours . . . Misfortune was that being there, every member of the Cabinet, old and young, able and decrepit, thought himself at liberty to discuss the whole state of Europe . . . They all particularly request that you excuse yourself from the King to attend Cabinet to-morrow - truly nothing could be more necessary.⁹⁸

This letter speaks volumes for Palmerston's patience, which Graham and

Brougham were to admire,⁹⁹ in allowing rambling and ill-informed discussions of foreign affairs to go on in Cabinet. There is also the strong impression that ministers, including Palmerston on occasions, looked to Grey for a lead on foreign policy. In his journal Lord Holland gives a more detailed account of the confusion that irritated Durham.¹⁰⁰ Most of the discussion centred around the good faith of the French action. The Tory element in the Cabinet, notably Goderich and Richmond, believed, as did Bagot, the British ambassador at the Hague, that the French had jumped the gun in intervening as the result of a deal with Leopold over the barrier fortresses and Luxemburg. Richmond suggested that the Conference should be dissolved and the Dutch and Belgians left to confront each other - not a practical suggestion but one which was later to occur even to Grey as the negotiations grew yet more tiresome.¹⁰¹ Palmerston was able to reassure his colleagues that Bülow and Wessenberg, the Austrian and Prussian plenipotentiaries, had confirmed that it was essential to reach amicable agreement with France over the movements of her troops if peace was to be maintained. This news was apparently a great relief to Holland, Lansdowne and Brougham. Consequently, agreement was reached on the attitude towards France, though out of deference to Grey and the other absentees, final judgement was deferred. There was some debate as to whether the English fleet should be placed at the disposal of the Conference as the Protocol stated. However, as Durham pointed out in his letter to Grey, the French army was on a similar footing, having been reprimanded for acting independently.

Grey's reaction to the events of the weekend was surprising. He showed an unexpectedly tough attitude towards France and wished to reserve the right for Britain to act independently. He was dissatisfied with the

protocol of 6 August:

If we concede this [the subordination of the Royal Navy to the Conference] as an equivalent to a similar engagement on the part of the French army, it must be remembered that it is only an engagement on the part of Talleyrand and may be disavowed—in that case we would be very inconveniently bound to the Conference, on the majority of which we cannot depend.¹⁰²

Grey's amendment was adopted in the final text, but Palmerston was still successful in his attempt to 'let off the French government as easily and as handsomely as we could'. The protocol in its final form was a masterpiece of ingenuity in view of the French breach of accepted diplomatic practice. However, it was a short term expedient. Questions were being asked in Parliament about the exact status of the French troops, which the government could not ignore. Palmerston was questioned closely in the Commons about the extent of British foreknowledge of the French advance and the apparent violation of the engagements of 1814-1815. His answers, based on the premise that 'there could be no previous agreement for an event which was not foreseen', failed to satisfy his critics, like his subsequent attempts to explain why the Dutch letter of 1 August remained unopened in his pocket for so long.¹⁰³ Londonderry and Aberdeen led the assault in the Lords, supporting King William of the Netherlands against any allegations of bad faith and criticising the government's acquiescence in French excesses.¹⁰⁴ Alarmed by the strength of feeling and by Sebastiani's hint that the French might remain in Belgium until the fortress question was settled to their satisfaction, Palmerston told Granville:

I have been assailed with questions and notices of motions on the subject, all of which have for

their object to express the strong expectation felt that now that the Dutch troops are retiring from Belgium that French troops will also return to their own territory. This was *the assurance given verbally by the French ministers to the Plenipotentiaries of the four Powers; and it was on the faith of this assurance that the Conference adopted the march of the French as a measure of the alliance.*^{105*}

Worse was to follow, for on the next day Talleyrand suggested privately to Bülow that perhaps a partition of Belgium might be the best solution to the problem.¹⁰⁶ Palmerston insisted to Granville that the French army had to leave Belgium - in view of Talleyrand's attitudes this had become 'a question of war or peace'.¹⁰⁷ As Palmerston said, Grey was 'peremptory on this point' in his own letter to Granville:

The French must not remain in Belgium on any pretext whatever . . . Public opinion in England is already excited and any appearance of bad faith on the part of France would kindle a flame which would make war inevitable.¹⁰⁸

Grey was particularly annoyed at the equivocal attitude of the French towards withdrawal. The Cabinet, meeting the previous day, had gratefully sanctioned Codrington's return to Portsmouth following the official order to the Prince of Orange to call off the advance to Brussels and retire behind the Dutch frontier.¹⁰⁹ There was another meeting on the 13th and ministers approved the language Palmerston had used in his despatch to Granville. According to Holland,¹¹⁰ Palmerston's opinion that partition was a very real threat carried much weight with his colleagues. Goderich, for example, was keen that Britain should show over Belgium the same firmness displayed by Stanley towards Ireland. Holland was more concerned about the Prince of Orange's delay both in executing his withdrawal orders and apologising for

*Italics Palmerston's.

the insults which Adair and Lord William Russell, the British mediators in the field, had suffered at his hands. However, he, together with Althorp, Brougham and Russell was persuaded to agree to Britain's stance. Judging from Althorp's subsequent attitude, the decision was not understood as a commitment to war without further warning.

The unsatisfactory French response to the British representations of which Palmerston learned on 16 August brought a commitment to war nearer. On that day he wrote to Granville using the oft quoted words:

One thing is certain - the French must go out of Belgium or we have a general war, and war in a given number of days.^{111*}

Palmerston spoke without Cabinet backing - a meeting was to be delayed to await official French replies to the representations in the letters to Granville of the 13th. It is unlikely that a Cabinet response would have been pitched so highly as this, Palmerston's most unequivocal threat to the French of British intervention over Belgium. The non-interventionist element in the Cabinet was strong, among whom Althorp was the most outspoken. He wrote to Brougham expressing even more heretical views on Belgium than those of Grey a year earlier:

Grey talks of a Cabinet on Belgium and of holding strong language about the French army there.

The case I admit to be very difficult but war can do no good, and must be ruinous . . . I had rather they kept Belgium permanently than that we should go to war. I am sure it would be the least of two evils for this country. The middle course would be best. The French wish to stay until something is settled: the Conference might insist with France on preliminary negotiations [between Holland and Belgium] . . . You must be at Cabinet whenever it is summoned.¹¹²

*Italics Palmerston's.

The Cabinet met on 18 August prior to a session of the Conference and it is not difficult to deduce from Palmerston's report to Granville¹¹³ that his colleagues persuaded him to tone down his language. Certainly the protocol of that day was conciliatory in that it set no time limit on the required French evacuation. The pretext was that official news of the Dutch withdrawal had not been communicated to the Conference.¹¹⁴ Judging by Holland's description of the Cabinet meeting, Grey's anger had cooled too, though almost certainly not for the reasons for former gives:

He is so reasonable in council and so unaffectedly desirous of peace . . . that I am half inclined to suspect that when he assumes so high a tone, as he does occasionally with France, that his vicinity to Richmond gives his first suppositions a tincture of Princess Lieven's politics.¹¹⁵

Although both Grey and Palmerston were still determined that the decision as to the demolition of certain barrier fortresses was to be left to the Four Powers, they stepped back from the brink further as news came in of the delay of the Dutch retreat and the deliberate inundation of Belgian land through dyke breaking.¹¹⁶ By 26 August Palmerston seems to have been satisfied by French promises to withdraw.¹¹⁷ However, he was still concerned at the possibility of a Franco-Belgian deal involving the demolition of certain fortresses in return for a portion of the French troops remaining behind to stiffen the Belgian Army. The French government had sent La Tour Marbourg to Belgium with a list of fortresses to be demolished. Palmerston sympathised with Leopold's plight, but could not allow a substantial French presence in Belgium. The Protocol of 15 September officially closed the August episode - the Dutch already having agreed to a six week's armistice - by announcing the complete

voluntary withdrawal of those French troops remaining at the express wish of Leopold.¹¹⁸

The length of time which elapsed between Palmerston's 'war in a number of days' outburst and the protocol about French withdrawal testifies to the way French diplomacy steadied and particularly to the moderating non-interventionist tone of the Cabinet. We have already seen how Grey softened towards France, and to judge by Holland's remark about 'Lansdowne's opinions on foreign affairs [being] 'as usual right but rather faint',¹¹⁹ we can assume that the Foxites won the day. Holland had suggested privately to Grey that the request to withdraw be delayed to make it look less peremptory.¹²⁰ Palmerston took the opposite view:

I hardly know upon what grounds we could justify, when the papers come before Parliament, having abstained from telling France that, the objects for which she entered Belgium being fully accomplished, it is time that her troops should retire.¹²¹

He wrote in similar terms to Granville,¹²² but received on the same day a long and important letter from Grey, reflecting Holland's view:

That we have a right to insist on the immediate evacuation of Belgium by the French is undeniable. The question is whether it is advisable to rest immediately upon the right, or to wait, without showing timidity or altering our tone . . . to see what France will do upon the very clear and distinct intimation which has been given to her . . . I must add that I have a great distrust of the ministers of the three Powers. Some of them would not be sorry to see a war break out . . . and more than one of them I suspect is in communication with the Duke of Wellington and Aberdeen. I hope you will take care to let them know that if a war takes place, they must be prepared to carry it on with their own resources, that we can act only by sea and that they must expect neither subsidies nor pecuniary assistance of any kind from this country.¹²³

In Cabinet the next day Grey's view was accepted - not surprisingly, given its appeal to the 'peace and retrenchment' lobby. Furthermore, Russian military strength could soon be brought to bear on Belgium in view of the imminent surrender of the Poles at Warsaw. The fear that the Tsar, 'flushed after his frightful success over the Poles', might offer military help to his brother-in-law was uppermost in the minds of ministers.¹²⁴ Palmerston had the unenviable task of conveying the Cabinet decision to his Conference colleagues and wrote somewhat irritably to Grey of his rough reception:

I had great difficulty in persuading the three Allies to do what you wished. Prussia was the most unmanageable and would hear of nothing but a summary protocol this day; Austria had instructions to do whatever Prussia did; Russia was the most anxious to acquiesce in our wishes.

After much battling I prevailed upon them to give up their protocol, though they all said they did it with regret.¹²⁵

With the immediate crisis past, the issues of a final settlement between Belgium and Holland and the fate of the barrier fortresses remained. It was clear that the Dutch would not accept the Eighteen Articles and that Belgium could not defend herself unaided. Negotiations were resumed, resulting in the Twenty-four Articles of 14 October and the definitive Treaty of 15 November.¹²⁶ From the point of view of possible British intervention the fortresses were of great importance, and the discussion about their possible demolition acts as a pendant to Cabinet debate on the proper response to the military events of August. The barrier fortresses had been refurbished after 1815, at Allied expense and under Wellington's supervision, to forestall a renewed French advance into Belgium. These

thorns in the French side had always been of dubious value, and the close ties between France and Belgium that were apparent after their respective revolutions seemed to render them unnecessary. At least, so the French thought: Talleyrand was irked to be excluded officially from the Conference's of 17 April, although he appears to have helped in drafting it.¹²⁸ It was agreed that in view of the general strategic situation and Belgium's reduced means, some of the fortresses would be demolished after further discussions between the Four Powers.¹²⁹ During the summer of 1831, Britain and France were preoccupied with the negotiation of the Eighteen Articles and the terms for Leopold's acceptance of the Belgian Crown, but Louis Philippe's pronouncement on 23 July that all the barrier fortresses were to be destroyed¹³⁰ brought the problem to the fore once again. The Dutch invasion was most unfortunately timed in this respect, for the French presence in Belgium was an excellent bargaining counter in discussions over the fortresses with the Powers and with Leopold in particular. We have already seen the vehemence of the opposition's reaction to Louis Philippe's speech, and during August Wellington made strong representations to Grey, in conversations and lengthy memoranda, about the military necessity of retaining at least half of the fortresses.¹³¹ Palmerston was able to command support in Cabinet for the principle of rejecting any bargain between Leopold and the French. He told Granville that 'I have seldom seen a stronger feeling than that of the Cabinet about this question of the fortresses.'¹³² However, he promised to treat the question of demolition realistically (as Wellington had not) in the light of Belgium's military weakness. Palmerston may have exaggerated the strength of feeling. Holland reports that Grey seemed reluctant to force the issue, as the

fortresses were to be demolished anyway.¹³³ Russell hoped to see French wishes accommodated, although he recognised Britain's right of property.¹³⁴ However, the Cabinet agreed that the Four Powers alone should decide the question,¹³⁵ and the French eventually showed their acquiescence by formally renouncing Leopold's unofficial offer to demolish all the fortresses if France guaranteed the Eighteen Articles.¹³⁶

Thus far, Palmerston and the Cabinet had seen eye to eye on the fortresses issue. However, during the final phase, after the publication of the protocol respecting demolition, the spectre of intervention and war reappeared, bringing out the customary differences of opinion. Negotiations on the fortresses had been continued alongside those on new terms for Holland and Belgium, with the difference that France was excluded. The fortresses were not in themselves important but Palmerston regarded them, in Webster's words, as 'the symbol of the resolution of the Powers to preserve the independence of Belgium from attack by France'. Leopold sent General Goblet to London early in October to negotiate a treaty¹³⁷ and a list of fortresses to be demolished was agreed in a secret protocol on 15 November.¹³⁸ The list differed from that which La Tour Marbourg had put before Leopold in August¹³⁹ in that Charleroi and Tournai, on the western border with France, were to be maintained on Wellington's advice. Philippeville and Marienburg, the two fortresses nearest the French border, were to be demolished.¹⁴⁰ The protocol secretly communicated to Leopold was the basis of the secret convention which the Four Powers signed with Belgium on December 14.¹⁴¹

The Cabinet approved the convention on the same day and Palmerston, to his subsequent chagrin, forgot to emphasise the need for complete secrecy.¹⁴² In the event Holland's indiscretion precipitated a major crisis.

Talleyrand clearly had wind of the Convention - Holland later told Palmerston that he only heard that Tournai was a point at issue through Talleyrand.¹⁴³ Talleyrand pressed Holland about the status of Tournai. Holland wrote to Grey:

What a taking [*sic*] Talleyrand is in about Tournai: it would be provoking that Casimir P erier's ministry should be endangered or any coolness between us arise from a matter which in reality does not signify 3 brass farthings . . .¹⁴⁴

It is not clear whether Holland had revealed all at the time he wrote this letter; however let us enjoy the account of the whole incident which he entered with engaging naivet  into his journal:

Fortress protocol signed - Mons, Ath, M nin, Philippeville and Marienburg are to be demolished. I told Talleyrand of it and he wants to know if Tournai is on the list. I sent to Palmerston to ask. His reply made me conscious of my own indiscretion in telling Talleyrand anything about it, but it was too late to recall.¹⁴⁵

Palmerston was justifiably angry with Holland. He had hoped to receive the Belgium ratification before presenting the Convention to France as a *fait accompli*. The French reaction to news of the Convention was extreme. They had expected Tournai to be demolished in accordance with a pledge given by Leopold on 8 September,¹⁴⁶ and retaliated by threatening to withdraw their sanction from the Treaty of 15 November. That Philippeville and Marienburg, two fortresses ceded by France in 1815, were to be demolished, was an additional insult.¹⁴⁷ Leopold was placed in an awkward position with regard both to France and the other Powers, and urged Palmerston to agree to a suspension of their demolition.¹⁴⁸ Durham added

his weight to Leopold's entreaties.¹⁴⁹ He was a close friend of the King and had recently returned from a special mission to Brussels, undertaken principally to distract his mind from a succession of family bereavements and some bitter disputes with Grey about his status in the Cabinet.¹⁵⁰

Holland also struck a conciliatory note in his letter of apology to Palmerston, though he agreed that the complaint about the demolition of Philippeville and Marienburg was suspicious. Their demolition was only injurious to France if she had designs of recovering them. But he warned Palmerston:

You miscalculate if you imagine that we, that our friends, or what is more material, the House of Commons or the Country are prepared to go to war or to spend one sixpence for the demolition or preservation of any or all of the fortresses in Belgium - still less for preserving . . . the right . . . of dictating what places shall remain fortified in a neutral territory.

However, with customary modesty, Holland emphasised that this was his view alone and that he would not press it in Cabinet the next day if Grey and Palmerston thought differently.¹⁵¹

In fact the meeting of the next day showed a marked difference of opinion between Grey and Palmerston.¹⁵² Grey regretted that the choice of fortresses had offended France although Palmerston maintained with some truth that the opposition to the demolition of two of them was suspicious. The French Cabinet was understandably worried about the reaction at home if France was seen to acquiesce in the Convention. Holland countered strikingly in his journal:

. . . A similar dread of Wellington is in truth our motive for making the selection we have made - for the point in dispute is three blue beans in one blue bladder - of no intrinsic value but suitable to make a clatter and call attention.¹⁵³

Palmerston's stubborn attitude towards France together with his 'wavering' attitude towards the Reform Bill¹⁵⁴ gave rise, according to Holland, to 'suspicions of lukewarmness in the cause of the party and ministry to which he belongs.' Grey continued to urge Palmerston to consider the position of Philippeville and Marienburg, but the Foreign Secretary's resolve was strengthened by the receipt of despatches from Paris, which showed that Sebastiani was spoiling for a fight. He had shifted the grounds of French protest in objecting to the manner in which the Convention had been negotiated, comparing it with the behaviour of the Quadruple Alliance.¹⁵⁵ Grey was thereby forced to reconsider his own position and emphasise that the fortresses were a matter between the Four Powers and Belgium. However, he insisted to Palmerston that Cabinet sanction was necessary before the Convention could be signed, no doubt expecting support for his moderate stance from some ministers.¹⁵⁶ Palmerston's reply of 24 December was uncompromising - he could not believe any Cabinet minister would propose a delay in ratification and expected many of his colleagues to oppose such a suggestion.¹⁵⁷ He was aware of the negotiations going on in Brussels between Leopold and Sebastiani's brother,¹⁵⁸ and was concerned lest further delay should give more time for French intrigues to bear fruit. Goblet had already announced that Belgian ratification had been delayed. Clearly relations between Palmerston and his more moderate colleagues were becoming strained. Holland claimed that Palmerston had written to Grey expressing a 'tartly hinted' determination on the part of himself and some of his colleagues to reject anything that could be construed as 'toadying' to France, and warned Grey of the consequences to his ministry of such an approach.¹⁵⁹ It is not clear whether Holland is merely exaggerating the

contents of the letter of 24 December or referring to a pungent document since lost or destroyed. However, the language is plausible and Palmerstonian, and Melbourne, Stanley, Richmond and Goderich would be among those he had in mind as resolute opponents to concessions.

Over the Christmas period the crisis reached its peak as the possibility of war seemed to present itself. On 25 December Grey reasserted his view that the difficulty over the fortresses was 'ridiculous' but agreed, subject to Cabinet approval, that Britain could not retract. As to war, he thought that the people would not support it, adding, with perhaps feigned disappointment, 'I cannot conceal it from myself'.¹⁶⁰ In Cabinet the next day Palmerston repeated his strictures on Holland for his indiscretion, and his attacks on France's hostile attitude. It seems however that no firm decisions on ratification were taken, for that day Grey wrote to Palmerston:

I am even more anxious that the matter which has never been distinctly brought before the Cabinet should now be submitted to their consideration.¹⁶¹

In the meantime Holland was rallying the moderate element. Durham had already expressed a hope that all the fortresses would be destroyed.¹⁶²

Brougham was ill and unable to attend Cabinet meetings at this time, but Holland kept him informed, playing on his Quaker pacificism:

Would it not be madness to quarrel and is it not dangerous to get out of humour about the fortresses in the weak and neutral country of Belgium? . . . The notion of a treaty conducted in secret with four of the Powers to keep them up as a security against French perfidy and aggression is in my judgement preposterous in the extreme . . . Palmerston says that if we hold tough language, the French will yield, for their present anger is all *bluster* . . . but at

the same time I must say our *high language* as far as I am a party to it, would be bluster too . . . I wish you were here . . . when you come, be peaceable and let them feel how utterly untenable a warlike system would be.¹⁶³

We must presume that Holland deferred to his superiors in the Cabinet of 27 December which approved an immediate ratification of the Fortresses Convention. However, Holland's report to Brougham suggests that the extent and degree of 'bluster' to be held towards France was in dispute:

I hardly think our Cabinet . . . would spend one shilling to keep the fortresses . . . a war, *a war!* for such an object would be scouted at from Johnny Grott's House to Land's End.¹⁶⁴

The invalid Brougham had no need of Holland's cautionary doses on this subject, as his reply shows:

. . . I agree with you more than entirely - that is I doubt whether you don't go too far with the warriors, stout as your joining them is. But that we must *speak daggers and use none* I hold to be quite clear . . . my creed, as you know, is yours - and even more bigoted and intolerant. I am 'one of the people called Quakers' and therefore I do *affirm* that I cannot belong to a government making war.

Brougham qualified this statement in memorable terms:

Of course I speak of offensive war - that is in our portion - *interference war*. If we did not go to war for Portugal and Poland we never can for any other thing that does not bear immediately or directly on our own self defence - Fortresses in Belgium indeed!! Pooooooooohhh!¹⁶⁵

Holland's reply shows how Grey and Palmerston had influenced him over the advantages of bluster:

I may be a little less *Quakerish* and *non-interfering* than you, from a persuasion that reasonable interference and even the attitude of war is sometimes the best means of preventing it.¹⁶⁶

Thus by the New Year, British Policy had been clarified, and further French and Belgian attempts to obtain a revision of the Convention terms failed.¹⁶⁷ Against a background of continuous French protests, the matter was closed by the face-saving declaration of the Powers, framed by the Belgian plenipotentiary Van de Weyer,¹⁶⁸ that the fortress arrangements were consistent with the existing guarantees to Belgium, and that the Five Powers all stood on an equal footing with her.¹⁶⁹

The settlement of the fortress question marked a new phase in Franco-British relations. The increasingly uncooperative attitude of the Eastern Powers, as shown by the Tsar's refusal to ratify the Treaty of 15 November,¹⁷⁰ induced Palmerston to look more towards the French for support in implementing the Treaty arrangements, rather than adopting the Concert approach that he had maintained throughout 1831 at the expense of relations with France. In the three crises of that year his differences with the Cabinet centred on the strength of protest to be made to France in each case. Palmerston was apparently prepared to go to war on all three occasions, though recognising that the fortress issue was hardly worthy of it.¹⁷¹ Almost certainly the Cabinet would not have been with him. We have seen the attitudes of Althorp and Brougham towards the French invasion and the fortresses and their opinions undoubtedly carried weight. Althorp's universally recognised integrity and Brougham's trenchant radicalism were essential pillars of the ministry in the two Houses. On the other hand there was the possibility that a conciliatory attitude towards France would expose

the government to the charge that European security was being threatened thereby. Holland summed up the dilemma neatly:

. . . I do not think Palmerston differs very essentially from us in the persuasion that a strict union with France . . . even with the risk of some little separation from the other three powers . . . is indispensable . . . he is perhaps a little too ready to listen to insinuations . . . about French intrigue and perhaps yet more apprehensive of incurring the reproach of entirely subverting the confederacy for the protection of Europe which Wellington and his party would say was the point of our victories . . .¹⁷²

If events had resolved themselves into a question of war or peace - which Palmerston's skill and bluster had prevented in 1831 - it is probable that Britain's strategic interests would have lain less heavily in the scales than the Cabinet's predilections towards peace, retrenchment and the survival of the Orleans Monarchy.

The year 1832 saw a basic change in formation as Britain and France united to secure a settlement for Belgium in the face of the obstruction of Holland and the Eastern Powers. Thus, when the time came, intervention in the Netherlands was contemplated with a view to foiling Holland rather than obstructing the ambitions of France. As Palmerston wrote to Granville on 19 February:

We [the Cabinet] wish to stave off for the present every question upon which Great Britain and France may have divergent interests.¹⁷³

It is not necessary here to follow the interminable negotiations over the problems of the Navigation of the Scheldt and the division of the Netherlands National Debt which continued throughout this year, and resulted in a

preliminary convention in May 1833.¹⁷⁴ However, it is pertinent to note in this context Palmerston's increasing interest in the constitutional movements in Germany and Portugal during 1832, as compared with his pragmatic attitude towards the aspirations of the Poles and the Italians in the previous year. His gradual recognition of the need to enforce the Treaty rights of Belgium was paralleled by his outspoken support for the liberal movement in Europe in his Parliamentary speeches during the summer of 1832.

Grey and Palmerston both seem to have become conscious of the possible need for joint coercion of the Dutch during the summer of 1832. Although the Eastern Powers had ratified the Treaty in April and May, their acceptance was hedged about with reservations, particularly with regard to the navigation of the Scheldt and the division of the National Debt between the two countries.¹⁷⁵ The conference called upon Holland and Belgium to open negotiations for a Definitive Treaty, but neither side would consent until Antwerp and Luxemburg were evacuated by the Dutch and the Belgians respectively. On 1 June, by which time the triumph of the cause of Parliamentary Reform was apparent and the Eastern Powers could therefore be confronted more comfortably, Grey suggested to Palmerston that a squadron be sent to cruise off the Downs.¹⁷⁶ The government had acted along similar, though more modest lines the previous October, when three ships and some smaller craft had been sent to convince the Dutch that a renewal of hostilities would prompt an immediate British reaction.¹⁷⁷ Leopold encouraged Grey to adopt a resolute attitude. In a typically emphatic letter he gave his opinion:

I feel convinced that as long as you do not

*force the King of Holland to evacuate Antwerp,
he will not negotiate on fair terms.*¹⁷⁸

Leopold, like Queen Victoria, seemed to think and write in italics for much of the time. In this matter at least, his agitation was justified. The citadel at Antwerp had been occupied by the Dutch since the revolt, and while initially the British had been happy to see it in their hands and not controlled by France,¹⁷⁹ it had become by 1832 a symbol of Dutch intransigence. Palmerston was beginning to think in terms of direct intervention, particularly after the Dutch rejected the unanimous offer of the Five Powers of concessions on the distribution of the Debt in return for the evacuation of the citadel and a commitment to begin serious negotiations.¹⁸⁰ Grey in his turn was aware that 'we may at last come to *mesures d'exécution* in Holland', although he was concerned about the possible effects on Anglo-Dutch trade.¹⁸¹

Palmerston had written to Granville on June 22, before the Dutch had finally refused to negotiate, asking him to sound out the French on the possibility of a joint naval blockade of the Dutch coast.¹⁸² The French reply was hesitant, not least because there was a continuing political interregnum in France following the death of Casimir Périer in May. However, the French joined with Britain in a counter statement to the Dutch refusal, informing the other powers that the two countries would proceed to implement the Treaty if no progress was made by 30 August.¹⁸³ Palmerston prepared for such an eventuality by obtaining reports on the condition of the Dutch and Russian navies from his ambassadors at The Hague and St. Petersburg.¹⁸⁴ The King was consulted about the best means of implementing the Treaty, but he was resolutely opposed to a joint

project for fear of antagonising the Eastern Powers.¹⁸⁵ Grey was also apprehensive, though for different reasons:

The whole procedure is very risky, for the French government is very weak and I fear that the Eastern Powers may intervene.¹⁸⁶

He added that full consultation with the Cabinet was essential.

Palmerston had not rejected a negotiated settlement completely, for he was working on a project, later to be known as his *Thème*, which displayed a genuine desire to come to grips with the complexities of the problems of the Scheldt and the Debt.¹⁸⁷ However, Leopold was insisting, with some justification, on the need for the British and French governments to make practical efforts to implement the Treaty and thereby stabilise the domestic situation in Belgium. He called for a joint operation involving the Royal Navy and the French Army.¹⁸⁸ Grey was clearly impressed by these arguments in view of the continuing deadlock in the Conference:

. . . for God's sake let us escape from the ridicule of these continued conferences and come to a conclusion one way or the other.¹⁸⁹

At this point Grey took himself off to Howick for the first time for two years.¹⁹⁰ He left Palmerston to face the reaction of his colleagues to the prospect of renewed military activity over Belgium, now increasingly likely in view of the Dutch rejection of his modifications to the November Treaty with respect to the Navigation of the Scheldt. Althorp and his friends were anxious to restrain Palmerston:

Richmond and Graham are here and alarmed at the prospect of troops in Belgium. This would mean war. A squadron in the Downs is the

furthest we should go.

If you can get France to be quiet, it would be the best thing to let Leopold try his strength . . . But for God's sake do not let us enter into war.¹⁹¹

Althorp stressed that the letter expressed a joint opinion, in which case Graham's concurrence is surprising. However, Graham showed willingness to support a purely naval action three days later:

I can promise a formidable number of ships ready for any service, but do not too hastily take up Transports or move troops - this is war.

A naval demonstration is harmless; a military movement is a step of more fearful consequences.

Leopold must try to hold his own in the first instance: and if he fails France, always too willing to move, will be ready at hand to assist.¹⁹²

Palmerston was in a position to appreciate that the moderation practised by his colleagues and in particular by the King did not take sufficient account of the stubbornness he was encountering from all sides in the Conference. His *Thème* had been officially rejected on 16 September and Grey was quick to realise that joint action was now inevitable. Still at Howick, Grey wrote to Palmerston of his attempts to persuade his weekend visitors, Brougham and Althorp, of the moral necessity of fulfilling treaty obligations in spite of the risk of war. The Cabinet was divided on the subject of coercion. Brougham and Althorp seemed disposed to let France act alone, a view which neatly incorporated Francophilia and non-intervention. Grey rejected both these attitudes, which displayed irresponsibility and a weak strategic grasp. On this occasion Grey belied his Foxite pedigree, for in the same letter to Palmerston he advocated for the first time complementary naval and military operations with France. He hesitated slightly in coming

to this conclusion, but because of the instability of the French government rather than through a reluctance to embrace joint intervention.¹⁹³

Some ministers had been worried that Palmerston would act without Cabinet consultation,¹⁹⁴ but in fact no move was made until 1 October. On that day the final Conference protocol was issued, making the split between the Eastern and Western Powers manifest. Wessenberg and Bülow had misled Palmerston about their readiness to join in putting pressure on the King of Holland. The British and French plenipotentiaries alone endorsed the final demand that Holland should come to a settlement on pain of 'voies coercives'.¹⁹⁵ Palmerston was determined to press on alone. He wrote to Granville next day:

We will act alone. It is much better that it should be so than that we and France should continue to be clogged and hampered by the three heavy sailors of the convoy.¹⁹⁶

It still remained to convince King and Cabinet of the wisdom of coercive measures. One of the problems which Palmerston foresaw when he first suggested a joint operation was the possibility of having to recall a hostile parliament.¹⁹⁷ Both Althorp and Holland were concerned about this: Althorp feared that the government might be forced out of office, although he accepted that firm action against the Dutch was essential.¹⁹⁸ The King had come round to the point of view after the Eastern Powers had dashed his hopes of a concerted approach.¹⁹⁹ Lansdowne seemed in favour of coercive measures without the recall of parliament. He argued that a new post-Reform Act Parliament 'would be a suitable tribunal to try us on the charge of not having called the old one'.²⁰⁰ Palmerston had already made up his mind. He wrote to Holland that if the Dutch continued to be

obstructive:

the Combined Squadrons should blockade their ports and the French troops advance to besiege and take the citadel [Antwerp].²⁰¹

Grey returned to London on 8 October, three days before the crucial Cabinet on the coercion issue was due to take place. He was probably not finally convinced of the necessity of force, but Durham's decided stance on the issue may have swayed both him and the doubters in the Cabinet. Durham had just returned from his mission to Russia by way of Brussels, and presented a well-argued memorandum²⁰² recommending joint Anglo-French action by sea and land. As we have seen from the correspondence of Grey and Palmerston, Durham was not the first to advocate this course, as his biographers would have us believe,²⁰³ but his arguments may have been decisive in obtaining Cabinet support. Any discussion of this point must be hedged about with qualifications as Durham's memorandum is not dated. It may not have been presented at the meeting on 11 October at all, but prepared subsequently as an answer to the King's grave misgivings about any Anglo-French military agreement.²⁰⁴ However, such a resolute stand on interference is remarkable coming from any member of the Cabinet except Palmerston, and we can well understand that the idea startled some of Durham's colleagues.²⁰⁵

The Cabinet reached final agreement on 16 October and its unanimity was sufficient to persuade the King to withdraw his opposition to a Convention. With the French government stabilised by the appointment of the Duc de Broglie as Prime Minister, the terms of the Anglo-French Convention were agreed upon within a week.²⁰⁶ Although the joint intervention was decisive, the

British share in the operation reflects the caution of the Cabinet. A naval blockade would not of itself achieve anything immediate beyond antagonising the commercial lobby at home,²⁰⁷ but the Cabinet would not contemplate a British land operation. We have already seen that Althorp and Brougham would have preferred to leave the coercion entirely to the French. Althorp's opinion seems to have carried increasing weight as the Grey ministry began to fragment, and on this occasion he was prepared to sanction a British blockade because it would add nothing to the naval estimates. He also conceded that decisive action at this time gave the best hope of peace in the future.²⁰⁸

Thus, after nearly two years of negotiation over Belgium, the Cabinet was at last prepared to sanction an unequivocal threat of intervention. The threat became a reality in November, when the French advanced towards Antwerp while the Royal Navy blockaded the Dutch ports. After a protracted struggle, hampered by Franco-Belgian disagreements over troop movements in Antwerp, the citadel was taken on 24 December. For the Cabinet, though certainly not for Palmerston, the Belgian affair was closed.

Although Palmerston's contribution to the peaceful creation of an independent Belgium has been recognised and admired, the strength of the opposition which he faced in the Cabinet has not been fully appreciated. His Whig colleagues did not easily shed opinions formed during a lifetime of opposition, even when the most ruthless pragmatism was required. Grey set a good example in this respect, but Palmerston found it difficult to break down the prejudices of his Foxite colleagues. Throughout 1831 Cabinet sympathy for France and a concurrent dislike of intervention in any form had militated against Palmerston's attempts to keep the peace. The years

of opposition seem to have bred in several members of the Grey ministry an infinite capacity for self-deception. The opinions of Althorp, Grant and Holland offer striking examples of this: their various prejudices against strategic intervention over Belgium, or any action that smacked of a renewal of the Quadruple Alliance against France, could have crippled British policy. In October 1831 Holland congratulated himself and his colleagues achievement over Belgium: 'none but a reforming ministry could have kept the peace' he boasted to Brougham. He talked of 'the good faith of France and especially the manly and straightforward conduct of Talleyrand' as being instrumental in the result.²⁰⁹

One can imagine Palmerston's reaction to praise of French good faith or the wisdom of the Cabinet. He had spent most of his political life in office, and drew his inspiration from the practical example of Castlereagh and Canning, rather than the obsolete traditions either of the belief in a proper moral tone in foreign policy, or the need for a reduction in government expenditure that were handed down by Fox. Palmerston employed Castlereagh's Concert framework together with Canning's methods of 'intervening to prevent intervention' to gain his ends in the Netherlands.²¹⁰ The history of the negotiations shows that the Whig traditions of non-intervention were no more relevant in the days of the Liberal Movement than they had been in the days of the Holy Alliance.

CHAPTER FOUR

NON-INTERVENTION AND RUSSIAN AGGRANDISEMENT, 1830-1833

The Belgian question dominated international relations for two years. The emphasis placed on a collective approach to the matter, as the only means of preserving European peace, coloured British reaction to events elsewhere. Although Palmerston made up for his initial silence with his championship of constitutional movements in Europe after 1832, some of the damage had already been done. The cost of obtaining Russia's grudging co-operation in the Belgian negotiations was discernible both in ideological and strategic terms. Russia was allowed to violate the Vienna agreements over Polish institutions lest British intervention should endanger the Five Power Concert. Turkey's request for British naval help against Mehemet Ali was parried by the Cabinet, who were unwilling to add to the Royal Navy's commitments while the Dutch coast was under blockade. As a result, the Polish revolt was crushed, while Turkey temporarily became a virtual Russian protectorate.

The outbreak of the Polish revolt on 29 November 1830 made little impact in Britain. The Cabinet discussed it briefly and dismissively in late December, and the plight of the Poles was not raised in Parliament until August 1831.¹ In this instance, Whigs and Radicals were slow to support a cause with which they had been traditionally sympathetic. A Polish mission, led by Count Biernacki and Prince Czartoryski, had found considerable support for the cause of Polish independence in 1814.² Brougham wrote an enthusiastic article on the subject in the *Edinburgh Review*,³ while Grey and Mackintosh brought the aspirations of the Poles to the

notice of parliament in their critiques of foreign policy.⁴ The architects of the Vienna settlement paid little heed to the representations of the Poles. Metternich and Castlereagh were anxious that Poland should be partitioned so as to make Prussia a stronger bulwark against France.

The Poles had Tsar Alexander to thank for any separate status at all.⁵ At his insistence a Kingdom of Poland was set up, united to the Russian Empire by its constitution. In territorial terms the Kingdom was a shadow of its historical self, although the Poles were granted their own Diet.⁶ Admittedly, there had been no concerted Whig campaign for Polish independence between 1813 and 1815,⁷ but the silence of 1830 and 1831 is surprising. Neither Grey or Brougham were inclined to give the Poles unconditional and open support in their revolt against the Tsar. Grey was conscious of his change of attitude, particularly after the *Morning Chronicle* printed a letter of his dating from 1814, in which he had strongly advocated the creation of an independent Polish kingdom. Times had changed since then, he argued:

. . . it is one thing to state certain political opinions with a view to arrangements which are not completed and another to urge the same views in order to set aside these arrangements after they have been sanctioned by treaties. The opinions I then entertained I see no reason to retract; and if the independence of Poland had been established on those principles which might best have secured the permanent settlement of Europe at the general peace, most of the difficulties and dangers which have since occurred and which still embarrass us might have been prevented.⁸

Brougham must have reasoned along similar lines, for although he subsequently remarked that 'if we did not go to war for . . . Poland, we never can for any other thing',⁹ he made no attempt to galvanise opinion in Parliament,

as he had done in 1814.¹⁰

In so far as they considered the Polish question at all, ministers regarded it as a local difficulty for the Tsar. It should be stressed that until he moved to destroy the Diet, the Tsar was acting within his treaty rights in the suppression of the revolt. On 18 December, Carlisle judged that the revolt 'must occupy the partitioning powers very seriously'¹¹ without caring to pass a British opinion. His more liberal colleagues were hardly more inclined to do so, for the French suggestion, first broached by Talleyrand on 26 December,¹² that Britain and France should mediate jointly between Russia and Poland, was coolly received. Grey had no wish to intervene and was at pains to establish that Belgium constituted a special case, in that a threat to European peace was involved and 'the amicable interference of mediators' was justified.¹³ Palmerston echoed this view, with Cabinet sanction, in a private letter to Heytesbury, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg :

. . . France has proposed to offer mediation between the Emperor and the Poles. We have, *of course*, declined such a step upon the serious grounds that to offer such interposition between a sovereign and his revolted subjects in the outset of the quarrel and before anyone can tell what may be its issue would give just offence and set an inconvenient example. Should the contest go on and assume the character of the Greek or Belgian affair so that there should appear little prospect that the sovereign could reconquer his former subjects the case might be different; but the matter is not ripe for such a course at present.¹⁴

This is hardly the voice of the Foreign Secretary of a reforming ministry and yet even Lord Holland deplored attempts by the French to stir up

*Italics mine.

liberal opinion in Europe:

. . . I wish Poland could be pacified and arranged without great military movements, although I do wish Lafayette had refrained from talking about it, which can do no good.¹⁵

The Cabinet determined to meet with silence the representations of the Polish mission in January 1831. Palmerston wrote to Granville about a private and unofficial meeting he had had with the Polish deputy

Wielopolski:

He told me their case, but asked for the good offices of England; I said that my ears were open but my mouth was shut . . . that I was glad to hear any authentic accounts of transactions of so much interest but that I received him in my private character and in my official character could say nothing to him whatever.¹⁶

This is not to say that some members of the Cabinet were not sympathetic to the Polish cause,¹⁷ but the Belgian Conference, and even the revived Concert of Europe, in so far as it helped to preserve peace, overshadowed all other considerations. It was not as if the French had proposed anything approaching direct intervention, or even independent mediation,¹⁸ but the Cabinet were disinclined to invite even the suspicion of intermeddling at this stage. Grey recognised that Britain's hands were not completely clean:

Can we take the insurgents under our protection, for such would be the fact, without incurring the imputation of holding out encouragements to revolt, wherever it might take place, setting a precedent of interference between the sovereign and the subject which might not improbably (the case of Ireland for instance) become inconvenient to ourselves?¹⁹

His apprehension was justified, for even over the Belgian question, Irish

radicals were quick to contrast Britain's proprietorial attitude towards Ireland with the collective approach towards the organisation of the Belgian state.²⁰ It was best to leave Poland and Russia to fight it out at Crochow, outside Warsaw, particularly as the Poles had wilfully deposed the Tsar on 25 January and elected Czartoryski President of the Provisional Government.²¹ Furthermore, as Palmerston pointed out to Holland in March 1831, there were other priorities:

If we did not want the Russians to keep Soutt [the French minister of war] in order, we should wish the Poles hearty success.²²

Incidentally, the same doctrine held good in Italy, where Palmerston withheld support from the rebels in Piedmont and the Papal States, for fear of encouraging French ambitions in the Mediterranean at the expense of Austria.²³

The news which Heytesbury communicated to Palmerston in his despatch of 25 February called for a fundamental change in the government's attitude. The Tsar had announced the appointment of Marshall Diebitsch as military governor of Poland and Engel as head of the provisional civil government which was to be established at Warsaw after the entry of the Russian army. Heytesbury commented that the appointments 'announce a material change of system with respect to the future government of Poland'.²⁴ Palmerston, who received the despatch in mid-March, did not need reminding of the implications of the appointments. They constituted a direct breach of the Treaty of Vienna, which prescribed a distinct administration for the Kingdom of Poland within the Russian Empire.²⁵ In strategic terms the Russian decision was equally momentous, as the

prospect of permanent military occupation of Poland could disturb the balance of power in the West. After consultation with the King and the Cabinet, Palmerston replied promptly to Heytesbury deploring the apparent breach and adding that the signatories of the Vienna Treaty had a special interest in Poland:

. . . In an ordinary case of civil war between a sovereign and his subjects, foreign states can have no grounds for intervention, even of advice or remonstrance. But there are circumstances peculiar to the Kingdom of Holland which make it in this respect an exception. The treaty . . . to which most of the States of Europe were parties [provided that Poland] . . . should be attached to Russia *by its constitution* and should enjoy a *distinct administration* . . .

The Government did not believe that the revolt gave the Russian government any grounds for departing from the stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna.²⁶ Despite the theoretical justification, the Cabinet shied away from a direct protest to Russia or any encouragement of the Poles. Palmerston asked Heytesbury to collect the opinions of his fellow-ambassadors in St. Petersburg on the prospect of permanent military occupation of Poland, in an attempt to produce a consensus among the Four Powers.²⁷ There was no thought of unilateral mediation or intervention. Palmerston's comment to Granville could have been written by Castlereagh:

We must stand upon our treaties . . . We should remonstrate if Russia departs from the Treaty of Vienna, on the other hand we could not do so ourselves by trying to make Poland entirely independent.²⁸

Grey echoed this view:

. . . Whatever we may feel, I do not see in whatever way, or on what ground we could interfere, except by an early intimation that has been given that we shall expect Russia to adhere to the Treaty of Vienna arrangements.²⁹

Palmerston's initiative failed: Heytesbury had to inform him at the end of April that his observations were not received 'with any great cordiality' by his fellow ambassadors.³⁰ Indeed, Metternich favoured Prussian intervention to save Russia from possible defeat. Defeat was unlikely, but the Poles remained in control of Warsaw in spite of their reversal at Gruchow. Palmerston warned Metternich through Cowley, his ambassador in Vienna, that Britain would remain neutral should France counter a Prussian offensive by invading the Rhenish provinces.³¹ However, he took note of the rebuff he had received from the Eastern Powers, and was not prepared to sacrifice the concert over Belgium for the sake of the Poles. A private letter to Heytesbury at the beginning of May reveals the relative importance of the Belgian negotiations, and the incessant French pressure for joint mediation over Poland:

The course of the Belgian discussions . . . has indeed been calculated necessarily to throw England into intimate union with Russia, Austria and Prussia and to place these four powers in a state of separation from France . . . Pray therefore assure Count Nesselrode that we know and understand the honesty and good faith of the Russian Cabinet and that we do not set less value upon those qualities after our own experience of some months of the kinds of qualities unfortunately displayed by the government of France . . .³²

He stressed the theme in a private letter to Granville ten days later:

But we are still desirous of keeping fair with Russia and we are not less likely to have influence

over her by letting her have no reason to suppose that we are making common cause with France against her.³³

In view of the pro-French sympathies of some members of the Cabinet and the frequent representations made by Talleyrand on behalf of the Poles, the Government's attitude towards the revolt might have been expected to be more sympathetic. Britain's reluctance to act cannot be explained wholly in terms of traditional Whig failings or the importance of preserving peace in the Low Countries. In the Spring and Summer of 1831, the Reform issue overshadowed everything else. Talleyrand had noted in March that ministers could not concentrate on other matters. He admitted to Sebastiani:

Je me viens à regret obligé de retarder les communications que les dépêches me mettront dans le cas de faire au ministère anglais. La discussion de la réforme parlementaire, qui se prolonge à la Chambre des Communes, absorbe tellement les ministres, la nuit et la jour, qu'il est impossible de les entretenir d'autres affaires sérieuses en ce moment.³⁴

However, the excuse of domestic pressures was insufficient. As Talleyrand remarked to Sebastiani two months later, any initiative in favour of the Poles would have to come from the force of public opinion:

Les affaires de Pologne sont pour moi un objet constant d'attention et de combinaisons: je ne doute pas que le Gouvernement anglais n'y porte aussi beaucoup d'intérêt et n'ait, sur ce point, des dispositions analogues aux nôtres; mais pour que le Cabinet de Londres intervînt en faveur des Polonais, il faudrait que l'opinion publique lui en fit, pour ainsi dire une obligation; et ce n'est qu'un événement marquant qui peut produire cet effet. Je pense au surplus que, dans ce moment où il y a de la longueur dans les affaires de Pologne, le Gouvernement du Roi mûrait moins d'avantage à s'occuper de cette question et que

des délais attenderaient beaucoup d'effet de ses démarches; mais si un succes important venait à avoir lieu, ce serait alors . . . que nous pourrions agir immédiatement . . . ³⁵

Thus the Poles could expect little active encouragement from Britain as they prepared to move against Diebitsch's forces at Ostroleka.

The King's speech of June 1831 reflected the Government's lack of urgency. In it, hopes were expressed that the 'contest in Poland' could peaceably be resolved.³⁶ Here, for the only time throughout Grey's ministry, Princess Lieven's influence is undeniably apparent. She had written to Grey asking him to substitute 'contest' for 'war' in the original draft of the speech, as the latter term implied equal status between the two belligerents.³⁷ The King also took exception to the term 'war' but did not suggest an alternative expression.³⁸ The Princess clearly had her way but this seems to have been a unique episode. Grey was prepared to quarrel with Princess Lieven over other matters, so we must assume that he did not consider the phrase used to describe the Polish revolt important.³⁹ The Grey-Lieven correspondence is much less full during Grey's years of office. When we read in Czartoryski's Memoirs that 'every morning before he got out of bed he used to write her a note on paper scented with musk',⁴⁰ it must be remembered that the cold reception accorded to Polish representations in London would colour the Prince's attitude. The mention of Poland in the King's Speech passed almost without comment in both Houses. 'Orator' Hunt alone made reference to Poland, deploring reports that arms exported from Birmingham were being used by the Russian army in the struggle, but making no mention of the sufferings of the rebels.⁴¹ The French meanwhile continued to press for a joint diplomatic initiative, particularly during July as news of the collapse of the Poles' eastern

rising at Ostroleka reached Paris and inflamed opinion there. For the sake of the stability of his government Casimir Périer urged Talleyrand to make renewed representations to the Cabinet in view of the feelings expressed by the press and public opinion in France;⁴² Talleyrand found the British attitude unchanged. Palmerston reacted sharply to suggestions of Franco-British arbitration or of sending a naval detachment to the Baltic or the Black Sea. He wrote privately to Granville:

. . . There is no pretext for interfering in any way than by a simple offer of mediation because it is a clear case of civil war between subjects and sovereign . . . in which the usual observances of modern times would forbid at least friendly powers from intermeddling by force . . . Talleyrand's proposal to send a fleet to the Baltic and Black Sea could not, at present at least, be thought of . . .⁴³

Palmerston's draft reply to Talleyrand's suggestion was discussed and endorsed by the peers of the Cabinet on 20 July. There were few outspoken supporters of the Polish cause in the Cabinet at this time. According to Princess Lieven, Durham, for one, was 'a Pole enragé' who had on three occasions in Cabinet pressed the cause of recognition for Poland.⁴⁴ Less dramatically, Holland had already expressed support for a joint mediation if it was practicable and safe.⁴⁵ However, as he himself noted in his Journal, there was little support: 'Goderich, Richmond and above all the Chancellor were vehement in urging objections to our concurrence in any such offer.' Brougham's attitude was particularly surprising, as Holland did not fail to point out:

It was passing strange that Lord Brougham should take this line - and not the less so that the Poles (especially Count Walecki), who have had intercourse

with us, are loud in their complaints of the coldness of our Cabinet, with the exception of Lord Brougham, from whom alone they profess to have received warm and cordial assurances of zeal and good offices in their cause . . .⁴⁶

Grey, Lansdowne and Melbourne 'urged the same objections as Brougham, but with less passion'. Holland and Carlisle were alone in favouring the French proposal. Holland does not elaborate on their arguments that Brougham and others used. However, a full meeting of the Cabinet the next day produced a similar conclusion, and presumably the arguments used at this meeting were those of the previous day. 'Informed opinion' in Holland's phrase, held that the French government was too unstable to be trusted. With the Chambers due to meet on 23 July, the Cabinet rightly suspected that Casimir Périer wished to entice Britain into an agreement beyond mere mediation to satisfy the Deputies. Grant and Carlisle agreed with Holland that the French Government should not be rebuffed while Althorp and Russell 'nearly' agreed. However, the Cabinet was not prepared to commit itself even to friendly mediation.⁴⁷ It is instructive that the division in the Cabinet involved its attitude towards the French rather than its attitude towards the Poles. The French government attempted to mask the failure of its joint mediation initiative through the aggression of the Speech from the Throne on 23 July, whose bearing on the Belgian issue has already been noted. The French Deputies were indignant at the lack of response shown to the plight of the Poles following their defeat at Ostroleka and the Russian advance across the Vistula towards Warsaw. Casimir Périer was ready to resign in the absence of an undertaking to assist the Poles. The issue was immediately overshadowed by the Dutch invasion of Belgium, but had it not been for

the Dutch action, the French Government would have collapsed as Holland, Grant and Carlisle had feared.

It was during August, when events in Belgium ensured that Britain would not wilfully break up the European Concert for the sake of Poland, that the plight of the Poles was first raised seriously in Parliament. Palmerston had refused to accept a petition from the Westminster Political Union on behalf of the Poles, which prompted Henry Hunt to call for his dismissal.⁴⁸ There were several other petitions presented at this time, from groups including the 'Friends of Humanity and Justice', the National Reform Association and one 'on behalf of British Youth'. All called for mediation to protect the Poles; some advocated fleet action. At a time when the movement of French troops was causing grave concern, there was little response either from Parliament or the Government. At the end of August the Cabinet dealt the Poles a further blow by refusing to forward to the King a request from Czartoryski to receive an official delegation. It was a trifling matter in itself, but the decision was important in that it expressed the Cabinet's official attitude towards the Provisional Government in Poland. Fortunately, the minute which the King received expressing the personal views of Cabinet members has survived, and this unhappily unique document affords an insight into the debate on British policy,⁵⁰ Grey and Palmerston had already agreed that the King could not receive a letter from the head of an unrecognised government, and their opinion was shared by Graham, Goderich, Melbourne, Stanley and Russell. Throughout the period the government could always excuse its inaction in the face of Russian violation of the Treaty of Vienna by pointing to the illegality of the Czartoryski *régime*. At this juncture ministers thought it unwise to antagonise Russia by making rash promises to the Poles. Russell

was anxious to reassure Czartoryski of British sympathy for the Polish cause, but by informal means. Lansdowne, Grant, Carlisle and Holland dissented from the majority view. Both Lansdowne and Grant doubted whether any harm would be done if the King were to accept the letter. Carlisle, who emerges from the shadows on this occasion alone to state his personal view, agreed with them. He also believed that the refusal carried British neutrality too far, in view of the Russian advance towards Warsaw and the possible destruction of the Polish army. It would be 'treading in the steps of the King of Prussia' to snub Czartoryski. Holland replied to Palmerston's request for an opinion in trenchant style. He accepted that the King could not receive the letter while Poland was unrecognised, but urged the Cabinet to consider the possibility of recognising the Provisional Government. Holland's ideas were not followed up and Palmerston continued his attempts to influence Russia through a concerted approach. After the fall of Warsaw he expected Austria and Prussia to remonstrate with Russia, for the military occupation which followed showed blatant disrespect for the settlement of 1815. Once the revolt was crushed, Palmerston did not regard the Russians as empowered to destroy Polish institutions. He wrote to Heytesbury:

The time is now come when the Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Vienna *may* interfere in Polish affairs . . . I think Prussia and Austria will also demand adherence to the Treaty of Vienna . . .⁵¹

Palmerston was to be proved wrong. In April Metternich had already shown where his sympathies lay by impounding the arms of a Polish corps which had accidentally retreated into Austrian territory.⁵² Heytesbury summed up the situation astutely in October:

I have some reason to suspect that a perfect understanding exists between the courts of St. Petersburg, Vienna and Berlin with respect to the modifications about to be introduced into the Polish Constitution . . . This would be a notable change in the political condition of Poland, but it would still leave a Constitution and a Representation according to the letter of the Treaty of Vienna . . .⁵³

By the beginning of November Palmerston seems to have decided to harden his heart against Russia and to deliver a formal protest without consulting the other Powers. Grey was slow to approve Palmerston's change of course. He was uneasy about a forthright statement to Russia, particularly as the Polish cause was now hopeless:

. . . after having suffered the Poles to be subdued without any interference, we should not carry public opinion with us if we were to get into a quarrel about the intended modification of the constitution. Experience has shown that the constitution has not been much respected, not is it probable that it would be more so, even if we could get it formally re-acknowledged and established . . .⁵⁴

These opinions prove that the assertion that Grey was more sympathetic to the Poles than Palmerston⁵⁵ is based on Grey's impotent protestations well after the damage had been done. Even after Grey received confirmation from Lieven of Russia's implacable attitude, he would not commit himself to being 'unenforcibly in the right' without Cabinet consultation.⁵⁴ However, the Cabinet, even in the absence of Durham and Grant, agreed that the Provincial Assemblies proposed by the Tsar were no substitute for the National Diet sanctioned by the Treaty of Vienna.⁵⁷ The arrival of some harrowing despatches from Chad at Berlin may have influenced the decision.⁵⁸ As a result, Palmerston sent Heytesbury instructions to convey to the Russian government an official protest at their violation of the Treaty of Vienna in

abrogating the constitution of the Duchy of Warsaw.⁵⁹ This laborious decision did little to affect Russian policy and still less to alleviate the sufferings of the Poles. If it was intended as a new departure, its impetus was exhausted by the necessity of obtaining Five Power agreement over a Belgian Treaty. Thus while the Government made great efforts to induce the Tsar to ratify the Treaty of 15 November, no serious attempt was made to follow up the protest about Poland. Palmerston reaffirmed the British position in March 1832,⁶⁰ but by then the matter was diplomatically supine. During the crucial summer months of 1831, the Government had been unwilling to consider Anglo-French mediation, let alone intervention, and it was ironic that the eventual protest was based on the hated Treaty of Vienna rather than support for the 'cause of liberty all over the world'. Admittedly it was difficult to conceive how Britain could have intervened directly and effectively, but Czartoryski and his colleagues were justified in feeling neglected.

Czartoryski himself arrived in London in December and succeeded at least in awakening the conscience of ministers. Grey confided to Brougham:

It is really heartbreaking to see him [Czartoryski] and now these d- - d Russians are doing all they can to throw the Belgian affair into confusion. It is to be regretted that we had no power of sending a fleet into the Baltic last summer to settle the matter of Poland.⁶¹

However, Grey would not alter his official attitude. He seemed to Czartoryski to be excessively concerned that he should not speak out of turn, 'as if he feared to say anything that might not be in accordance with Palmerston's views'.⁶² Czartoryski found Palmerston himself cold

and dogmatic in his quibbling about the exact meaning of the Vienna terms in relation to Poland. In the Prince's account he appeared embarrassed over his government's policy, retreating rather ingenuously into declarations of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states.⁶³

Brougham also had some awkward shuffling to do: he explained to Czartoryski that no joint representation was made because:

Such a step would have been of doubtful efficacy . . .
The fate of Poland will always interest us, but unfortunately the Polish cause is opposed to the wishes of all the other powers. They all want peace, while to take up the cause of Poland means war.⁶⁴

Czartoryski shrewdly characterises British attitudes with his comment:

The ministry does not seem to feel strong or to be conscious that it stands at the head of a great nation capable of exercising a powerful influence on the destinies of Europe. All this leaves a free field to our enemies in the North.⁶⁵

If Cabinet sympathy was belatedly expressed, parliamentary support for the Poles was equally mistimed. It was only when Russian intransigence in other areas was apparent that the Polish cause became, in Mr. Taylor's expression, 'the symbol of Radical foreign policy'.⁶⁶ The Radicals were little troubled by the war during 1831 and *The Times'* call for British intervention in July of that year had not been taken up.⁶⁷ However, the members of the reformed parliament were more prepared to speak out against Russia than their predecessors had been. There were debates in the Commons in April and June 1832 and in July 1833. Although the Tsar came in for bitter and colourful criticism, equivocal radical attitudes towards intervention recalled the debates on foreign policy of the previous

decade. As William IV commented, those who made the loudest outcry about Poland would have refused to grant the supplies necessary to support their cause.⁶⁸ The debates of 1832 and 1833 were fiery but rarely constructive. Thomas Attwood was among the few who were prepared to go beyond mere abuse of Russia. He offered his four sons, and forty million pounds of public money, in the cause of war to liberate Poland (to Palmerston's great amusement) but he waited until July 1833.⁶⁹ By that time his radical colleagues were more concerned with assisting Polish refugees through the Polish Societies which had formed in London and the provinces.⁷⁰

For the government, the matter was closed. One last attempt to move the Russians over Poland had been made in the Summer of 1832 when Durham was sent on a mission to St. Petersburg. Grey had suggested that Durham be sent on a trip abroad to help him overcome his depression and nervous instability. Durham was given no specific brief to plead the Polish cause but it was hoped that he would be able to mention at least the plight of Polish refugees.⁷¹ The Russian Government was initially alarmed at the prospect of a 'Pole enragé' coming to St. Petersburg, arriving as he did when news came through of the Commons debate in June during which the Tsar had been roundly abused.⁷² Palmerston's eloquent silence during the debate was and has been much discussed⁷³ in terms of his increasing support for the Liberal Movement in Europe, but it is significant that he gave the Poles no encouragement at this time, and subsequently defended the Tsar against similar personal attacks. If the Russians had little to fear from Palmerston, they were soon to discover that Durham was even less trouble during his stay. One of Durham's weaknesses was his inordinate vanity and love of honours. Lord Tankerville had said of him

'Gad sir, he calls on you and thinks it gives him a right to quarter your arms'.⁷⁴ The Russians indulged him to the full and were able to blind him to the ineffectiveness of his mission. He could not bring himself to mention the Polish question to the Tsar himself. Brougham told Czartoryski that Durham did not wish thereby to jeopardise his chances of gaining the Ribbon of St. Andrew.⁷⁵ Durham mentioned the matter to Nesselrode, the Russian Foreign Minister, at the very end of his mission and was fobbed off with a promise that the Tsar would issue a merciful ukase to the Poles.⁷⁶ Holland later commented that Durham's judgment had been warped by 'Russian cajolery':

[Who] if he can say 'boo to a goose' has not the presence of mind to say 'phoo to a bear' but allows himself to be hugged by him.⁷⁷

Durham was encouraged by the intrigues of Nesselrode and Princess Lieven to think of himself as a possible successor to Palmerston.⁷⁸ Thus the fruits of his mission were wholly unconnected with the fate of the Poles.

The government had allowed Russia to crush the Polish revolt without effective protest. Palmerston gave a higher priority to the necessity of the concerted approach towards the Belgian problem while his colleagues, as Brougham admitted to Czartoryski, gave their concern for peace at all costs an equal emphasis. They shared the general concern for the fate of Polish refugees,⁷⁹ but their earlier failure to act in diplomatic recognition of the sufferings of the Poles and the true intentions of Russia was quickly shown up by events. The Russians did not co-operate in ratifying or helping implement the 15 November Treaty; indeed they were the strongest source of support for the Dutch in their intransigence. As a result the Poles suffered even more than the Belgians. Palmerston

was never able to live down his application of double standards to the aspirations of the Belgians and the Poles after Russian duplicity had made a nonsense of the strategic justification for favouring the Belgians.⁸⁰ The historic cause of Polish independence had been neglected, to the extent even of resisting French proposals for joint mediation before the final collapse of the revolt in September 1831. Obviously it would have been too much to expect the Royal Navy to be sent to the Baltic, given the passive state of public opinion, but Palmerston's meek attitude towards Russia angered the back benches. After a fierce Commons debate in July 1833 in which he had stood up for the Tsar against the radical attacks, Palmerston confessed his misgivings to Bligh, Heytesbury's successor at St. Petersburg:

It is indeed impossible for any honest man to speak of the conduct of Russia towards the Polish nation without feeling that she has a large and fateful account to render providence . . . [but] I could not hold in Parliament different language as to the violation of the treaties from that which I have held as Secretary of State in my despatches . . .⁸¹

The fact that the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi was signed three days before Palmerston spoke on behalf of the Tsar in the Commons adds extra irony to his position. The government's timidity in 1831 had placed it in an uncomfortable position. As Grey admitted to Czartoryski, he and his colleagues had 'not been sufficiently conscious of the means at their disposal'.⁸² They had been content to base their protest on the violation of the same treaty that the Belgians and the French had successfully defied in 1830, rather than embracing the cause of the Poles (who had themselves violated the Treaty of Vienna by dethroning the Tsar) for its own sake. When the Poles rose again in 1861, Palmerston recalled

the government's action of thirty years previously, reminding a Commons questioner that Britain intervened only in proportion to how much she could peacefully achieve.* It was a lame but fitting epitaph to the events of 1830-1831. The government had not even managed the Foxite moral condemnation of Russia that might have been expected in the absence of any threat of intervention.

* * * * *

If the government's failure to give support to Poland damaged its reputation rather than its strategic interests, the rebuttal of the Sultan's request for naval help against Mehemet Ali in 1832 constituted a serious miscalculation. The danger to Britain's Mediterranean interests if Turkey should be dismembered or become a Russian protectorate was ignored for the sake of low Naval Estimates, anti-Turkish prejudice and short-term peace. One of the main consequences was the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, which took Palmerston eight years to unscramble. He never forgot the Cabinet's equivocations in 1832:

It is true that Russia alone prevented the occupation of Constantinople by Ibrahim or at least some general break up in consequence of his advance; and I humbly venture to think (and in that opinion I have been more and more confirmed by everything that has passed since) that no British Cabinet at any period of the history of England ever made so great a mistake in refusing to the Sultan the assistance and protection which the Sultan then sent Mavrojeni and Namick Pasha to solicit. Our refusal at that time has been the cause of more danger to the balance of power and to the interest of England than perhaps any one determination ever before produced.⁸³

Palmerston himself was not entirely blameless. He was preoccupied

* *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, CLXIV, 233 (2 July 1861).

with the forcible resolution of the Belgian question and, in common with most of his contemporaries, he was slow to appreciate the importance of the maintenance of Turkish territorial integrity for the European balance of power. We have already noted the Foxite attitude that 'the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, *quocumque modo* would be a great good even if Russia should gain from it.⁸⁴ Initially, Palmerston had shared the Whig anti-Turkish outlook. He had condoned Wellington's non-intervention in the final Russo-Turkish War over the Greek boundaries in 1829.⁸⁵ Aberdeen's comment, that the 'hour long since predicted' was imminent when Turkey would 'crumble to pieces from its own inherent causes of decay',⁸⁶ is probably an accurate indication of the British attitude at the time of the Treaty of Adrianople. It was not sufficiently appreciated that the harsh terms of the Treaty⁸⁷ left the Sultan unprotected against the demands of Mehemet Ali, who was already in possession of Egypt and Crete. In 1832, while Palmerston and Grey were preoccupied with Belgium and the Reform question, Mehemet sent Ibrahim Pasha into Syria⁸⁸ to obtain redress for his supposed grievances against the Sultan.

Acre fell to Ibrahim on 27 May 1832, but the news had little effect in Britain, in spite of the explicit threat to the Sultan's throne. Palmerston rejected the idea of mediation between the Sultan and the Pasha. Grey endorsed this decision upon which the Cabinet does not seem to have been consulted. He thought Mehemet a gentleman worth cultivating should Turkey collapse:

With respect to Pasha of Egypt, it appears to me undoubtedly to be our interest to be on good terms with him, and if he should succeed in extending his power over the Sultan, there seems to be a good deal of truth in the remark that the establishment of such a dominion may be of real advantage to our

interests. The dissolution of the Turkish Empire seems to be inevitable and though it may be right to do all we can to avert or allay the crisis which this must occasion, it is necessary that we should look to the means which may exist of producing such a state of things as may attend us some security against the danger, which may arise from it, to our Eastern Empire.⁸⁹

Palmerston's approach to the problem was somewhat more far-sighted than Grey's as he showed through his attitude to further Turkish requests for help. Stratford Canning had been in Turkey in connection with the settlement of Greek boundaries, and was under pressure to give the Sultan at least his moral support against the threats of Mehemet to prove British good will, as his despatches to Palmerston show.⁹⁰ Palmerston appreciated the importance of the Sultan as an ally in view of the recent Greek settlement. Furthermore if the Sultan was overthrown there was the danger that the French, already entrenched in Algeria, might move into Egypt and cut off British trade routes to the East. He surmised that the Sultan was a more important ally than Mehemet could be, but suggested to Grey that Cabinet dispersal could be used as an excuse for the lack of a fully articulated policy.⁹¹ It is surprising to find Palmerston using an excuse of this sort. His awakening to the possible dangers of Turkish dissolution had not yet persuaded him that resolute and immediate action was required. Grey certainly saw no need for urgency. He replied from Howick in a non-committal tone, wishing to wait for Stratford Canning's opinion.⁹² Their colleagues, in so far as they thought about foreign affairs during the recess, were more concerned about possible Anglo-French coercion of the Dutch.

Stratford Canning returned to London on 17 September, and sent a memorandum to Palmerston a month later, urging the adoption of a resolute

policy to keep the Sultan free from Russian domination.⁹³ In the meantime Mavrojeni, the Turkish *chargé d'affaires* at Vienna, was on his way to London to ask for naval assistance for the Sultan bearing an introductory letter addressed to the 'Grand Vizir Earl Grey'.⁹⁴ Such an approach was not calculated to impress the Prime Minister as to the gravity of the situation when Anglo-French action in Holland was the main preoccupation.⁹⁵ Palmerston seems to have been amused by the Turks. After reporting to Grey their request for a naval squadron to be despatched to Constantinople in return for commercial benefits to Britain, he added:

Mavrojeni wishes to see you. He is a respectable man, talks French and looks like a half-shaved old clothes man.⁹⁶

It is not clear when the Cabinet discussed the issue of naval aid to Turkey, but Palmerston wrote of the decision to Mandeville, the British *chargé* at Constantinople*, on 5 December:

(Mavrojeni) has most zealously and ably pleaded the cause of his master the Sultan and it is not his fault that this letter is not delivered to you by an admiral of a fleet of 13 ships of war. But we have a good deal on our minds just now - we have our fleet blockading the Dutch and another keeping Dom Miguel in order and we are stinted to our peace establishment . . . if we had quite made up our minds to comply with the Sultan's wishes we have not exactly the disposable means to allow ourselves to do so - you may say that we feel strongly the importance of upholding the Turkish Empire such as it is, and keeping it free from dismemberment. . .⁹⁷

This letter is an ideal text for any discussion of the foreign policy of the Grey ministry. The emphasis on the limitations of the naval budget

*There was no British ambassador at Constantinople during the crucial period between August 1832 and May 1833.

is typical, and in this instance serves in an additional capacity as a cloak for the Cabinet's habitual indecision. How often was Palmerston forced to report to British and foreign ambassadors that 'we had not made up our minds'! Naturally, in spite of the rejection of the Sultan's request, the Cabinet concludes with an expression of policy that is Foxite in its belief in the power of moral declarations without any threat. One senses that Palmerston had to work hard even to wring a moral declaration from his colleagues. He maintained later that he had tried to persuade ministers to sanction intervention:

. . . But Althorp and Brougham and others, some from ignorance of the bearing of foreign affairs, some for one foolish reason, some for another, would not agree. Grey, who was with me on the point, was weak and gave way, and so nothing was done in a crisis of the utmost importance to all Europe.⁹⁸

Although, as we shall see, Palmerston exaggerated the strength of his own resolve at the time, he is almost certainly correct in identifying Althorp and Brougham, the apostles of peace and retrenchment, as the leaders of the opposition to intervention. Althorp, in one of his indiscreet letters to his father, Earl Spencer, showed no alarm at the prospect of Russian 'protection' of the Sultan:

Some of my colleagues are a good deal alarmed at this; I am not . . . it concerns Austria much more than it does us and it very probably will induce Austria to be a little more jealous of Russia . . . which will be a very good thing.⁹⁹

He would not have had to use such naive arguments in Cabinet - the commitment to retrenchment was strong enough to carry the day. As Dr. Bartlett has pointed out,¹⁰⁰ when discussions of foreign policy turned

to cost, Palmerston for once could not overwhelm his critics with superior knowledge. It was difficult enough to fulfill the pledge to reduce the Naval Estimates for 1833 with squadrons in action off Holland and Portugal; a further burden would have been intolerable. Grey later explained the difficulties that could have been expected in Parliament:

. . . it was not in our power already engaged in the affairs of Belgium, and Portugal, to enter into a third business of the same nature. We had no force for such a [passage] . . . and I am quite sure Parliament would not have granted us one.¹⁰¹

It was on these grounds that Palmerston subsequently made his awkward explanation of British inactivity to the Commons:

. . . we were embarking on naval operations in the North Sea and off the coast of Holland and were under the necessity of keeping up another naval force off the coast of Portugal, it would have been impossible to have sent to the Mediterranean such a squadron as would have suited the purposes of the Porte and at the same time have compounded with the naval dignity of this country.¹⁰²

Graham, who was more involved than anyone in the struggle to bring down the Estimates, showed a commendable grasp of the importance of the problem. He clearly regretted having to turn down Mavrojeni's request: something more than the principle of retrenchment was involved, as he appreciated:

The Turkish affair is a real evil, . . . very embarrassing to us. It will be hard to persuade the People of England that they have any direct or deep interest in the fate of the Ottoman Empire yet its sudden overthrow . . . will be a severe shock to our power in the East, and timid acquiescence will only aggravate the ultimate danger. No supplies however from a *reformed* House will ever be granted for a *crusade* and

our place among nations must depend on the magnanimity of Joseph Hume. Gibbon I think says "the nose of an Arab might have changed the destiny of the world"; in revenge [*sic*] the vote of a tailor may now cause the fall of the throne of Mahomet.¹⁰³

By his strategic insight (as well as by his literary misattribution) Graham shows himself anything but Foxite. The Foxites in the Cabinet could not bring themselves to bolster up Turkey, even if British interests would benefit thereby. Grey, to his credit, seems to have realised that something ought to be done, but he would not overrule his colleagues. Among them Holland was the most prominent of those who objected to intervention on ideological as well as financial grounds. He denied that the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire was necessarily in Britain's interest. His views are clearly reflected in his marginal comments* on Stratford Canning's memorandum on Turkey of 19 December 1832.¹⁰⁴ Stratford Canning argued in favour of the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire rather than allowing it to be partitioned between the Sultan and Mehemet and left a prey for the first invader. He believed that the Sultan could easily re-establish his authority in Egypt and Syria with British naval assistance and that the danger of Russia swallowing Turkey would be sufficient to justify British intervention. He rejected mediation between the protagonists, arguing that economic sanctions against Egypt and Syria, together with British preparedness to support Turkey with force if necessary, would be required to meet the Sultan's needs. He thought all this would be better coming from Britain than from the French whom the Sultan distrusted, although he appreciated that a joint intervention would be preferable from the British point of view.

*These notes were long attributed to Palmerston. For a full discussion of their authorship, see Appendix II.

On his own admission, Holland's criticisms did not constitute an alternative policy.¹⁰⁵ He illustrated the Whig inability to come to terms with the true situation in the Near East, a failing which Cabinet decisions on the matter reflect. His conviction that the Ottoman Empire could not be reformed or supported conditioned his comments. Thus he regarded the unwieldy extent of the Empire as the great check to its improvement and the great cause of its weakness. He doubted whether a British squadron could achieve the task Canning set it, and in any case made no distinction between the basis of the power of the Sultan and Pasha respectively - both were 'usurpers of minor authorities'. He disapproved of the idea of economic sanctions against Egypt and Syria as being injurious to British trading interests in the area. He was clearly alarmed at the prospect of unilateral British intervention - if any country was justified in intervening alone it was surely France, through her geographical position and her actual connections with Turkey.

The views of both men were outdistanced by events. Two days after Canning (by then *en route* to Madrid)¹⁰⁶ presented his memorandum and long before Holland commented upon it, Ibrahim routed the Turks at Konya. With Constantinople now directly threatened, the Sultan was obliged to turn to Russia for assistance. The request was answered with suspicious promptness and the Sultan held back, suspecting a trap.¹⁰⁷ Meanwhile, Namick Pasha, his personal representative, had arrived in London to renew the appeal for British assistance. Namick had come armed with advice from Metternich, who was anxious that Britain rather than Austria should have the task of confronting Mehemet.¹⁰⁸ The Cabinet, as yet ignorant of the events at Konya, again refused the request. Both Palmerston and the King were upset by the decision. William believed that Britain had to respond to the call immediately; if there was delay the decision would only have to

be taken later 'under much more disadvantageous circumstances'.¹⁰⁹

Palmerston does not seem to have been quite so concerned: 'his own conviction was not sufficiently strong', in Webster's careful words,¹¹⁰ but he had wished for a firm statement of policy at the very least. In August 1833 he explained his position in a private letter to Ponsonby at St. Petersburg:

My own opinion at the time was that without any naval means immediately disposable, we ought to have held strong language to Mehemet and to have bid him stop and I am sure he would have done so . . . others thought differently and a postponed decision meant virtually a negative.¹¹¹

This description rings truer than some of Palmerston's later accounts of this episode. He was not immediately aware of the consequences of refusing naval support. However, he was prepared to resort to a Foxite moral condemnation of Mehemet Ali in the absence of anything else,¹¹² and even this failed. The Cabinet's lack of interest in the whole affair is displayed by the delay in the dispatch of an official answer to the Turkish request. It was not sent until 7 March¹¹³ and by the time it arrived Turkey had already signed the Convention of Kutaya with Ibrahim.

British policy towards Turkey took a long time to recover from the misjudgement and diffidence that had been displayed over the naval intervention issue - indeed it needed rumours of a Russo-Turkish treaty to produce Palmerston's definitive statement on the necessity of maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, for the sake of 'tranquillity and the liberty and the balance of power of the rest of Europe'.¹¹⁴ Until then Cabinet attitudes ensured that British policy followed events rather than anticipating them. News of the battle at Konya was not sufficient to persuade Holland

for example to depart from a policy of non-intervention. All he could advocate was the closest possible cooperation with France and a self-denying ordinance on the part of the Powers. Beyond this he could not 'see his way one inch' although he appreciated the gravity of the problem.¹¹⁵ Grey was not much more decisive though he was worried about the possible subjugation of Turkey by Russia. He hoped for Anglo-French cooperation but doubted that a convention would please Parliament:

Would either Parliament or the people support us
in a war which would be generally felt to arise
for the sake of a remote and problematical interest?¹¹⁶

For Holland and the majority of his colleagues there was only one answer to Grey's question.

Palmerston, who seemed unsure as to how British interests could best be protected, attempted to launch a joint initiative to forestall the domination of Turkey by Russian arms. In view of the continuing attempts by the French to interpose themselves between the Sultan and the Russians,¹¹⁷ and Metternich's disinclination to break with Russia,¹¹⁸ the attempt was doomed to failure. The French were talking in terms of joint mediation, but only as a means to secure the dismemberment of Turkey and the possible establishment of Mehemet as Sultan.¹¹⁹ Britain nursed a traditional suspicion of French designs in Egypt which the recent occupation of Algiers reinforced. Furthermore, Mehemet had a Napoleonic dash about him which appealed to the French.¹²⁰ For such reasons Palmerston was beginning to consider the maintenance of Turkish territorial integrity a necessary principle. He expressed his feelings to Granville in a private letter at the end of January:

. . . it is impossible for Mehemet to become Caliph or Sultan and therefore he cannot succeed to the unbroken empire and can only dismember it . . . And surely, the injury which would thus be done to the great interest of Europe, by placing the ruler of Turkey directly in the hands of Russia would far more than counterbalance the advantage we should derive from the establishment of *Ecoles primaires* and schools of anatomical dissection in Syria and Mesopotamia.¹²¹

It should be noted that Palmerston was still undecided as to whether the Royal Navy should intervene. Throughout the spring of 1833 he was involved in a fruitless wrangle with Metternich over the content and location of a European conference on the subject.¹²² Meanwhile at Constantinople Britain was represented only by Mandeville, the *chargé d'affaires*, who played no significant part in events there. The French attempt through Admiral Roussin to mediate between the Sultan and the Pasha ahead of Russia had failed. Thus the Western Powers could only watch as the Russians camped outside Constantinople at the end of March to protect the Sultan from the renewed attack that Ibrahim had threatened after his rejection of the French terms.¹²³

At the beginning of April Palmerston, not yet aware of Roussin's failure, came to the conclusion that a British naval presence in the Eastern Mediterranean would help to encourage Mehemet to treat with the Sultan. He was not necessarily concerned with the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire. As Professor Temperley has pointed out, it was not a question of abstract principles but of whether Britain would fight to maintain Turkey or not. Temperley concludes that at this stage Palmerston would only have fought had the British road to India been blocked.¹²⁴ In the present instance, Admiral Hotham was ordered to take his small detachment from Greece to Alexandria to strengthen the British consular

representations to Mehemet in favour of negotiation with the Porte.¹²⁵

Perhaps because of Palmerston's indisposition during the first week in April, the Cabinet was not consulted on the matter. Althorp was furious, perhaps suspecting covert British intervention and inflation of the Naval Estimates. Grey apologised profusely:

It was an improper omission . . . the case was one on which the opinion of the Cabinet should have been taken. The truth is that I attached too little importance to it and thought it too clear.

He emphasised that an early settlement between Mehemet and the Sultan was the only means of preventing a collision between France and Russia. It was also important, in his view, to make the two Powers realise that their naval strength in the Mediterranean had not passed unnoticed.¹²⁶ It is fascinating to speculate on possible cabinet attitudes towards naval action at this point. Only Graham emerges as having definite opinions on the necessity of confronting Russia:

Having settled Belgium, we shall I hope, arrange Portugal and then we shall be in a strong position to talk strongly to Russia.¹²⁷

Talleyrand complained that the Cabinet showed little interest in the matter,¹²⁸ although ministers supported his idea of a self-denying ordinance with respect to Turkey on the part of the Four Powers involved.¹²⁹

Apart from the fact that the worsening of Anglo-French relations with the Eastern Powers made a concert approach very unlikely,¹³⁰ the Convention of Kutaya made such proposals redundant. Palmerston was permitted early in May to send a squadron commanded by Admiral Malcolm to cruise off the Dardanelles, most probably to encourage Russia

to withdraw as the negotiations between the Porte and the Pasha were reaching a conclusion. The Cabinet's acquiescence in this step is perhaps best explained in terms of the new availability of ships for strategic purposes, with the lifting of the Dutch blockade, rather than as heralding a turn towards an interventionist policy.¹³¹ The squadron was strictly under orders from London and was not to enter the Dardanelles except under very exceptional and unlikely circumstances. In a letter to Grey, Palmerston admitted that in the existing situation it was unlikely that Ibrahim would renew his rebellion or the Sultan invoke British aid. In all cases Malcolm 'was better out of the way'.¹³² One suspects that Palmerston gained Cabinet approval by stressing the unlikelihood of British action in the Dardanelles. He could justify the despatch of the squadron in terms of the possible diplomatic effect in encouraging the Russians to withdraw from Constantinople as Ibrahim's bluff had been called. He knew perfectly well that the Dardanelles could not be forced by ships alone. The decision was far from a commitment to intervene to preserve the territorial integrity of Turkey.

The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, Russia's prize for her intercession on the Sultan's behalf, did much to convince Palmerston that a more resolute response was required. Ironically, Malcolm's squadron may have helped to convince the Sultan of the necessity of an agreement with Russia, for he misconstrued Britain's motives in sending out a naval detachment.¹³³ The proper construction of the Treaty, particularly its secret clause concerning the passage through the Straits, was long a matter of contention. It now seems generally agreed that the Russians did not gain any new concessions in this area. The ancient rule excluding foreign warships from the Straits was reaffirmed. Such a ruling benefitted Russia, in that

her Black Sea coast would be free from attack in the event of a war with Britain and France, but it did not amount to the Turkish surrender of sovereignty in the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles which was widely assumed in Britain. Palmerston had a shrewd idea of what the Treaty contained and what it did not, and he was inclined to give Russia and Turkey the benefit of the doubt over the Straits question. However, he was incensed at the Treaty, not so much because of the equivocal secret clause, but because of

the mutual agreement between the two powers to consult each other confidentially upon all their respective interests and by which the Russian Ambassador becomes chief Minister of the Sultan.¹³⁴

In public Palmerston maintained his defence of the Tsar against personal attacks and asserted his belief in Russian good faith over Turkey.¹³⁵

Nevertheless, his conviction that Turkey must remain independent was hardening. Three days after the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi had been signed he told the Commons that:

It is of the utmost importance for the interest of England and for the maintenance of the peace of Europe, that the territories and provinces forming the Ottoman Empire should be an independent state . . . undoubtedly the Government would feel it to be their duty to resist to the utmost any attempt on the part of Russia to partition the Turkish Empire and, if it had been necessary, we should equally have felt it our duty to interfere and prevent the Pasha of Egypt from dismembering any portion of the dominions of the Sultan.¹³⁶

Commentators have seized upon this speech as marking a new departure in British policy towards the Near East: in reality the Government's conversion to the Turkish cause was gradual and only partial during the last year of

the Grey ministry. Six months were to pass before the Cabinet agreed to the issue of the 'discretionary orders' to the force off the Dardanelles, which were the practical counterpart to Palmerston's newly stated principle. At first Palmerston protested about the Treaty through the normal diplomatic channels. He resisted the appeals of Ponsonby, at last installed as Ambassador to the Porte, to allow Malcolm's squadron to proceed to Constantinople to forestall any future Russian attack. He explained that such a decision would require Cabinet sanction and that ministers were scattering for the summer recess.¹³⁷ Ponsonby had to wait until December for a formal reply to his request.¹³⁸

Palmerston could not expect a prompt or informed Cabinet opinion on intervention in Turkey, particularly as he himself was still feeling his way. During the summer the main preoccupation was with the struggle over Irish Church Legislation which emphasised the government's weakness in the Lords. Its popularity in the Commons had not been increased by internal divisions over Ireland and the Slave Trade and the indifferent parliamentary performances of Cabinet members.¹³⁹ Those who were inclined to support British intervention abroad such as Graham, Holland and Russell were, as we shall see, more interested in the Portuguese question at this time, not least because there was a strong ideological element involved. The same could not be said of Turkey, where Palmerston's frequent entreaties to the Sultan that he should reform his administration were not well received.¹⁴⁰ The members of the Cabinet, in their usual equivocal mood, hesitated as they had done over the coercion of Holland the previous year. There was a world of difference between sending a fleet to cruise off the Dardanelles subject to orders from London and allowing the Ambassador at the Porte to order the ships into the Straits when he deemed it necessary. Russell appreciated that the

Turkish situation was critical, but he was none the more determined for that:

When the Sultan goes in to Constantinople and virtually assumes the protectorate of Turkey I think we ought to make up our minds how we are to act in such a state of things . . . I am quite undecided.¹⁴¹

Writing from Howick, Grey was inclined to let Ponsonby have the extra ships and the discretionary powers he wanted but was aware of the difficulties of deciding under what circumstances the fleet should proceed up the Dardanelles. He was worried at the possibility of war (one suspects he was in a 'resigning fit' at this time) and was even prepared to consider using Mehemet Ali against the Russians.¹⁴² Surprisingly, Stanley made a contribution to the debate in so far as he agreed with Palmerston that Malcolm's forces should be strengthened, and that the Russians should not be allowed to suppress a renewed revolt against the Sultan on their own.¹⁴³

Holland was not apparently worried or interested:

I am never very anxious about Turkey, but if we have taken a step that implies others I agree with Palmerston that Russia is not in a temper to make it prudent for us to shrink in the least degree from the consequences of our actions.¹⁴⁴

The matter would not be discussed until the beginning of the session in November. The events of the autumn had helped to distract attention from the issue. Grey and Palmerston had quarrelled over the question as to whether a formal protest should be sent to St. Petersburg.¹⁴⁵ Grey was pained when Palmerston thought that his reluctance to agree to the protest was due to Princess Lieven's influence.¹⁴⁶ In truth Grey wished to avoid a further aggravation of Anglo-Russian relations following the Tsar's

rejection of Palmerston's nomination of Stratford Canning as Ambassador to St. Petersburg.¹⁴⁷ The Treaty of Münchengrätz deflected some of Palmerston's ire towards Metternich, for he believed that it contained a secret agreement to dismember Turkey.¹⁴⁸ However, the Cabinet appears to have discussed Ponsonby's request at the end of November and turned it down, principally because there was now no useful purpose that the Royal Navy could serve alone. After Münchengrätz the Austrians could not be expected to afford any support. Palmerston stressed to Ponsonby that the Sultan's best defence against Mehemet was not Russian arms but internal reform.¹⁴⁹ The despatch hints at the reluctance of the Cabinet to take decisive steps as well as revealing Palmerston's own hesitation as to the best counter to further Russian aggression.¹⁵⁰

The Cabinet did not see its way clear to place the Dardanelles force under the orders of Ponsonby until January 1834. It is not clear why the decision was taken then rather than in December,¹⁵¹ although the availability of ships may have been a factor. Graham wrote in December 1833:

We are quietly preparing more ships of the line and it will depend on the explanations of Russia with regard to her armaments both in the Black Sea and the Baltic whether in the spring we shall be able to maintain the general peace.¹⁵²

Presumably the significance of Unkiar-Skelessi and Münchengrätz had sunk in and ministers had appreciated by January 1834 the need to back up its diplomatic attempts to coax the Sultan away from Russia and to show Russia that she would not be allowed to impose her will on the Sultan by force.¹⁵³ On 10 March Ponsonby was authorised to summon the fleet into the Dardanelles to counter any Russian move, if the Porte asked for

assistance. So the 'discretionary orders' were very limited in extent, although they have been considered by some to have been instrumental in restraining Russia and regaining some of the ground lost by Britain in 1833.¹⁵⁴

The Grey Ministry left the problem of intervention in Turkey hanging in mid-air. Palmerston later admitted that the Eastern question, alone among the affairs with which he had to deal during Grey's ministry, was in an 'unsatisfactory state'. He blamed the Cabinet for withholding their moral support for the Sultan in the autumn of 1832.¹⁵⁵ He was probably wrong in thinking moral support sufficient at that stage when he himself was reluctant to countenance intervention. As in the case of the Polish revolution, he and the rest of the Cabinet were preoccupied at the crucial time. There was another factor as well: the Whigs did not find it easy to change their tune over Turkey, particularly if a commitment to intervention and war might be involved. Those who had been prepared to countenance the French occupation of Belgium would hardly jibe at Russia's occupation of Constantinople. We have already noted Grey's description of Turkey as 'a remote and problematical interest' for Parliament and the country. Ministers were later to regret their inaction and their prejudices. Brougham admitted in 1838 that his earlier belief that the exclusion of Turkey from Europe would be a great benefit was a 'refinement too absurd to require serious refutation'.¹⁵⁶ He ought to have added in his own defence that this 'refinement' was shared by the majority of his countrymen until the dangers of Russian aggrandisement and Turkish weakness were fully appreciated. In retrospect it is the neglect of the Poles that is more surprising in view of traditional Whig attitudes.

CHAPTER FIVE

NON-INTERVENTION IN PORTUGAL AND THE CABINET CRISIS

The civil war in Portugal illustrates perfectly the dilemma over intervention and non-intervention which exercised the Grey administration. The legitimist cause on the Peninsula was a rallying point for Whigs and Canningites alike, and after November 1830 British policy towards the absolutist *régime* of Dom Miguel could have been expected to reflect the fact. So it proved; for three years the government maintained a neutral and non-interventionist attitude but acquiesced in the exertions of private citizens in the rebel cause. This stance was in the Whig tradition of scant regard for the letter and spirit of the Foreign Enlistment Act and a cavalier interpretation of the principle of neutrality, short of formal British intervention. When, at the end of 1833, circumstances seemed to demand such intervention, the equilibrium of opinion was upset, precipitating the only major cabinet division over foreign affairs during Grey's premiership. We have seen how previous disagreements about the wisdom of assertive diplomacy were resolved by refinements of official language, the skilful deployment of naval resources or even by the avoidance of the issue. On this occasion however, there was a direct conflict of opinion between those who supported intervention, whether for strategic or ideological reasons, and those favouring peace and non-intervention. For Grey, it was an issue of principle and therefore a resigning matter. After a minority in the Cabinet had rejected intervention, it was only with the greatest reluctance that he consented to remain at the head of the government.

It will be remembered that Palmerston's criticism of government

policy towards Portugal had been instrumental in bringing him into prominence as a possible Foreign Secretary in a reformed administration. He deplored the manner in which Wellington and Aberdeen had apparently squandered Canning's initiative of 1826 by recalling the British force from Lisbon and according Dom Miguel tacit recognition. Now in Office, he had the opportunity of assisting the cause of Donna Maria and her Regent, Dom Pedro, by combining an official policy of neutrality with the 'intermeddling' he regarded as justifiable in certain circumstances. He had told the Commons in 1829 that

. . . if by interference is meant intermeddling and intermeddling in every way short of actual military force, I must affirm that there is nothing in such interference that the Law of Nations may not in certain cases permit.¹

Palmerston was as good as his word. Indeed, it was his 'non-intervention' in the affairs of Portugal that occasioned Talleyrand's cynical comment quoted at the beginning of this study. He went further than some of his colleagues would have wished in support of the legitimist cause, but, at least until the matter came to a head in January 1834, the differences in interpretation and emphasis rarely excited the attention of the full Cabinet. Only Lord Holland showed both a constant interest in Portuguese affairs and a desire to help Dom Pedro in every possible way. He had long standing political and financial connections with Portugal and his sympathy with the legitimist cause, together with his wish to see the interest of British subjects there protected, were sufficient to outweigh his natural leaning towards peace and non-intervention. Throughout the period he bombarded Palmerston, Grey and their less sympathetic colleagues with memoranda urging stronger measures to ensure the success of Dom Pedro's

offensive.

In 1831, the immediate prospects were not encouraging. Pedro, displaced as Emperor of Brazil, had brought Donna Maria to Europe with a view to launching an attack against Dom Miguel from the legitimist stronghold of the Island of Terceira. Despite his barbarous methods, Dom Miguel seemed well established in Portugal, while Dom Pedro had to live down his reputation as an incompetent Emperor of Brazil and as the architect of the ill-fated Constitution which he had introduced prior to his abdication from the Portuguese throne in 1826. In Britain, only Holland believed that Pedro's reputation was ill-deserved. Palmerston, an enemy of Miguel rather than a champion of Pedro, was under no illusions as to his failings and concerned himself initially with the protection of British subjects against Miguelite outrages. It was also necessary to restrain the French from taking drastic action to safeguard their interests, both in Portugal and in Spain, where an attempt to encourage the opponents of the *régime* of Ferdinand VII might provoke a reaction from the Eastern Powers. Thus Palmerston was in a defensive mood when St. Amaro, the Brazilian Minister in London, approached him early in 1831 about the possibility of British support for an expedition from Terceira. With the Belgian negotiations in the forefront of his mind, he contented himself on this occasion with a declaration to the effect that Britain's treaty obligations to Portugal did not involve support for the illegal *régime* against its internal enemies. It was hardly necessary for Grey to have to remind Palmerston that any further statement of policy would require Cabinet approval. Grey himself was anxious that the government should do nothing to compromise its neutrality over Portugal, but made it clear where his personal sympathies lay.² Palmerston had suggested to him that a naval detachment should be

stationed off the Tagus to protect British subjects, but Grey was disinclined to issue discretionary orders to 'seamen who are apt to be a little too prompt' and would have preferred to channel complaints through the Consul General at Lisbon.³ Palmerston purported to agree,⁴ but within a week Grey deferred to his arguments in favour of a display of force off the coast. Early in April, 'a few sea captains paid Dom Miguel a visit'.⁵ The evidence that survives suggests that this was a Cabinet decision; presumably Palmerston pointed out that the expedition would not contravene Portuguese sovereignty.⁶ The British presence had the desired effect in settling outstanding grievances but Palmerston was warming to the rebel cause and regretted that the Navy was limited to a deterrent role.⁷ Grey was concerned that it should stay as such. He told Palmerston that although Dom Miguel was indeed 'a wild beast', his behaviour did not justify British intervention.⁸

The possibility of French intervention in Portugal had worried successive governments as it would challenge Britain's traditional preponderance there as well as being a threat to European peace. Thus when in June Palmerston's hatred for Miguel led him to encourage the French to seek redress in the British manner, Grey was alarmed and the Opposition were furious.⁹ The Duke of Wellington regarded the protection of Portugal and British interests there almost as his personal responsibility after the liberation of the Peninsula from French domination. His indignation at the possibility of renewed French aggrandisement was reinforced by the commercial lobby, who wished for the maintenance of the *status quo* in Portugal, and justified their stand by reference to Britain's long-standing commitments to defend Portugal against foreign attack.¹⁰ Fortunately for Palmerston and for the government, the French showed exemplary restraint in obtaining redress

and the government was not compromised by its refusal to respond to Miguel's calls for assistance on the basis of treaty obligations.¹¹ In truth, Britain's treaties with Portugal, dating back to the days of John of Gaunt, had long been regarded as constituting a pretext rather than an obligation to intervene. Canning had considered Britain bound to defend Portugal solely in the event of her being attacked by a foreign power. He would not protect her from internal enemies.¹² The government's refusal to protect Miguel against the French reflects Canning's view. However, even dedicated opponents of the Portuguese *régime* did not wish to see it topple at French hands. Holland had thought the French justified in obtaining satisfaction from Dom Miguel by threats, but he was anxious that the Terceira Regency should triumph through the good offices of Britain rather than France.¹³

Meanwhile, Dom Pedro and Donna Maria had arrived in England, hoping to attract support for the intended expedition. Talleyrand had already sounded Palmerston about the possibility of joint Anglo-French action, but Palmerston parried the request by stating that Britain's treaty obligations necessitated independent action.¹⁴ In this respect at least, the Portuguese treaties were a convenient excuse for waiting on events. Sebastiani raised the matter again on 15 July but his enquiry could not have been more badly timed in view of Louis Philippe's speech to the Chambers on 23 July.¹⁵ The French King had confirmed Tory suspicions of French ambitions in Portugal by boasting that 'the tricolore was fluttering under the walls of Lisbon'.¹⁶ Although the French retired from Portuguese waters soon afterwards, it was unthinkable to encourage Sebastiani at this stage. Palmerston was thinking in terms of independent and covert support for Dom Pedro's expedition. He wrote privately to Granville that although

warships could not be supplied directly, Britain might sell them to Pedro at a nominal price. He went on:

Really, when one reads what is going on in Portugal, one feels tempted to throw the principle of non-interference overboard and to send Pedro straight to Queluz. But nevertheless the thing ought to be done in a decent manner, but done it should be.¹⁷

Holland was equally impatient with the policy of neutrality: indeed he criticised both Graham and Palmerston for avoiding the issue by blaming the King for the neglect of Dom Pedro.¹⁸ Certainly the King did not warm to the legitimist cause - he received the Queen and her father with the greatest reluctance¹⁹ - but the government's equivocal stance cannot be blamed on the King and still less on the attitude of Palmerston or Graham, interveners both. The fault lay with their colleagues. The Cabinet's natural aversion to the use of force was strengthened by doubts about Dom Pedro's competence to lead a national movement. Furthermore, Portuguese affairs were overshadowed in the summer of 1831 by events in Belgium. The possibility of assisting the Terceira Regency formally was not discussed by the Cabinet until late September, when the extent of the opposition to dramatic gestures was revealed. Holland had already expressed the opinion that Britain would be acquiescing in French or Spanish domination of Portugal by adhering to a policy of non-intervention.²⁰ Such sentiments had a cool reception in Cabinet. Goderich and Richmond questioned both the justice and the expediency of an expedition against Dom Miguel and protested at the hospitality afforded to the Portuguese royal couple. Palmerston joined Holland in emphasising the dangers of leaving the contest for other powers to decide. According to Holland, 'Grey, Stanley,

Lord John Russell and even Althorp' inclined towards his view, but obviously they did not incline far enough.²¹ Thus for the time being the government remained committed to a policy of neutrality in which Palmerston and Holland had to acquiesce. Despite the impression, Holland gives in his Journal, Grey for one had grave misgivings about any departure from such a policy, as he confessed to Palmerston a week later:

I find it very difficult to make up my mind to take a decided measure to overthrow a government established *de facto* and which is submitted to by the people. It is a most embarrassing question and one on which it would not be prudent to take any decided step till we see whether we are to retain the power of conducting to a conclusion the measures which we may think it right to adopt.²²

Grey was intermittently aware of the necessity for the Government to formulate a more definite policy towards Portugal in view of the imminence of Dom Pedro's expedition from Terceira and the intensifying struggle for the succession in Spain between the Apostolicals and the legitimists.²³ He was prompted by a local difficulty in Lisbon in October concerning the use of British ships in the Pedroite cause to write both to Palmerston and Holland for their recommendations with regard to possible British intervention in the approaching contest. He told Palmerston that he remained unconvinced as to the propriety of opposing an established *régime*, but he could not countenance direct action in its defence. He was unsure of the proper course of action:

I wish I could see a clear course out of these difficulties. Supposing there was none, except joining with France to establish Donna Maria, in what way would you set about it; or what ground would you take for interfering? The statement of a project for this purpose would greatly assist our deliberations.²⁴

Palmerston responded promptly with the opinion that the Portuguese question 'could not be set straight without some sort of interference'. He had no clear answer for Grey however; he merely stated that a definite policy would have to be agreed upon by the spring, when Pedro was expected to mount his attack and British policy would come under Parliamentary scrutiny.²⁵ Holland replied to Grey's request²⁶ in more trenchant terms. He recommended full consultation with the French prior to the recognition of Donna Maria and the conclusion of a triple alliance. He justified such action in terms of the crimes of Dom Miguel and his failure to respond to repeated British calls for an amnesty for political prisoners. Holland also recommended that the Government should make diplomatic representations on Pedro's behalf both to the London Conference and the various courts of Europe.²⁷

Palmerston and Holland were both restrained in their advice, presumably with the full Cabinet in mind. Privately, Palmerston wished to go beyond diplomatic representations, as he confessed to Esterhazy, the Austrian plenipotentiary,²⁸ and Holland was certainly with him. However, some of their colleagues were, as we have seen, reluctant even to endorse a policy of amicable neutrality towards the Terceira Regency, and Melbourne re-emphasised his fears of the effects of British intervention at this time.²⁹ Lansdowne was also uneasy, as one of his rare letters to Palmerston shows. He excused himself from a Cabinet meeting on Portugal early in December, admitting that he had no clear opinion on the subject. He hoped that a peaceful solution could be found by appealing to the Powers to recognise Donna Maria in the interests of stability as well as legitimacy. As to intervention, Lansdowne was concerned lest Britain should be involved in a protracted struggle:

To raise the standard of civil war by foreign interference in Portugal without reasonable certainty of an immediate as well as a successful result would be . . . impolitic and unjust.³⁰

The Cabinet which met in Lansdowne's absence was reluctant to include any reference to Portugal in the forthcoming King's Speech. Holland insisted that a reference was made, albeit of a neutral character, to the imminent struggle. He lamented the attitude of his colleagues. Grey he found lacking the energy required to formulate a definite policy, while Palmerston was 'either constitutionally or systematically cold and dilatory'.³¹ This was unfair: Palmerston was in fact attempting to obtain international agreement to a plan to induce Dom Miguel to retire in favour of Donna Maria on condition that the unpopular Constitution of 1826 was not revived. He was prepared to pledge Britain to a policy of non-intervention if Spain and the Eastern Powers reciprocated. Naturally, 'non-intervention' meant acquiescence in the private supply of ships, arms and volunteers for the rebel cause.³²

No one could doubt where Palmerston's sympathies lay, but the government's preoccupation with the Reform Bill and the Belgian issue prevented him from acting upon them. He narrowed his horizons in the spring of 1832 and concerned himself with the protection of British subjects in the event of a civil war. He wished to retain a naval presence off Lisbon for the purpose as well as to serve as a deterrent to any Spanish attempts to cross the border to assist Dom Miguel.³³ Graham fully supported him,³⁴ but Holland could not accept a passive role for Britain and urged Palmerston to renew his efforts to win international recognition for Donna Maria.³⁵ Palmerston had to remind him that it was essential to stand by the Cabinet line of 'moral neutrality', at least in public, to

avoid embarrassment in view of the delicate domestic situation that the Reform issue had created.³⁶ Unfortunately, Grey's concern to clarify British policy towards Portugal had not been sustained. He was opposed to any grand diplomatic gestures. He feared that the King would not approve of any move which might be construed as a threat to Spain and was anxious not to antagonise William at a time when his confidence was most needed.³⁷ Holland countered with the view that 'a little maritime bullying before Lisbon . . . would not at all displease King William the Tar'.³⁸ This may have been true, but Grey lacked the will to prove it. In the event, Admiral Parker was ordered to retire from the Tagus and remain outside the three mile limit to await further instructions.³⁹ At the same time, Lord William Russell, brother of Lord John, was sent on a special mission to Portugal with a view to strengthening British representations in Lisbon. Palmerston made no secret of his personal desire to see Britain take Donna Maria 'decidedly by the hand', but emphasised to Russell that he should maintain the strictest neutrality.⁴⁰ As he had admitted on a previous occasion, 'Pedro must win his spurs for himself; Terceira is neither a separate state or the Portuguese monarchy'.⁴¹ One senses the invisible restraining hand of the Cabinet acting upon Palmerston throughout the spring and summer of 1832. He must have found this frustrating in view of his growing resolve to support the liberal cause throughout Europe. This new departure was to be most clearly demonstrated in August during the Commons debate on the imposition of the repressive Six Resolutions on the German Confederation. Palmerston made a powerful speech, which was printed and circulated throughout Germany, declaring consitutional states to be the natural allies of Britain.⁴²

Dom Pedro proved to be an uninspiring fighter for the cause of constitutional government of which Palmerston was coming to be regarded as the patron. The Terceira force, supported navally by the English admiral Sartorius, had landed at Oporto in July 1832, only to find itself besieged almost immediately. The British Government watched anxiously, if Brougham's secretary, Le Marchant, is to be believed:

French politics are now forgotten in our anxiety about Portugal. Every day has some fresh report Dom Pedro's victory or defeat and proportional speculations are of course afloat respecting him.⁴³

It was soon clear that Pedro's cause was hopeless without foreign assistance. Palmerston and Holland were hamstrung, for they realised that the permission and supplies necessary for British intervention would not be forthcoming.⁴⁴ In any case, Grey was showing his habitual caution over military affairs and while he appreciated Pedro's plight, he was unwilling to expose British forces to the possibility of a long engagement and eventual defeat.⁴⁵ The Cabinet as a whole seemed less concerned about the outcome of the struggle than Le Marchant implied. Holland complained to Brougham:

I owe you all a grudge for not having given him [Pedro] more moral support when it would have been of service. A minister to Terceira or even to Oporto on his taking it (quite compatible with neutrality) would have made all the difference.⁴⁶

It seemed too late to help Dom Pedro. Althorp was already communicating his thoughts to Palmerston on the proper fate of the Island of Terceira following the expected recognition of Dom Miguel.⁴⁷ Graham still hoped to see British intervention, but showed himself well aware of the probable outcome of the contest:

. . . if he [Pedro] cannot make head [*sic*] against Dom Miguel, we should negotiate for his retreat on the condition that he retires *absolutely* from the contest and that the government of Dom Miguel is to be recognised by us.⁴⁸

Graham emphasised his lack of confidence in Pedro in a letter to Palmerston a month later, which Melbourne fully endorsed.⁴⁹

In fact the struggle in Portugal did not develop in the way the government expected. Though outnumbered by ten to one, Dom Pedro managed to hold off the Miguelite forces and remained in precarious occupation of Oporto. Both Lord William Russell and Hoppner, the Consul General in Lisbon, urged Palmerston to intervene, but he was still bound by the Cabinet to a policy of neutrality, as well as being aware of the disappointing response of the Portuguese people to Dom Pedro's requests for support.⁵⁰ Grey was never impressed by Pedro and he was disinclined to cultivate him. He wrote to Palmerston on 15 November:

Dom Pedro does not seem to have prospect of much support even from his partisans in Oporto - we must not be too nice to him.⁵¹

In spite of his low regard for Pedro, Grey again became conscious of the need for Britain's position to be made clearer, as he admitted to Graham a week later.⁵² Graham himself was determined without being specific:

I think a direct course would be found to be more safe and easy than any indirect proceeding, and the vice of our policy in Portugal has been the want of sufficient decision, for we have pursued the substance of neutrality with all its inherent weakness and incurred all the risks and odium of hostilities without the efficacious advantages of war.⁵³

This was an admirable summary of the situation, but Grey's particular outlook led him to support Lord William Russell's attempts to persuade Pedro and Miguel to retire from the contest prior to the establishment of a regency for Donna Maria, the grant of an amnesty and the burial of the 1826 Constitution.⁵⁴ Those of his colleagues who were on hand in late November endorsed Russell's initiative.⁵⁵ However, it stood little chance of success, not least because of the turn of events in Spain. The ailing King Ferdinand had unexpectedly transferred his political support to the legitimist party of Queen Christina.⁵⁶ With the partisans of the Apostolical Don Carlos in retreat, it was hardly likely that the Eastern Powers, with their deep suspicion of constitutional movements, would agree to the simultaneous dispatch of Dom Miguel. Stratford Canning was sent on a special mission to Madrid in December to press the legitimist cause in both countries and to repair the damage caused by Addington, the near-Carlist British Ambassador.⁵⁷ This intensive diplomatic activity did little to help Dom Pedro directly and Hoppner sent Palmerston a memorandum in December re-emphasizing the view that prolonged resistance to Dom Miguel was impossible without foreign assistance.⁵⁸ There was as little hope of British intervention at this time as there was of Stratford Canning negotiating an armistice and the withdrawal of Miguel. The Cabinet did not wish to be troubled, particularly as the delicate state of Anglo-French relations following the surrender of Antwerp dominated foreign policy discussions over the New Year. Admiral Parker's force, insufficient in itself to influence the struggle, remained off Oporto to protect British subjects if they were threatened.

The continuation of Pedro's dogged resistance meant that affairs on the Peninsula remained static during the opening months of 1833. Stratford

Canning's mission to Madrid was a complete failure, for Ferdinand had reverted to his earlier patronage of the Carlists, making Zea Bermudez, a former ambassador to Britain, his Prime Minister. Bermudez, Palmerston's *bête noire*, frustrated all Canning's efforts.⁵⁹ The situation seemed to have reached stalemate. Dom Pedro was still contriving to hold on at Oporto, but his situation was desperate, as Palmerston recognised.⁶⁰ In Lisbon Russell, who had fallen too much under the influence of the Spanish Ambassador Cordova, came to the conclusion that there was nothing to choose between Pedro and Miguel.⁶¹ The French seemed to share this view, having quite lost their earlier appetite for a joint initiative with Britain. Broglie the Prime Minister had been far from enthusiastic about Canning's mission.⁶² Given these circumstances, Wellington's motion deploring the Government's departure from the principle of neutrality over Portugal as proclaimed in the King's Speech, could not have been better timed to embarrass the ministry.⁶³ The government was defeated in the Portuguese debate and Grey was strongly tempted to resign.⁶⁴ The attack on British intermeddling and the government's reply mirrored the debates on foreign policy in the 1820's, the roles of government and opposition being reversed. In the previous year, Peel had attacked Palmerston's policy in Canningite terms, deploring his hypocrisy in demanding that Spain should remain neutral while he displayed an obvious partiality towards Dom Pedro.⁶⁵ Now the opposition could attack the administration on still stronger grounds in view of the repeated violations of the Foreign Enlistment Act, as witnessed by British acquiescence in the troop-raising activities of Mendizabel, a Jewish entrepreneur operating in England, and the appointment of Sir Charles Napier as commander of Dom Pedro's navy. Lord Aberdeen produced a list of expeditions to Portugal mounted from Britain which was

so long that *Hansard's* reporter confessed himself defeated.⁶⁶ Lord Wynford fulminated against Mendizabel, refusing to believe that

Great Britain . . . was so degraded as to endure that the Government should permit a Jew to hire crimps to kidnap its subjects, or parish officers to relieve the burden of their parishes by sending them to be murdered in a foreign country and in a cause with which they had no concern.⁶⁷

Canning's warnings about the dangers of falling between the two stools of strict neutrality and intervention were especially relevant in this context. Palmerston had not heeded his mentor's advice 'away with the distinction between intervention and armed neutrality!'⁶⁸ and the government was reaping the fruits of his speech of June 1829, in which he gone beyond the Whigs' elastic conception of neutrality to justify intermeddling by any means short of actual force.

It fell to Grey to defend a policy which reflected Palmerston's philosophy rather than his own. He was on weak ground anyway, in view of his previous promises to uphold the Foreign Enlistment Act.⁶⁹ It was difficult for him to explain why the unsuccessful Sartorius had been reprimanded for his breach of the law while Napier, under the name of Carlo Ponza, was allowed to set out for Portugal unhindered. Brougham and Lansdowne could add little to Grey's halting reply and the debate was becalmed amidst varying interpretations of international law. In the division, the government was defeated by ten votes. Next day, the Cabinet met to draw up two letters to the King, one tendering resignation, the other requesting an answer to the address passed by the Lords. Althorp and Grey were both nursing thoughts of retirement and were strongly tempted to send the first letter immediately. The proposals concerning the abolition of slavery and the redistribution of Irish Church Temporalities

were having a rough passage even in the reformed Commons and the government feared subsequent defeats in the Lords. Grey in particular had lost any relish for a struggle, and his Cabinet, never a homogeneous body, had been plagued by internal differences after the passage of the Reform Act deprived ministers of a common purpose. However, he eventually agreed that the Commons should be given the opportunity to pass an opinion on the recent events in the Upper House. A question was to be set up for Palmerston to give him a chance to deplore the Lords' verdict and the Cabinet would take its cue from the reaction of the Commons and send the King the appropriate letter.⁷⁰

The letter of resignation was never needed, for the response to Palmerston's statement of 5 June was favourable and there was an overwhelming majority in favour of Colonel Evans' motion the next day approving the government's Portuguese policy.⁷¹ Ministers had feared that the radicals would combine with the Irish contingent to embarrass the government, but both groups fully supported British policy.⁷² Pro-government speakers stressed the wickedness of Dom Miguel's *régime* in justifying partisan action, together with the ominous strength and ambitions of the Eastern Powers. In the more sympathetic atmosphere of the Commons it was comparatively easy for the government to sidestep accusations of covert intervention and defiance of the Foreign Enlistment Act - which was certainly Lord John Russell's approach in a speech described by Lord Ellenborough as 'wicked'.⁷³ Peel taunted the government with quotations from Canning and Fox proclaiming the advantages of a strict neutrality, and he repeated his accusations of moral hypocrisy against Palmerston.⁷⁴ Palmerston's reply was uninspired but acceptable to the House. He defended the government's determination to see that Spain did not intervene in Portugal

in terms of the cause of peace and the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe. He also emphasised the difficulty of enforcing the Foreign Enlistment Act against individuals, even if such a procedure was just or desirable. He left the Commons in no doubt as to his personal view:

. . . the principle of embarking in the contests of other countries had prevailed and had been acted upon in the brightest period of our history.⁷⁵

Such a statement did not bear close examination, but it satisfied the House, whose members were becoming more impatient with the Eastern Powers. Their growing antipathy was displayed in the violent debate on Russian policy in Poland a month later.

In the midst of this domestic excitement, the situation in Portugal was transformed both militarily and diplomatically by 'Carlo Ponza', who destroyed Miguel's fleet off Cape St. Vincent, thus opening up the road to Lisbon for Dom Pedro. The Cabinet was encouraged to act more positively by this unexpected boost to the legitimist cause. Even Brougham, who had never cared for Pedro, wrote 'with feelings of the strictest neutrality I excessively rejoice'. Lansdowne shared his opinion.⁷⁶ Holland immediately produced a project involving the recognition of Donna Maria. He appreciated that it was important to maintain the momentum of Pedro's success, for the royal couple, recently reunited in Lisbon, were being harried by the Miguellite rump under the command of the Frenchman Marshall Bourmont.⁷⁷ For once, Holland's colleagues were not far behind him. Surprisingly, Stanley was delighted at the news of Napier's success and looked forward to a British response:

I sincerely rejoice at the Portuguese news; and I am inclined to think that a little more success might justify our taking a step in advance. But matters are hardly ripe yet . . .⁷⁸

Grey acknowledged that

Nobody adheres more scrupulously than I do to the principle of not interfering. But this, like other principles, must have its limits.⁷⁹

The Cabinet met early in August to discuss the recognition of Donna Maria. Ministers decided to send discretionary instructions to Russell empowering him to recognise the young Queen if the Terceira forces remained in control in Lisbon. More significantly, the Cabinet agreed to warn Spain that Britain might intervene if any attempt was made to assist Dom Miguel from over the border.⁸⁰ Palmerston and Lord John Russell were disappointed that further action had not been agreed, such as the reinforcement of the naval force off Lisbon to cover any determined Spanish action.⁸¹

In the event, the government was to be brought to the brink of intervention in Portugal by the developing situation in Spain. It was obvious by late August that the ailing King Ferdinand could not survive much longer and the British Government feared that Dom Miguel would be encouraged in his efforts in Portugal if Don Carlos, his political cousin, were to be proclaimed in Spain.⁸² The fortunes of the two pretenders were inextricably linked, as were those of their rivals, the Infanta Isabella and Donna Maria. Grey conceded on 8 September that 'humanity, peace and our interests may compel us to intervene'.⁸³ A week earlier, Princess Lieven had noted that

His patience was exhausted, which means Miguel!

and Bourmont are still worrying him and that he threatens to intervene in the matter.⁸⁴

While he was taking his ease at Howick during September, Grey became increasingly convinced that British intervention in Portugal would be necessary.⁸⁵ He was reluctant to depart from a neutral stance, especially as his opinion of Dom Pedro as a statesman and a soldier had not changed and was indeed shared by the majority of his colleagues.⁸⁶ The interventionists in the Cabinet, of whom Russell was becoming the most voluble, were conscious of the difficulty of persuading their colleagues to back Dom Pedro. As Russell wrote to Holland, past form was not encouraging:

When the Russians saw their interests in the East threatened, they went in, leaving us to lump it. I fear we have not the necessary spirit.

He urged Holland to work on Grey to persuade him to sound out the members of the Cabinet individually on the prospect of intervention, thereby avoiding the necessity of a formal meeting.⁸⁷ Nothing could more eloquently demonstrate Russell's lack of confidence in the Cabinet as a body. This initiative was unsuccessful and British policy assumed the becalmed state customary during the long recess. The government was still officially neutral in the Portuguese contest, just as Palmerston was still acting as intermediary and broker in the business of sending out volunteer troops to join Dom Pedro. His letter to Lord William Russell of 24 September is typical:

I am pressing Funchal [Pedro's agent in London] daily to send out troops. He may have trained and disciplined Belgians by thousands and entire battalions of Scotch and Irish are to be had as plentiful as blackberries.⁸⁸

Palmerston's only success during the early autumn was to obtain Grey's blessing for the dispatch of a force to Cork in readiness for possible action in Portugal.⁸⁹

By October the situation had apparently eased, due to the proclamation of the Infanta following the death of Ferdinand and Bourmont's withdrawal from Lisbon after a dispute with Dom Miguel. Even Palmerston had to admit that the necessity for Britain to intervene had decreased and that intervention in the existing circumstances would be hard to justify to Parliament.⁹⁰ Stanley, who was retreating from his earlier position, wrote to Palmerston in October to warn him of the strain on military resources that would be involved if a substantial force was sent.⁹¹ However, the fear that other Powers might intervene if Britain stood aside, thereby usurping her traditional predominance on the Peninsula, was strong enough to maintain an enduring case for intervention. There was a danger that France might follow her immediate recognition of the Infanta (under the Regency of Queen Christina) by intervening on her behalf, thus inviting a response from the Eastern Powers.⁹² Britain and France had accepted each other's predominance in Portugal and Spain respectively,⁹³ but in the contemporary situation close co-operation would be essential if the interests both of the two countries and the two young queens were to be safeguarded. The legitimist cause in both countries was precariously based and Broglie had reversed his previous policy with regard to British intervention in maintaining that it was essential for the tranquillity of both countries that Dom Miguel should be promptly expelled.⁹⁴ Grey was quick to appreciate the interrelation between British and French interests and revealed the direction in which he was moving in an important letter to Palmerston

on 9 October:

You know my aversion to war . . . you are equally aware of how much I deprecate all interference in the affairs of other countries. But this principle must be regulated by a just attention to our own safety, and looking forward to the possibility, I would not willingly say the probability of interference, I feel strongly the necessity of concerting with France, when the proper time shall arrive, the measures which be required to bring the contest which may ensue to a satisfactory, and which is scarcely less essential, to a speedy termination.⁹⁵

If Grey was joining Palmerston, Graham and Russell in favouring intervention, his change of attitude was counterbalanced by that of Brougham, who was hardening in support of strict non-intervention. He had hoped that Bourmont's withdrawal would cool the ardour of the interveners in Britain,⁹⁶ but he was worried at the prospect of the French marching into Spain to enforce the claims of the Infanta.⁹⁷ He wrote two impassioned letters to Broglie in October setting out at length his own philosophy of non-intervention and urging the French Premier to adopt it. His attitude towards intervention in Portugal was uncompromising:

On no account could I have approved of any measures adopted by the English government for assisting the Queen's party in the contest because the same motives . . . which had led us to interfere in favour of liberty and good government might have been put forward by the Holy Alliance in 1821 to suppress the spirit of improvement and re-establish a despotic government in Italy and elsewhere.

This is the statement of a philosopher rather than a statesman or a politician, for at the same time that Brougham was writing, the Eastern Powers were meeting at Münchengrätz to determine a rationale for intervention in the internal affairs of other states, thus necessitating an

adjustment in the approach of Western governments. Brougham was anxious for Britain and France to make a stand in favour of the highest principles. France should abstain from interference in Spain to match Britain's stance in Portugal:

Whether speaking as a French or as an English statesman, I should consider myself precluded from adopting any measures to assist the Regent and the Infanta against Don Carlos, because I see no reason that could be given for such an interference that would not justify the German and Northern Powers . . .

He called for a joint initiative:

While France and England are united and while they abstain from meddling in the internal affairs of their neighbours, what possible risk can happen to either from any combination that could be formed, even of all the other powers?⁹⁸

Brougham claimed to speak for his colleagues and 'all his country' in this, but in truth the Cabinet, dispersed for the recess period, differed widely on the Portuguese question. In complete antipathy to Brougham, Lord John Russell urged Palmerston and Holland 'not to give in to the non-interveners, working directly or indirectly' and he believed that 'five thousand Britons at Lisbon and three thousand Frenchmen at the Pyrenees would solve the problems of the Peninsula'.⁹⁹ Grey held a middle view, at least to Brougham, for he assured him that he would deprecate Anglo-French intervention - unless Don Carlos received outside assistance.¹⁰⁰

There was no immediate Cabinet decision on intervention when ministers reassembled. The political situation on the Peninsula remained finely balanced, with both Regencies expecting onslaughts from their

respective enemies, who had joined forces on the Portuguese border.¹⁰¹ The lack of positive response from the Cabinet, for all its constitutional inertia, is puzzling. Admittedly the King was going through a Francophobe period at this time and was consequently suspicious of any attempt to strengthen Queen Christina's Regency,¹⁰² but his attitude cannot explain why the matter does not appear even to have been discussed by the Cabinet until January 1834. In the absence of any relevant private correspondence or evidence of policy discussions, we must assume that the non-interventionist lobby in the Cabinet were able to scotch any attempt to raise the question of intervention or a joint initiative with France. Thus Palmerston could give no answer to Villiers, Addington's permanent replacement in Lisboa, as to whether or when Britain might come to the rescue. Indeed, he sent his ambassador no communications of any kind between November and February.¹⁰³

If the autumn of 1833 was a discouraging time for the British supporters of constitutional rule on the Peninsula, they could take comfort from Grey's growing resolve to intervene to preserve European peace. He feared that a prolonged war might hasten Don Carlos' expected return to Spain and concluded that only British intervention could prevent such a catastrophe. By late December Villiers' reports had persuaded him that the situation in both countries made the time ripe for a British initiative. The legitimist cause in Portugal had made little headway outside Lisbon and Oporto, while the recent failure to corner Don Carlos on the Portuguese border made a full-scale conflict in Spain virtually certain. Grey was naturally reluctant to depart from the principle of non-intervention, but he was nonetheless determined:

I no longer know how to resist the arguments for taking measures to put an end to the war which by its continuance must produce so much distress and danger not only to Portugal but to the whole Peninsula. The case has certainly assumed a totally new aspect from the recent occurrences in Spain . . . the necessity of maintaining peace and order could justify our interference jointly with the Spanish government.¹⁰⁴

He proposed that British and Spanish forces should be stationed off Lisbon and on the Portuguese border respectively. In return, Dom Pedro, who still lacked the confidence of British observers, was to be told to refashion his administration to make it acceptable to the Cortes and to grant a general amnesty and an act of oblivion. If he agreed, Britain would ask Spain for help in expelling Dom Miguel. In view of Talleyrand's imminent attempt to interest Grey and Palmerston in a Franco-British alliance, it is significant that France did not figure in Grey's ideas. This serves to emphasise that Grey's motives were strategic rather than ideological.

Palmerston welcomed Grey's proposals, agreeing that no time should be lost in bringing them before the Cabinet. Although he had less trouble with his conscience than Grey in such matters, he suggested that it would be best to depart from non-intervention obliquely, by allowing Spain to defend herself from possible Carlist incursions while British forces stood by in readiness to assist either country.¹⁰⁵ Graham favoured a more forthright approach. He was delighted at Grey's conversion, but was pessimistic about obtaining a swift or sympathetic response from his colleagues:

. . . the first week in January . . . that awful period to which everything is postponed and in which nothing will be done, will be late for a decision which presses more and more every hour.¹⁰⁶

In the event, the first week in January came and went without any discussion of Portuguese policy, but in that time Palmerston had received two requests which ensured that the Cabinet would have to consider Peninsular affairs. Talleyrand had received permission from both Louis Philippe and Broglie to advance his favourite scheme for an Anglo-French defensive alliance in the event of a conflict with the Eastern Powers. In truth, the project was designed to gain for the two Powers the same primacy in Peninsular affairs that Russia enjoyed in Turkey.¹⁰⁷ British governments were never attracted to the idea of defensive alliances; in this instance Palmerston's desire to restrict French influence in Spain, as later exemplified by his exclusion of Talleyrand from the Quadruple Alliance negotiations, put the proposal out of court. Grey supported this line, for he was anxious not to offend the Eastern Powers unnecessarily.¹⁰⁸ He and Palmerston were more interested in the simultaneous request from Dom Pedro for British troops to occupy Lisbon while his forces dealt with Miguelite resistance in the interior. In soliciting this assistance, Sarmiento, the Portuguese Ambassador in London, stressed that Pedro was prepared to hold elections, summon the Cortes and call a general amnesty.¹⁰⁹ Although the plan differed from that which Grey and Palmerston had agreed, in that it involved co-operation with Portugal rather than with Spain, both were enthusiastic about it. Grey immediately drew up a memorandum for the King explaining his proposal. In this document, which has fortunately survived among his papers, Grey argued for intervention on strategic grounds but did not neglect the political aspect:

. . . It is therefore humbly submitted to Your Majesty that immediate measures should be taken for the collection of a force of not less than 6000

men for the purpose of taking up a position at Lisbon which may encourage the people of Portugal to unite under Queen Donna Maria in establishing a government suited to the wants and wishes of the Portuguese nation.

He stressed that the strongest representations would be made to Dom Pedro to ensure that his domestic policies satisfied Western opinion.

In conclusion, he justified the project on the ground that the concentration of Carlist troops on the Portuguese border forced the British Government to take active measures to defend her ancient ally.¹¹⁰ It was probably this last point, together with his desire to see French designs on the Peninsula forestalled, that persuaded the King to give Grey his provisional approval to the plan. Grey brought the matter before the Cabinet on 14 January.¹¹¹

The Cabinet meeting and its aftermath serve as a climax to the study of Whig attitudes towards intervention during Grey's premiership. The accounts which survive enable us to trace the events of 14-16 January in some detail.¹¹² At the meeting, Grey presented a paper which was essentially the same as that which he had put before the King. His proposal to dispatch troops was supported by Palmerston, Holland, Russell, Lansdowne, Graham, Ripon and *in absentia* by Brougham and Carlisle. Althorp led the opposition to intervention, supported by Melbourne, Richmond, Grant and Stanley.¹¹³ The split thus cut across traditional Whig-Canningite division. Grey urged British action for the sake of long-term peace and claimed that the presence of Carlist troops in Portugal constituted a *casus foederis* for Britain.¹¹⁴ He was sure that the mere presence of British troops would be sufficient to arrest the civil war and prevent a Carlist-Miguellite alliance. He also argued that Britain should act so as

to forestall a French invasion of Spain. Any French move in this direction would threaten Britain's position on the Peninsula, as well as perhaps encouraging the Eastern Powers to renew their efforts to crush the independence of the smaller German states.¹¹⁵ Palmerston and Graham, who Holland describes as 'earnest for interference', added their weight to Grey's arguments. Althorp objected on grounds of principle as well as for the practical reason that parliament would be unlikely to sanction a war. Grant and Stanley were also anxious to avoid a collision with the Commons. Stanley had warned Palmerston the previous autumn of the difficulties he might have in obtaining the supplies necessary to mount a substantial expedition to the Peninsula.¹¹⁶ Portugal was by no means a cause close to the hearts of the Radicals as was Poland and Ellice warned Grey that 'the country does not care a straw about either Pedro or Miguel'.¹¹⁷ Palmerston later reported to Lord William Russell that some ministers had denounced Dom Pedro in the meeting, asserting that

We really could not send an expedition to enable his ministers to extend over the whole of Portugal the system of confiscation and proscription.¹¹⁸

If Grant and Stanley based their objections on purely practical and specific grounds, Melbourne and Richmond shared Althorp's opposition to the very principle of intervention. Melbourne had always disapproved of intermeddling or intervention in whatever guise, while Richmond could never be convinced that the cause of constitutional government in Europe either deserved or required support. He was intolerant of Holland's predilection for 'foreigners in general and Portuguese in particular'.¹¹⁹ Althorp himself had consistently deprecated Palmerston's aggressive style in foreign affairs, from the time

of the crisis over the election of the Duc de Nemours onwards, just as he had consistently campaigned for a reduction in military and naval expenditure. Non-intervention and retrenchment were for him indissoluble and universal principles.

Grey was in Althorp's words, 'very shaken'¹²⁰ by the strength of the opposition to his proposals, and consequently reluctant to resolve the issue in terms of a majority vote. There was a possibility that Melbourne and Stanley could be swayed towards intervention, or so Howick thought,¹²¹ while the resignations of Richmond and Grant would not have been fatal to the administration. It was Althorp's position that made compromise impossible. His prestige both in the Cabinet and in the Commons was such that his support was essential to the success of the proposal. Once it was clear that Althorp would not change his attitude, Grey decided to resign. Howick explained in his Journal the main reason for his father's decision:

He thinks himself compelled to abandon this policy, but he felt himself unable to retain this present situation and to defend the foreign policy of the government in the Lords when debarred from pursuing the only course which appeared to him safe and honourable.¹²²

There were other factors involved. Grey was weary of office and of the extra burden imposed upon him by virtue of the divisions in his Cabinet over Ireland and the slavery question. There had been widespread rumours the previous August that he was on the point of resigning and had nominated Althorp as his successor.¹²³ With his thoughts turning towards retirement, Grey would have been reluctant to precipitate the resignation of his heir apparent. In view of Grey's undisguised distaste for office, it is tempting

to explain his decision to resign substantially in these terms, but in fairness to him, his private correspondence reveals that the need to put an end to the Portuguese civil war was uppermost in his mind. He must have been prepared to argue the case in Parliament, for he was aware that the size of the expeditionary force he proposed would require a vote of supplies.¹²⁴ He seemed determined on this occasion to put aside his objections to intervention and 'fly to the aid of Portugal' in the manner of the despised Canning. Althorp was equally determined to oppose him and the deadlock of the second week of January serves as a telling reminder of the contradictions of Whig foreign policy throughout the post-war period.

Brougham immediately sought to make amends for his absence at the Cabinet meeting by trying to break the deadlock. His own stance during this episode was surprising, for despite his lectures to Broglie in the autumn, he had announced to Grey in December that he would be prepared to countenance intervention in favour of Dom Pedro, subject to guarantees as to his future behaviour. We must presume that Brougham was persuaded to change his outlook by the deteriorating situation on the Portuguese border, but his *volte-face* is none the less extraordinary. On the eve of the Cabinet meeting he had written to Grey 'hoping and trusting that Britain would intervene'.¹²⁵ Brougham had always entertained the highest respect for Grey's opinions on foreign policy and his change of mind may be indicative of strength of Grey's resolve. However, once Brougham learned that the future of the administration was at risk over the issue, he was quick to revert to his customary position. Holland tells us that Brougham insisted 'with all his customary vehemence and exaggeration' that the question of intervention in Portugal was 'as nothing'

in comparison with the prospect of Grey resigning.¹²⁶ At his instigation, the members of the Cabinet sent Grey a round robin on the evening of 14 January urging him to reconsider his decision to resign. The letter did not touch upon the point at issue, but Brougham and his colleagues impressed upon Grey their belief that he must remain in office, not merely because of the high esteem in which they held him, but out of a

. . . deep and settled conviction of the fatal consequences, which must ensue from your resigning, to the best interests of the country.¹²⁷

Several ministers sent Grey personal letters in addition. Brougham himself warned Grey that 'the whole interests of the country', together with 'those foreign concerns which are immediately in question' would be in jeopardy if he was to resign.¹²⁸ Lansdowne appreciated Grey's dilemma perhaps better than anyone and he wrote to him 'after a sleepless night' to urge him to reconsider his position. Lansdowne revealed his own tentative attitude towards the intervention issue by stressing that his approval of Grey's project was conditional upon the full support of the Cabinet and of Parliament. More pointedly, he warned Grey that if the Cabinet were to be broken up over the question of intervention, 'our enemies' might conclude that Britain would not intervene in the internal affairs of foreign states, whatever the pretext.¹²⁹ Holland also wrote to Grey, offering him three choices: to capitulate to the non-interveners, at the cost of a civil war in Spain, to resign, or to accept the 'the irreparable loss' of Althorp from the Cabinet. Alone of all the members of the Cabinet, Holland put the cause of Spain and Portugal before the unity of the administration and he advised Grey to take the last course, even though it was almost as 'painful

and unsatisfactory' as the other two.¹³⁰ No letter from Palmerston has survived, but in terms of the continuity of British policy towards Portugal, he had more reason than anyone to urge Grey to remain at the head of the Cabinet.¹³¹ The King, whom Grey was to meet at Brighton the next day (16 January), wrote him a letter in similar terms to those of his ministers'.¹³²

Grey's anguish was doubtless increased by the warmth of the letters from his colleagues. On the evening of 15 January he sought the advice of his son Howick and his brother-in-law Edward Ellice. Howick urged him to stay on while Ellice advised resignation, and it is likely that Grey left for Brighton next morning undecided.¹³³ He could be sure on one point: Althorp would not retract one inch from his position. Holland and Brougham had tried independently to obtain his agreement to alternative plans which placed the emphasis on mediation while keeping the option of intervention open.¹³⁴ Brougham had been confident of success, believing that Althorp and his followers would 'go as far as we can take them, short of troops'.¹³⁵ Althorp would not be drawn however, and he was fully supported in this by the others. He told Palmerston of the decision on 15 January.

I of course consulted Melbourne and Grant as well as Richmond and Stanley, the first because I consider his judgement better than that of all the rest of us put together, and the second because I knew he went as far as any of us in his opinion.

Upon this consideration they all agreed that it was better that I should not make the proposal of a middle course to Earl Grey . . . I put my confidence in my own judgement and indeed I must say that I was satisfied with the correctness of these views.¹³⁶

Althorp shows remarkable self-confidence in this letter, which was partly

sustained by his conviction that Grey would not resign. This was by no means a universal view: Graham for one was sure that Grey would go, believing that he could not be induced to change 'a decision which his own judgement has pre-determined for the last six months'.¹³⁷

Although Graham's analysis was accurate, Althorp's intuitive opinion was to be proved right. Grey finally succumbed to the pressure which his colleagues and the King had exerted upon him and he agreed to remain as Prime Minister on 16 January. He seems to have come to the decision during his audience with the King that afternoon. He did not attempt to disguise his reluctance and the letter he wrote to Lady Grey that evening reveals his unhappiness:

Against my judgement, against my feeling and with the conviction that I expose myself to the greatest risk, if not the certainty of failure under circumstances no less embarrassing to the country and infinitely more dangerous to my character and my future peace of mind, I have consented to remain. All my feelings of the difficulties of my situation and of the false position in which I place myself are undiminished, but I found it impossible to take upon myself the responsibility of breaking up the government, under all the circumstances of the moment, in opposition to the expressed opinion of all my colleagues and the King.

. . . the King's manner was kind and affectionate beyond what I can express - it was indeed impossible to resist it . . . [but] I am very unhappy. For the first time I am placed in a situation of supporting what I think wrong . . . If I fail, I shall not, as heretofore, have an undisturbed conscience to support me.¹³⁸

Grey's principal failing was his moral arrogance and it is nowhere better displayed than here. Even so, there is conviction behind his reverent addresses to his own conscience. His commitment to intervention in

Portugal, for the sake of long term peace there, is a measure of how he had matured as a statesman from the years when he expounded self-indulgent attitudes to foreign policy from the opposition benches. He had observed at first hand the consequences of British inaction over Poland and the 'remote and problematical' events in the Near East. The enduring strength of the opposition to intervention suggests that others of the 'Old Opposition' had not been similarly enlightened. Althorp thought the principles of non-intervention and retrenchment more important than a possible early end to the conflicts on the Peninsula, while Lansdowne seemed still incapable of coming to a firm decision on intervention, for all his sympathy for Grey. Melbourne's views on foreign policy had been ever trenchant but uninformed and Cabinet office had done little to alter them.¹³⁹ While Holland and Russell were consistent in their support of intervention in Portugal, their views on foreign affairs generally were no more coherent in office than they had been in opposition.

It is fascinating to compare Grey's experience in 1834 with that of Canning little more than seven years earlier. Both men had slowly become convinced that the situation in Portugal demanded and justified British intervention. Canning had been finally persuaded to intervene by the news of Spanish incursions into Portugal. Britain was bound by her treaties to cast aside non-intervention to defend her ally.¹⁴⁰ Canning's appeal to the Commons:

The object of the address which I propose to you is not war; its object is to take the last chance for peace. If you do not go forth on this occasion to aid Portugal, Portugal will be trampled down to your irretrievable disgrace:- and then will come war, in the train of national degradation.¹⁴¹

was in essence the same as that of Grey to his Cabinet in 1834. Canning had received warm support from both Houses, despite Hume's appeals to the principle of retrenchment.¹⁴² Grey, who had, ironically, opposed Canning's decision, found himself defeated by the arguments which Hume had been almost alone in adopting in 1826. On the surface, the decision not to intervene was a victory for Althorp and his followers; in political terms, it was an admission of the weakness of the Grey administration. Admittedly the House of Commons of 1834 was a vastly different body from that which had cheered Canning in 1826, but it is likely that Whig and Radical members would have responded to a united front bench appeal to foil Dom Miguel and Don Carlos and thus out-manoeuvre the Eastern Powers. The Cabinet's fear of possible parliamentary criticism was revealed in successive episodes in international affairs. It had helped to excuse the policy of non-intervention in Poland and Turkey; in the Portuguese affair, where the conflict of opinion was irreconcilable, it was the principal reason for non-intervention. Lord Holland was so ashamed at the decision that he wished it to be kept secret - at least from the French.¹⁴³ It must have been galling for Palmerston to have to inform an astonished Sarmiento that the British government remained committed to the policy of non-intervention in Portugal.¹⁴⁴

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Palmerston refused to accept defeat on the question of intervention in Portugal. In February 1834 he resumed his correspondence with Villiers in Madrid, reminding him of the government's continuing neutral stance, but leaving the Ambassador in no doubt as to his personal conviction of the need for Britain to show her sympathies:

The great object of our policy ought now to be to form a Western confederacy of free states as a counterpoise to the Eastern league of the arbitrary governments. England, France, Spain and Portugal, united as they now must be, will form a political and moral power in Europe which must hold Metternich and Nicholas in check. We shall be on the advance, they on the decline; and all the smaller planets of Europe will have a natural tendency to gravitate towards our system.¹

Palmerston here expresses himself in the sort of terms which might reasonably have been expected to appeal to his Whig Colleagues, although as we shall see, his stock remained low. He had long cherished hopes of a Western liberal alliance and despite the setback of January, events on the Peninsula developed in such a way as to allow him to achieve his ambition in the spring of 1834. In January Zea Bermudez had been succeeded as Spanish Prime Minister by Martinez de la Rosa, who enjoyed the reputation of being a liberal and was anxious to scotch the ambitions of Don Carlos, then lurking on the Portuguese border with Dom Miguel.² The mutual distrust between Spain and Portugal was such as to encourage the Spanish government to seek British support. An expedition was being prepared in Spain and Miraflores, the Ambassador in London, approached Palmerston in March with a view to

forming an alliance with Britain to defeat Carlos and Miguel - and to ensure that Dom Pedro did not persecute his former opponents. Palmerston was enthusiastic about the idea of an alliance, but he recognised that the Portuguese should be involved in view of Dom Pedro's short-term importance. He had no thought of including France directly in the negotiations at this stage.

It was clear that an undertaking of this nature would require full Cabinet consultation and approval. After his own experience in January, Grey was doubtful as to whether such co-operation would be forthcoming, but he was concerned that the British force should be as large as was necessary, notwithstanding the opposition of the retrenchment brigade.³ Early in April Miraflores indicated that his government would be willing to agree to a tripartite treaty and Palmerston immediately drew up a convention in which Britain undertook to blockade the Portuguese coast while Portuguese and Spanish troops subdued the Pretenders' forces in the interior. Palmerston hoped to forestall unilateral action on the Peninsula by the Spanish and also by the French, whom both he and the Cabinet recognised as important, if secondary parties to any agreement. Palmerston's report to the King of the Cabinet meeting of 12 April places great emphasis on the need to involve France in such a project in order to discourage her from crossing the Pyrenees without consulting Britain.⁴ It is unfortunate that we have no informal account of the Cabinet's discussion of Palmerston's proposals,⁵ for it would be instructive to know how he persuaded his colleagues to commit Britain, albeit only navally, to a definite role in the civil wars on the Peninsula. To judge by Palmerston's jubilation after the signing of Treaty, it was a personal triumph which the experience of the previous three and a half years had not led him to expect. However, there

were important factors in his favour, notably the possibility that a show of British indifference at this stage could have led to unilateral action and a subsequent general conflict. If it flatters Grey's Cabinet to ascribe to its members such diplomatic prescience, then the fact that the naval blockade of the Portuguese coast would add nothing to the Estimates would have weighed heavily with ministers; after all, the crisis in January had centred around the extra vote of supplies which Grey's project might have entailed.⁶

Palmerston's triumph was delayed by Talleyrand, who was warned of what Miraflores and the Foreign Secretary were hatching. As a result, Palmerston was unable to present France with a treaty already signed and sealed by the three other Powers as he had intended. Talleyrand pressed for a Franco-British alliance alone and when this plan was rejected, he hoped to salvage French pride by obtaining an explicit recognition by the other Powers of the special position of France in Spain. On this occasion however, Palmerston outsmarted 'Old Talley' during the deliberations as to the form of the Treaty preamble. The Quadruple Alliance, which was signed on 22 April, contained a recognition of Britain's special relationship with Portugal yet accorded France neither a preventive role nor a vested interest in the civil war in Spain. The actual terms of the Treaty⁷ did not differ from those first agreed by Palmerston and Miraflores ten days earlier and Palmerston had managed to obtain Cabinet approval of the final arrangements after a virtuoso performance, if his famous letter to his brother is to be believed:

I carried it through the Cabinet by a *coup de main* taking them by surprise and not leaving them time to make objections.⁸

In his excitement, Palmerston may have overestimated the importance of the Treaty and the nature of his achievement in obtaining Cabinet sanction. The Quadruple Alliance was important as a symbol of the Western Powers' opposition to the philosophy behind Metternich's Münchengrätz agreement of the previous year, but in real terms it amounted to little more than a British undertaking to honour long-standing obligations towards Portugal. It is of interest that Holland, writing in his Journal three months later, praised Miraflores rather than Palmerston for providing the impetus which made the Quadruple Alliance a reality and hastened the end of the civil wars in Portugal and Spain.⁹ However, the threat of British action did help to decide the conflict in Portugal in Dom Pedro's favour. Miguel's army was defeated by the Spanish force which had mobilised in March and both the pretenders had surrendered by June.

The conclusion of the Quadruple Alliance was Palmerston's last diplomatic achievement during his first term at the Foreign Office. It had been universally recognised, at least by the summer of 1833, that the ministry was too fragile to survive long once the resolution of the Reform issue had deprived it of its *raison d'être*.¹⁰ Wearied by the deep division in his Cabinet, Grey's thoughts turned increasingly towards retirement. The position of the Irish Church was generally the symptom, if not the cause of conflict between the radical element - Brougham, Durham, Russell and Ellice - and a conservatively inclined group including Althorp, Stanley, Melbourne and Richmond. Once Durham had left the Cabinet, ministerial conflicts tended to centre around Althorp, the diffident heir apparent, and Brougham, whose popularity amongst radicals encouraged him to entertain hopes of succeeding Grey. During 1833, the wrangles both in Cabinet and in Parliament about the Slave Trade Legislation and the redistribution of

Irish Church Temporalities had brought both Grey and Althorp to the brink of resignation. As we have seen, Grey was reluctant to resolve the Cabinet differences over intervention in Portugal while Althorp was disinclined to prolong the life of the ministry. Howick noted in his Journal at the end of January 1834 that

. . . Althorp is in despair at the impossibility of getting the Cabinet to agree to anything and his hoping every day to provide an excuse for breaking up the government.¹¹

Howick's source was the contentious 'Bear' Ellice, who was undoubtedly prejudiced against Althorp, but in truth the manner in which the radical element in the Cabinet had persisted in provoking divisions over the use and apportionment of the Irish revenues had infuriated Althorp and his colleagues to the point where they began to wish for an end to it all. The final collapse of the ministry began in May 1834, when Russell 'upset the coach' through a precipitant declaration about the secular use of Irish Church Tithes. Graham, Stanley and Richmond resigned in protest: Graham, for all his resolution in the face of reactionary foreign governments, would not tolerate an attack on the hegemony of the Established Church in Britain.¹² Six weeks later the ministry disintegrated after a disagreement over the application of the Irish Coercion Bill to public meetings in Ireland. Althorp resigned immediately, but he was soon followed by Grey, who had lost the energy and patience required to prolong the life of his ministry further. The differences within the Cabinet were clearly irreconcilable. Althorp admitted that his initiative had occasioned the collapse of the ministry, but he identified Brougham, 'who threatened to embrace furious causes' as the chief culprit.¹³

The summer of 1834 saw little activity on the diplomatic front. As Grey's ministry moved towards its end, Palmerston was occupied with problems arising from the execution of the Quadruple Alliance and a French attempt to reopen the Belgian question following rumours that King Leopold wished to abdicate.¹⁴ The Foreign Secretary played no part in the events which led to the break-up of the administration, but it was clear that Grey's departure was a personal setback for him. Palmerston did not expect to survive a change of Prime Minister and he had confided to Minto in Berlin that he believed that Durham would succeed him at the Foreign Office.¹⁵ Grey had been generally sympathetic towards Palmerston's view of foreign affairs despite his Foxite pedigree and the two men had rarely differed on matters of policy. The day-to-day problems of international relations had educated Grey to the extent that he had outgrown those rooted attitudes which he had adopted in opposition and which some of his colleagues still espoused. Palmerston was acutely aware of Grey's contribution, as he emphasised in a letter on the latter's resignation:

. . . The country has sustained a loss of the heaviest sort and I individually have been deprived of a guide whose direction was invaluable and whose kindness was unlimited.

A daily and confidential intercourse of three years and a half has made me intimately acquainted with one of the most statesmanlike minds and noblest natures that have ever yet appeared in any country on the scene of public affairs.¹⁶

Grey thrived on compliments such as this, but his reply was studied and reserved:

. . . It cannot, I hope, be necessary for me to assure

you how deeply sensible I am of all its kindness. Such a proof of confidence and friendship, at the moment when our official connection is ending, is most valuable and I more than meet the desire you express that an intimacy which has been at once so useful and so satisfying to me should be preserved.¹⁷

Grey was always cool towards all but his closest political associates, but it is nonetheless surprising that he made no mention in his reply of Palmerston's very considerable achievements during his term at the Foreign Office. Palmerston could argue, as indeed he did when his return to the Foreign Office was opposed in 1835, that his record was second to none:

All the important questions connected with Greece, Portugal, Belgium and Spain which essentially affected the interests of England I left either virtually settled or in a satisfactory train of adjustment.¹⁸

Only the Near Eastern Question remained unresolved, but that was as much the fault of the Cabinet as of Palmerston himself. King Leopold was to write to him in December 1834 after the collapse of Melbourne's first administration to congratulate him on his achievement:

. . . It must be a great satisfaction to you to think that without spending a farthing of public money you have managed since 1830 to maintain the peace of Europe.¹⁹

So it must have been; but Palmerston's labours had clearly failed to win Grey's full support, as we shall see when Melbourne began to form his second ministry in April 1835. Grey was conscious then, as he probably was at the time of his resignation, that Palmerston's unpopularity amongst Whigs was a threat to the cohesion of any future administration. Palmerston was certainly justified in doubting whether he would survive the change of

Prime Minister if we are to believe the Duchesse de Dino, an acute observer:

Lord Palmerston is the least secure of all; his colleagues think little of him. Lord Grey does not deny that his speeches in the House of Commons are bad. The *Corps Diplomatique* detest his arrogance. The English think him ill-bred. His one merit . . . seems to consist in his remarkable facility in speaking and writing French.²⁰

Of course Palmerston survived the reshuffle and remained at the Foreign Office until the fall of Melbourne's ministry in November, but he was to encounter stern opposition, much of it based on the shallow pretexts mentioned by the Duchesse, to his return to the Foreign Office following the end of Peel's 'Hundred Days' ministry. The episode throws a great deal of light on Whig attitudes to Foreign policy and the extent to which Palmerston's approach conflicted with those attitudes.

Following Peel's resignation, William IV turned again to Grey in April 1835 in the hope of persuading him to return to public life as Prime Minister. Grey was flattered, but he was not prepared to forsake the pleasures of retirement at Howick and Richmond. He suggested to the King that he should approach Lord Melbourne to form another ministry if Lansdowne could not be persuaded to assume the Premiership. However, William was reluctant to approve a ministry which included neither Grey nor Althorp - who had gone up to the Lords and into retirement five months previously - and it was partly as a consequence of this royal reluctance that Melbourne and five of his colleagues wrote to Grey urging him to reconsider his decision and to accept the Foreign Office even if he felt himself unable to head another administration.²¹ Palmerston was among the signatories. It seems plausible to assume with Webster that

he expected Grey to refuse.²² So indeed he did, forcing the King to ask Melbourne, the only suitable alternative, to form his second administration. The problem of Palmerston and the Foreign Secretaryship was uppermost in Melbourne's mind and he sought Grey's advice freely. Both men were acutely aware of the hostility which existed towards Palmerston, whose position had been weakened by his election defeat in South Hampshire. In his reply to Melbourne's request for guidance, Grey stated frankly that it would be inadvisable to reappoint Palmerston, because of 'the objection to him which is so generally felt', notwithstanding his sincere regard for the former Foreign Secretary. He expressed the same opinion to Princess Lieven the next day.²³ Melbourne passed Grey's letter straight on to Palmerston, intimating that he agreed with it.²⁴ Palmerston was justifiably hurt and surprised at Grey's attitude, which amounted to a subordination of British interests to the exigencies of cabinet unity and unruffled diplomatic relationships. Palmerston was of course prepared to offend any man and any country in the pursuit of the interests of England. He wrote Melbourne an angry letter in which he did not deny that the courts of Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin and the Hague objected to him as Foreign Secretary, but he reminded Melbourne that his policies towards Belgium, France, Portugal and Spain had been approved by his Cabinet colleagues as consistent with the best interest of Britain. The peroration of Palmerston's letter is worth quoting in full:

It is always disagreeable to speak of oneself, but upon this occasion I must be permitted to say I consider myself to have conducted our foreign relations with great success during four years of excessive labour and through extreme difficulties arising not only from the complicated nature of the questions to be dealt with, but also from the resistance opposed to me by a combination of domestic

with foreign opponents.

All the important questions connected with Greece, Belgium, Portugal and Spain which essentially affected the interests of England, I left either virtually settled or in a satisfactory train of adjustment.

There was but one important matter which when we went out in November last, remained in an unsatisfactory state; and that was the condition of Turkey, with relation to Russia on the one hand and to England on the other.

But with respect to that matter, the blame does not lie at my door; for if my advice had been taken by the Cabinet in the Autumn of 1832, and if we had given to the Sultan our moral support against Mehemet Ali, the subsequent Treaty of Constantinople [i.e. Unkiar-Skelessi] would never have been signed.²⁵

Palmerston's case was unanswerable, but hostility towards him remained widespread. As he had suspected, Bülow and Pozzo di Borgo, the Prussian and Russian ambassadors, were working to prevent his return, but such intrigues served if anything to strengthen his domestic position.²⁶ However, the opposition of his erstwhile colleagues was much stronger than he had imagined. He assumed that only 'a knot of intriguers headed by Edd. Ellice'²⁷ was involved. In fact, a number of senior figures had misgivings about Palmerston. Russell, who had cut short his honeymoon because of the uncertainty surrounding the formation of the ministry, wrote to Grey to add his might to the entreaties of his colleagues that the latter should take the Foreign Office 'to save us from an embarrassment which I need not name'.²⁸ Only Holland appeared to give Palmerston his whole-hearted support. Once it was clear that Grey would not return, Holland 'hoped and expected' Palmerston to return to the Foreign Office.²⁹ After twenty four hours of hectic negotiation, Melbourne found himself virtually with no alternative but to reappoint Palmerston, despite the problems which his presence in the Cabinet might precipitate. Unfortunately the discussions

which preceded Palmerston's reappointment are not well documented, so that it is difficult to give Melbourne's reasons for so deciding with any certainty. However he was probably impressed with the argument that Palmerston's exclusion would be seen as a triumph for his enemies abroad. Bülow, Esterhazy and Pozzo di Borgo had made their intentions too clear, so that if Palmerston was prevented from returning, it would appear that Melbourne and his colleagues were pandering to the wishes of the Eastern Courts.³⁰ Palmerston's spirited defence of his record at the Foreign Office must also have impressed Melbourne. In the absence of full written evidence, we may assume that the principal reasons for the groundswell of opinion against Palmerston were those which the Duchesse de Dino had mentioned nine months earlier - his rudeness, his single-mindedness and his concern with the substance of international relations at the expense of the manner in which they were conducted.

Before we go on to examine more fully the differences of attitude within Grey's Cabinet over the proper style and content of foreign policy, it is appropriate to mention at this point a successful attempt to exclude Palmerston from the Foreign Office. Howick, by then the third Earl Grey, together with Palmerston's perennial enemy Ellice, combined to prevent Lord John Russell from forming a Whig administration in December 1845 on the grounds that they could not accept Palmerston as Foreign Secretary. There is no need for us to follow the negotiations and misunderstandings which surrounded the abortive attempt to form a ministry on this occasion,³¹ but Howick's reasons for not wishing to serve in the administration with Palmerston as Foreign Secretary are fascinating as a pendant to the episode of April 1835 and to his entire career at the Foreign

Office up to that time:

When he formerly held the office, events occurred which have created feelings of alienation between him and some of the chief statesmen and diplomats of foreign countries - more especially of France . . . I could not believe that the appointment to which I objected might very materially increase the danger of the country's being involved in all the calamities of war . . .³²

We have seen from our initial survey of Whig attitudes towards foreign policy whilst in opposition how moderate and radical members alike tended to concentrate on the form of diplomatic relations at the expense of their substance. By way of contrast, Palmerston had pursued a realistic rather than an idealistic foreign policy and had helped to preserve European peace by showing himself prepared to countenance war. Furthermore, as King Leopold remarked, his success had not placed any extra burden on the Exchequer. He had been faithful to the principles of peace and retrenchment, but his colleagues in the government and parliament generally preferred to see him adopt a loftier and less pragmatic stance. We have seen how reluctant some ministers were to sanction Palmerston's uncompromising attitude towards France during the crucial stages of the Belgian question in 1831. The fact that Palmerston was thereby championing the cause of self-determination (albeit for strategic ends) was secondary to the Whig concern to avoid war at all costs and to maintain a gentlemanly relationship with the liberal *régime* in France. Thus Holland, with his Francophile outlook, and Althorp and Brougham, with their distaste for any form of military activity, were disturbed by Palmerston's threats of war over Belgium. They were reluctant to see Britain intervene, and were apparently prepared to see France capitalise on the weakness of the Belgian

state because of their desire to cultivate good relations with the much admired Orleanist government. Yet when the Poles needed support from the constitutional states of the West, no one in the cabinet was prepared to remonstrate with the Russians; non-intervention in this instance was the product of timidity rather a moral decision. Holland's son Henry Fox commented treachantly in August 1831 on the way in which the principle of non-intervention was applied to foreign policy:

I admire extremely the system of *non-intervention*. Holland and Belgium are not to have a word to say in the settlement of their own quarrels. Five powerful neighbours take it out of their hands - on *the principle of non-intervention*. There is a question of vital importance to one of the five powers [i.e. the problems surrounding the demolition of certain Belgian fortresses] in which she is not to have a voice - on *the principle of non-intervention* and yet these are the Cabinets of London and Paris who could act with great consistency on *the principle of non-intervention* when only Poles and Italians were concerned . . .³³

Fox's criticism is itself unsatisfactory in that it ignores considerations of strategy and *realpolitik* but this very deficiency makes his statement worthy of his great-uncle Charles James. The thread of Whig philosophy on foreign policy can easily be discerned in the way the Grey administration approached crises in foreign relations but the action (or inaction) which resulted bore the signs of a heterogeneous body of ministers offset by a determined Foreign Secretary, who was prepared to further his country's interests by 'intermeddling'. In a subsequent onslaught against government foreign policy, Fox singled out the element in the Cabinet whose pedigree was suspect:

Whatever I have said that may appear a criticism

of your Cabinet arises from a strong interest I feel that Whigs should act Whiggishly . . . *you know that I have always thought* that some of these who joined your Whig Cabinet are hollow friends. They do not feel activated by the same principles nor do they look for the same results. They have however exactly the merits you Whigs are deficient in - long official habits and rapidity and precision in getting through the drudgery of office. When you swerve from the *juste milieu* towards the Holy Alliance, I feel you could do without the hacks of Lords Liverpool and Castlereagh . . . their coldness on reform and the language of their *entourage male and female* convinces me that they look beyond the grove [?] of Lord Grey's administration.^{34*}

For all Fox's strictures, the foreign policy of Grey's administration generally reflected the Whiggishness of its members. However traditionally British Palmerston's policy towards Belgium may have appeared, we know after an examination of the Cabinet's discussions that he would probably not have received permission actually to embark upon war. The Cabinet's failure to advance the Polish cause by naval or diplomatic means shows not so much untypical acquiescence in the designs of Russia as a customary disinclination to be involved in potentially explosive situation, even to the extent of avoiding moral censure of the Tsar. The same could be said of the Whig attitude towards Turkey, where the presence of two autocratic powers in conflict reinforced the ministers' inclinations towards non-interference in matters involving Britain's strategic interests. The prolonged debate over intervention or non-intervention in Portugal displayed all the traditional characteristics of the Whig approach - on the one hand the hot-headed support of the rebel cause shown by Holland, and on the other the attempts to blur the distinction between neutrality and armed

*Italics Fox's.

intervention whilst shying away from any open profession of military support for Dom Pedro for fear of increasing military expenditure or disturbing the diplomatic calm.

It is perhaps difficult to credit how a coherent foreign policy emerged from the muddled reasoning and discussion which has been described in this study. Yet British policy as seen by the world appeared to be both resolute and largely traditional, although an element of liberalism, seemingly due to the reforming character of the ministry, was apparent. In spite of the criticism from the Tory side, Palmerston can clearly be seen as acting according to tradition in safeguarding Britain's strategic interests in the Low Countries and attempting to do the same in Turkey. Similarly, in spite of radical criticism, his record in assisting the cause of national independence and constitutional rule in Europe, with the notable exception of Poland, was impressive, particularly after 1832. As his speeches of 1829 had promised, his attitude towards foreign affairs and in particular the perennial problem of what constituted intervention in the internal affairs of other states, owed much to Canning, but went beyond Canningism in a willingness to favour constitutional causes, such as the Terceira regency, by stretching the conception of amicable neutrality to the limit of its credibility. By such means he helped to make the foreign policy of the Grey ministry appear complementary to the reforming impetus at home. As we have seen, this was achieved despite rather than because of the efforts of some of his colleagues and his parliamentary critics, who doubted the strength of his attachment to the liberal cause.

Grey deserves a measure of credit for this achievement and it is appropriate in the context of a discussion of the interpretation of the

meaning of 'non-intervention' to quote from an article which Lord John Russell wrote in the *Edinburgh Review* after Grey and Althorp had died. In paying tribute to Grey, Russell, whose own views on foreign policy developed considerably from an original Foxite stance, praised the Premier's conception of non-intervention virtually in Canningite terms, whilst still paying lip-service to Fox:

It has been absurdly supposed . . . that in seeking for peace Lord Grey meant to preserve that blessing . . . called non-interference or non-intervention - that is to say, totally abstaining from interference with the affairs of other countries. Lord Grey has too long been a follower of Mr. Fox to countenance so senseless a doctrine. We are convinced, as the great statesman had . . . taught, it is only by a vigilant attention to the affairs of the Continent that this nation can hope to secure the continuance of peace; that it is the interest of Great Britain to maintain the independence of the various states of Europe and connection and alliance are the necessary means to that end; that the internal government of these states is frequently connected with their external relations; that the independence of a country, or in other words its existence as a separate state, may be wounded as mortally by the support of its internal factions as by an attack on its external frontier; that if it is lawful for one power to intervene for the sake of establishing a foreign dependency, it is lawful for another to interpose for the sake of strengthening a national government.³⁵

If this excellent summary of what Russell believed should be meant and embraced by the doctrine of non-intervention is too rational to serve as a description of the foreign policy of Grey and Palmerston, it is at least an invaluable key to understanding that policy. It helps to explain the resolute treatment of French ambitions on the one hand and the brazen breaches of neutrality with regard to Portugal on the other. It was a policy which owed much to Canning, however loath Grey would have been to admit the fact, but which also reflected Palmerston's hectic brand of diplomacy, tempered by Grey's caution.

The experience of the highest office had purged Grey of the more impractical of Fox's precepts and it is ironical that Russell should ascribe to Fox the credit for inspiring Grey to adopt the policies which were followed between 1830 and 1834. Some of his colleagues showed themselves to be truer Foxites in their attitudes towards the possibility of war with France over Belgium - it was Althorp, Brougham, Holland and the rest who found most difficulty with the doctrine of non-intervention and its proper application where the interests of Britain and of the liberal cause in Europe were involved. Whig traditions bore witness to prolonged periods of opposition and they were difficult to apply to the intricate and ever-changing situations which faced the Foreign Secretary. Foreign policy is the least susceptible of all the areas of government to changes of ministry; the qualities required of a Foreign Secretary in a reforming administration are a combination of conservatism with regard to the traditional interests of the state and a degree of radicalism in pursuing these interests with an eye on the fortunes of other constitutional states. Palmerston achieved this balance, but some of his colleagues failed to come to terms either with the problems or his solutions to them because of their confusion as to how the interests of Britain and 'the cause of liberty all over the world' could be served within a framework of peace, retrenchment and non-intervention. Non-intervention, like disarmament, is a policy which works only when all the powers agree to adopt it; when it breaks down, it is up to the individual powers to improvise an alternative policy. Palmerston appreciated this, as Castlereagh and Canning had before him. With their lack of 'habits of business', some of Palmerston's colleagues were slow in grasping this need and even slower to shed their prejudices.

APPENDIX I

GRANT'S PAPER ON BELGIUM, 20 JANUARY 1831*

The conversation of last night has given birth to the following thoughts.

Having been much engaged in my own office I have known the course of our foreign proceedings only from the papers in circulation and the discussions in Cabinet. I have not conversed with any of the Foreign Ministers and have seen Van de Weyer [the Belgian accredited to the London Conference] but once, last Tuesday, since the change of this government. I have not been mixed up with the current of foreign affairs and may be considered with regard to them almost as a bystander. My impressions therefore may probably be those of the generality of the people.

The congress [*sic*] has held conferences for two months-up to a point with obvious utility and efficiency-

Hostilities arrested- armistice obtained- the five powers coincident as to non-intervention beyond the exclusion of certain specified persons- No Bourbons No Napoleons- Leopold also out of the question-

After these agreements why the delay? The Belgian Commissioners have been here 3 weeks. What are they doing? What is the congress now doing? What is the cause of the delay in the final settlement? Why does not Belgium choose a King? If all the five powers honestly abstain from interference why should not the election be left to the Belgians- subject to the above exclusions? Why should not the commrs. be told that the congress requires an immediate election?

The present state of things ought not to continue.

It is dangerous- in as much as delay tends to breed mutual suspicions among the five powers and perhaps even to occasion conduct justifying such suspicions and in as much as the longer Belgium continues unsettled, the more do the chances of war in Europe multiply-

It is discreditable-to all powers-most of all to G.B.

Why should not the congress hold to the Belgians this language?

The immediate choice of a sovereign is indispensable.

Exclude the above and choose whom you will-

The five powers in good faith should keep aloof. Objection: This is throwing them into the arms of France.

Answer: so is the further protraction of the conferences. Let them choose Otto, even with Mérode Regent.

Objection: This is France

Answer: The placing on the throne of Belgium of a prince connected with France or supposed to be under her influence may be considered in two views-

1. In itself.

2. In its impression on the people of this country.

1. In itself. I am apt to think we rather overrate the dangerous consequences of such an event. All history from Charles 5th. to Louis Buonaparte shows that these family ties and influences have really little effect on the policy of states.

The policy of the Belgian King, be he French or Dutch, will be Belgian- It is true that being Belgian it does not follow that it should not be French- but this would only be on the supposition that Belgium itself is French in heart and

*Grey MSS., Box 15, File 14.

feeling. It would be French by virtue of being Belgian. The natural policy and national feeling of Belgium will determine the balance one way or the other-

In this respect I should think Belgium would be in fact more certain of remaining a separate and substantive power and of not being absorbed into France if she were under a Bourbon than under any other sovereign. In so far as the peace of Europe, the independence of Belgium and the safety of Holland are concerned, a Bourbon I am inclined to think would be best choice. At all events, (the Bourbons and Napoleons being out of the question) these objects are equally attainable under any sovereign. The new King will be or become Belgian just as Louis Buonaparte became Dutch.

2. This is a difficulty. There still exists an old English feeling about the Dutch barrier- Marlborough's War- William 3rd. and Louis 14th. This will be assiduously excited by the opponents of the administration. Yet peace is our first and last policy- and I believe the majority of the people would be opposed to a war about the Belgian throne. I cannot but think that the people would support a ministry that refused war on such an account, except in the single case of France manifestly moving against Belgium with a view to destroying her independence.

APPENDIX II

STRATFORD CANNING'S TURKISH MEMORANDUM, 19 DECEMBER 1832*

Stratford Canning's memorandum of 19 December 1832¹ on the necessity of British naval aid for the Sultan in the face of the threat of Mehemet Ali has long been recognised as the classic statement of the interventionist viewpoint during the Near Eastern crisis of 1832-1833. Both Temperley and Crawley laid great stress on the document in their pioneering studies of British policy in the Eastern Mediterranean during this period² and successive scholars have reinforced their judgement. Unfortunately these two authors lent their authority to the perpetuation of an error first made by W. A. Phillips in 1907³ whereby the pencilled marginal comments on Stratford Canning's ideas were attributed to Palmerston. This mistake forced historians to employ considerable ingenuity to reconcile the hostile attitude towards the Sultan and the principle of Turkish territorial integrity which is expressed in the marginal comments with Palmerston's growing conviction that the strategic consequences of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire would be disastrous to British interests. He had written in November 1832:

. . . I think it in the general interest of all except Russia to uphold the Sultan's power against the Pasha . . . The Turk is a better reformer than the Egyptian because the first reforms from principle and conviction . . . the second merely from a mercantile calculation.⁴

This opinion hardly coincides with that expressed in the margin of the memorandum that the success of Mehemet Ali would be as advantageous to Britain as the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire under the Sultan.

M. Vereté was the first to point out that for a variety of reasons, the comments were not Palmerston's.⁵ Sir Charles Webster confirmed this opinion in *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*.⁶ The most cursory comparison of the hand in which the comments were written (see Plate 1) with Palmerston's distinctive copperplate (see Plate 3) demonstrates the truth of Vereté's contention, quite apart from the un-Palmerstonian attitudes which the comments express. Vereté made the additional point that Palmerston invariably initialled comments on official documents while those on Canning's memorandum are unsigned. In concluding his article, Vereté suggested that Lord Holland was the author of the Comments and promised to expound this hypothesis in a subsequent article. This seems never to have appeared, but all the available evidence points to the correctness of this view. The similarity between Holland's writing as typified by his letter to Grey reproduced below (Plate 2) and that in the margin of the memorandum is striking. There is impressive additional evidence contained in the same letter to Grey, for Holland actually refers to the Stratford Canning memorandum and his comments upon it.⁷ He writes to Grey of 'my paper which only contained loose and undigested thoughts on Sir Stratford Canning's paper'

*See above, Chapter IV, pp. 133-134.

and whether or not his 'paper' was the actual memorandum as amended, (Canning wrote no other memorandum on the subject at this time), it is clear that he saw Canning's document and commented upon it. If we add to these facts our knowledge of Holland's views on Turkey, as expressed over a period of years,⁸ the case for attributing the marginal comments to him becomes overwhelming. In his letter to Grey of January 1833 already referred to, he writes that he cannot bring himself

. . . to relish anything like an engagement to sustain the Ottoman Porte against external, much less internal destruction . . . She is destined to crumble to pieces and that soon.⁹

The comments on the memorandum complement this attitude, for their writer constantly expressed doubt as to whether the Ottoman Empire deserved to survive and deplored any unilateral British attempt to protect it. Holland - for it must be he - regarded the Sultan and Mehemet alike as 'usurpers of minor authorities'.⁹ Palmerston in contrast was developing his ideas on the strategic importance of Turkey away from the stereo-typed attitudes towards the Sultan's *régime* that he had previously shared with Holland and the rest. Holland's cavalier attitude was a luxury that Palmerston could not afford in view of the advance both of Ibrahim Pasha and the Russian army towards Constantinople.

and degraded in the opinion
of his Subjects, would find
it more difficult than ever
either to make head against
the encroachments of Russia,
or to carry on that system
of improvement, which is
become essential to the
maintenance of his + +
Independence.

Is not the unwieldy
extent of the Turkish
Empire
one great check
to the improvement
of its industry &
resources &
possibly one great
cause of its internal
weakness? -

If the contending Parties
were left to themselves, it
is but too probable that
a long and arduous War
would drain their respective
resources, and, by adding
another cause of desolation
to those which have long
worn down the Turkish
Empire, render it an easy
prey to the first Invader.

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Plate 1

A page from Stratford Canning's memorandum of 19 December (F.O.78/211, f.342).
[The marginal comments read: 'Is not the unwieldy extent of the Turkish Empire one
great check to the improvement of its industry and resources and possibly one great
cause of its internal weakness? -']

25 / Jan 251

Dear Grey -

It would be an extent
of courtesy to call my
paper which only contained
loose & undigested thoughts
on Sir Stratford Canning's
paper, my view of the
subject - In truth I have
formed none - But certainly
this intelligence of the
Vizir's defeat & the
Russian's intrigues &
activity seem to make the
prompt adoption of some

Plate 2

Lord Holland's handwriting (letter to Grey, 29 January 1833: Grey MSS., box 34, file 1).

['Dear Grey-It would be an extent of courtesy to call my paper which only contained loose and undigested thoughts on Sir Stratford Canning's paper, my view of the subject-in truth I have formed none- But certainly this intelligence of the Vizir's defeat (at Konya) & the Russian's intrigues and activity seem to make the prompt adoption of some (line of policy absolutely necessary)'.]

382
 1833

Stanth. 31 March
 1833

My dear Lord Grey,
 Graham suggested
 to me yesterday that
 some fresh Instructions ought
 to be sent out to Hotham
 with the Reinforcement
 which we are giving him
 and after talking the
 Matter over together
 we were disposed to think
 that some such Instructions
 as these are what he
 ought to have.

Plate 3

Palmerston's handwriting (letter to Grey, 31 March 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 4)

['My dear Lord Grey, Graham suggested to me yesterday that some fresh instructions ought to be sent out to Hotham with the Reinforcements which we are giving him, and after talking the Matter over together, we were disposed to think that some such Instructions as these are what he ought to have.']

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 T.Raikes, *Journal kept by Thomas Raikes Esq., from 1831 to 1847* (4 vols., London, 1856-1857), vol. I, p. 106. Sir Charles Webster doubts the authenticity of this remark but not its truth.
- 2 State Paper of 5 May 1820, printed in *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1922-1923), vol. II, pp. 622-633. See especially pp. 626-627.
- 3 Despatch printed in Sir C.K.Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822* (London, 1925), pp. 509-512.
- 4 *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, vol. II, p. 32. Castlereagh made it clear that he regarded British intervention in the war against revolutionary France in 1792 as a special case.
- 5 See, for example, his speech in the House of Commons, 9 February 1816: *Parliamentary Debates* (hereafter *Hansard*), 1st. Series, XXXII, cols. 685-686.
- 6 Castlereagh to Bagot, 14 December 1821: *Correspondence, Despatches and other Papers of Viscount Castlereagh* (ed. Marquess of Londonderry, 12 vols., London, 1848-1853), vol. XII, p. 444.
- 7 Bathurst to Castlereagh, 20 October 1818: *Ibid.*, vol. XI, pp. 56-57.
- 8 See H.W.V. Temperley, *The Foreign Policy of Canning 1822-1827* (London, 1925), pp. 114-121.
- 9 *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, IV, 1369-1371 (20 March 1821).
- 10 *Ibid.*, 1375.
- 11 Speech in the House of Commons, 30 April 1823: *Ibid.*, 2nd, Series, VIII, 1511-1512.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 1st. Series, XVII, 541-542 (13 June 1810).
- 13 A.J.P.Taylor, *The Trouble Makers: Dissent over Foreign Policy 1792-1939* (London, 1957), p. 34.
- 14 Grey to Hoiland, 14 January 1816: Grey Papers, Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, University of Durham, box 35, file 2. As this collection receives frequent additions and has not been finally arranged, box and file references are provisional.
- 15 A. Mitchell, *The Whigs in Opposition 1815-1830* (Oxford, 1967); p.81.
- 16 Letter from Adair, referred to in Grey to Adair, 19 January 1815: Grey MSS., box 1, file 3.
- 17 Speech in the House of Lords, 7 April 1815: *Hansard*, 1st Series, XXX, 369-72.
- 18 A full draft has been preserved among Grey's papers. It is referred to in G.M. Trevelyan, *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill* (2nd. impression, London, 1952), pp.175-176.

- 19 M. Roberts, *The Whig Party 1807-1812* (New ed., London, 1965), p. 139.
- 20 Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, pp. 17-18. For a similar view, see R. Bullen, *Palmerston, Guizot and the Collapse of the Entente Cordiale* (London, 1974), pp. 2-5.
- 21 See Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, pp. 86-92, for the disagreements and confusion over Whig policy for the 1816 session.
22. For example, his speech in the House of Commons, 27 April 1815: *Hansard*, 1st. Series, XXX, 891-935; reprinted in J. Joll (ed.) *Britain and Europe 1793-1940: Pitt to Churchill* (London, 1950), pp. 60-68.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 918.
- 24 Grey to Holland, 9 February 1816: Grey MSS., box 35, file 2.
- 25 Speech in the House of Lords, 2 November 1830: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, I, 39-40.
- 26 See below, Chapter II, pp. 38-39, for Grey's remarkable attitude to the Belgian Revolution while in opposition.
- 27 Holland to Grey, letter endorsed '1816': Grey MSS., box 34, file 1.
- 28 Grey to Holland, 17 January 1817: Grey MSS., box 35, file 2.
- 29 'Our great object should be to connect them (Whig opinions on foreign policy) with questions of expense': Grey to Holland, 8 December 1816: Grey MSS., box 35, file 2.
- 30 Holland to Grey, letter endorsed '1816': Grey MSS., box 34, file 1.
- 31 Grey to Holland, 23 April 1820, Grey MSS., box 35, file 2.
- 32 H.W.C. Davis, *The Age of Grey and Peel* (Oxford, 1929), p. 217
- 33 Speech in the House of Commons, 30 April 1823: *Hansard*, 2nd Series, VII, 1485.
- 34 *Ibid.*, IV, 48. (23 January 1821).
- 35 Speech in the House of Commons, 30 April 1823: *Ibid.*, VIII, 1453-4.
- 36 C. Holbraad, *The Concert of Europe* (London, 1970), esp. pp. 119-135.
- 37 Lord John Russell, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Lord Holland on Foreign Politics* (First published 1819; 4th ed., London, 1831), pp. 5-6, 45-47.
- 38 *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, IV, 1367, 1375 (20 March 1821).
- 39 Quoted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822*, pp. 503-4.
- 40 In his despatch to Stewart, 16 December 1820: *Ibid.*, pp. 303-5.
- 41 See *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, pp. 44-46, where it is suggested that the instructions mark a new departure in British policy. They would seem rather to be a response to the changing strategic situation. For a contemporary recognition of the continuity of policy between Castlereagh and Canning, see letter from Viscountess Anson to Creevey, 5 November 1822: *The Creevey Papers* (ed. Sir H. Maxwell, 2 vols., London, 1903), vol. II, pp. 52-53.

- 42 Grey to Holland, 5 January 1823: Grey MSS., box 35, file 2.
- 43 Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, p. 172.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- 45 Speech in the House of Lords, 24 April 1823, *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, VIII, 1238-9. See also C.J. Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power 1815-1853* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 66-67.
- 46 A.G. Stapleton, *The Political Life of the Right Honourable George Canning 1822-1827* (3 vols., London, 1831), vol. I, pp. 317-327.
- 47 Speech in the House of Commons, 28 April 1823: *Hansard*, 2nd Series, VIII, 1336.
- 48 Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, pp. 172-3.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- 50 Speeches in the House of Commons: 14 April 1823: *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, VIII, 872-896; 30 April 1823: *Ibid.*, 1478-1527.
- 51 Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, p. 83.
52. *Annual Register*, vol. LXV (1823), pp. 27-8. Quoted in A. Turbeville, *The House of Lords in the Age of Reform 1784-1837* (London, 1958), p. 184.
- 53 The government forced a division on the issue of British neutrality and the policy was approved by 372 votes to 20.
- 54 It was said that each habitually waited for the other to speak first in debates: *Annual Register*, LXV, p. 28.
- 55 *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, VIII, 1048 (16 April 1823). Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, p. 174.
- 56 Sir D. Le Marchant, *A Memoir of John Charles Viscount Althorp, 3rd. Earl Spencer* (London, 1876), p. 211n.
- 57 *Hansard*, 2nd Series, VIII, 1483 (30 April 1823).
- 58 J.C. Hobhouse (Lord Broughton), *Recollections of a Long Life* (ed. Lady Dorchester, 6 vols., London, 1909-11), vol. III, pp. 311-12. Hobhouse shows a consistent hostility towards Grey in these memoirs.
- 59 *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, p. 63.
- 60 *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, X, 1271 (18 March 1824).
- 61 'Celsa sedet Aeolus arce Sceptra tendens; mollit animos et temperat iras': *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, XVI, 367 (12 December 1826).
- 62 Speech in the House of Commons, 17 February 1824: *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, X, 190-203.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 1271 (18 March 1824).
- 64 To A'Court, 9 February 1823: Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, p.81.
- 65 He announced an increase in the Navy in February 1823 whilst maintaining a neutral tone: *Ibid.* His famous speech at Plymouth in October 1823 was made in front of the very ships that could back up his threat of war if British interests were in jeopardy. *Ibid.*, pp. 119-20.

- 66 See, for example, Grey to Holland, 2 January 1824: Holland House Papers, British Museum, Additional Manuscripts 51554. The numbering and arrangement of MS. volumes in this collection is provisional.
- 67 Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, p. 440.
- 68 Grey to Holland, 10 March 1824: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51554.
- 69 Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, pp. 30-31.
- 70 Quoted in Wendy Hinde, *George Canning* (London, 1973), p. 403.
- 71 *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, p. 83.
- 72 Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, p. 203.
- 73 The effectiveness of British Naval power in the Mediterranean was largely dependant on the maintenance of bases in Portugal. Cf. Palmerston's speech in the House of Commons in 1827, defending the despatch of troops to Portugal in 1826:
- Only think for a moment of Portugal forming part of Spain, and Spain led away by France into war with England, and what would be our naval condition with all the ports from Calais to Marseilles hostile to us . . . and nothing between us and Malta but Gibraltar?
- Quoted in Sir H.W. Richmond, 'The object and Elements of Sea Power in History' in *History*, New Series, XXVII (March 1943), p. 14.
- 74 *Hansard*, 2nd Series, XVI, 389.
- 75 To Granville, 14 December 1826: Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, p. 381.
- 76 *Hansard*, 2nd Series, XVI, 389.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 372, 376, 390.
- 78 Grey to Princess Lieven, 27 January 1827: *Correspondence of Princess Lieven and Earl Grey* (ed. G. le Strange, 3 vols., London, 1890), vol. I. p. 35.
- 79 Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, p. 191.
- 80 Canning remarked to Lyndhurst, the Lord Chancellor: 'I feel I must remain in the Commons, but I am half tempted to ask for a peerage merely to let fly at him'. See 'Lord Lyndhurst's Recollections 1826-1832' in W.F. Money Penny and G.E. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (2 vol. ed., London, 1929), vol. I, p. 390.
- 81 Speech of 10 May 1827: *Hansard*, 2nd Series, XVIII, 727-30.
- 82 Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, p. 440.
- 83 *Hansard*, 2nd Series, XVII, 1166. (8 June 1827).
- 84 *Ibid.*, 1168.
- 85 Grey to Henry, Viscount Howick, 2 July 1827: Grey MSS., box 25, file 2. Quoted in Trevelyan, *Grey*, pp. 204-5.

- 86 Apart from the collection mentioned above, Princess Lieven's relationship with Earl Grey can be studied in H.W.V. Temperley, *The Unpublished Diary and Political Sketches of Princess Lieven* (London, 1925) and *Letters of Princess Lieven during her Residence in London 1812-1834* (ed. L. G. Robinson, London, 1902).
- 87 Grey to Princess Lieven, 12 October 1828: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, I, p. 162.
- 88 G. Rule, 'A British Prime Minister and a Russian Ambassadors', in *the Diplomatic Fly Sheet*, 2 April 1890, p. 224.
- 89 Davis, *Age of Grey and Peel*, p. 216.
- 90 The membership included 37 M.P.'s For a complete list, see C.M. Woodhouse, *The Philhellenes* (London, 1969), pp. 182-4.
- 91 Both Fox and Grey deplored British action in the face of Russia's possible acquisition of Oksakow from the Turks in 1791: Trevelyan, *Grey*, pp. 26-27.
- 92 Grey to Holland, 10 February 1826: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51554. Trevelyan quotes part of this letter (*Grey*, pp. 227-228), without indicating that he has made omissions.
- 93 Davis, *Age of Grey and Peel*, p. 216.
- 94 Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, pp. 397-401.
- 95 Grey to Princess Lieven, 2 September 1827: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, I, p. 54.
- 96 Speech in the House of Lords, 29 January 1828: *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, XVII, 30. See Professor Davis's comments in *Age of Grey and Peel*, p. 218.
- 97 Grey to Adair, 2 February 1829: Grey MSS., box 1, file 3.
- 98 For a full discussion of Wellington's Near Eastern policy, see C. W. Crawley, *The Question of Greek Independence: A Study of British Policy in the Near East. 1821-1833* (Cambridge, 1930), chapters 7, 8, 10-12.
- 99 Grey to Adair, 9 September 1829: Grey MSS., box 1, file 3. See also Grey to Princess Lieven. 14 September: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, I, pp. 292-3.
- 100 Crawley, *Greek Independence*, pp. 174-5, 179-80. Subsequently, Palmerston obtained more favourable boundary terms for the Greeks.
- 101 Grey to Howick, 13 February 1830: Grey MSS., box 25, file 2. For Trevelyan's discussion of this episode, see *Grey*, pp. 227-230.
- 102 'For the first time in my life I found him (Grey) absolutely undecided in his opinions as to the course we ought to pursue': Adair to Holland, 18 March 1828: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51609.
- 103 'As to Portugal, it makes me sick to think of it': Grey to Princess Lieven, 28 July 1828: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, I, p. 115.
- 104 See Mackintosh's speech in the House of Commons, 1 June 1829: *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, XX1, 1601-2.

- 105 For example Holland's motion for information on Eastern affairs in July 1828, which Grey noted to be 'neither a motion of censure or even of mistrust': Grey to Princess Lieven, 19 July 1828: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, I, p. 112.
- 106 Grey to Holland, 9 February 1830: Grey MSS., box 35, file 2.
- 107 Palmerston's success was totally unexpected. See C.C.F.Greville, *The Greville Memoirs. A Journal of the Reigns of King George IV, King William IV and Queen Victoria* (ed. H.Reeve, 8 vols., London, 1905), vol. I, p. 216 (11 June 1829).
- 108 *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, XXI, 1601-1671.
- 109 *Ibid.*, 1601-1625.
- 110 *Ibid.*, 1636-1641.
- 111 *Ibid.*, 1626-1636.
- 112 *Ibid.*, 1641.
- 113 In 1860, Palmerston struck out passages in a draft of his biography which emphasised his debt to Canning and his desire to emulate him after leaving the Wellington administration. H.C.F.Bell, *Lord Palmerston* (2 vols., London, 1936), vol. I, p. 59.
- 114 Canning to Granville, 21 January 1825: P.J.V.Rolo, *George Canning* (London, 1965), p. 222. Cf. Palmerston's view, above, note 73.
- 115 *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, XXI, 1669. The speech occupies cols. 1643-1670.
- 116 *Ibid.*, 1646.
- 117 *Ibid.*, XXII, 596.
- 118 For a full discussion of this episode, see below, chapter VI, pp. 184-189.
- 119 Lord Brougham, *The Life and Times of Henry, Lord Brougham, Written by Himself* (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1872), vol. III, p. 467.

CHAPTER TWO

- 1 Grey to Lord John Russell, 13 December 1829: *The Early Correspondence of Lord John Russell 1813-1840* (ed. Rollo Russell, 2 vols., London, 1913), vol. I, pp. 298-299.
- 2 Lord John Russell Papers, Public Record Office, PRO 30/22 1A.
- 3 Holland House Dinner Books, Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51950-51957.
- 4 Palmerston to the Hon. William Temple, 4 December 1829: Sir H.Lytton Bulwer and Sir E.Ashley, *The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston* (5 vols., London, 1870-1876), vol. I, pp. 347-352.
- 5 Palmerston to Temple, 15 December 1829: *Ibid.*, pp. 356-359.
- 6 J.Ridley, *Lord Palmerston* (London, 1970), p. 102.
- 7 Grey to Princess Lieven, 22 January 1830: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, I, p. 470. For letters of Grey's critical of the French liberals, see pp. 407, 411 (10, 19 January 1830).

- 8 Comtesse Flahault to Grey, 6 June 1830: Grey MSS., box 15, file 2.
- 9 Palmerston wrote enthusiastically to Charles Grant about the moderation of the Revolution: 'who would have expected to see.....a nation of maniacs and assassins converted into heroes and philosophers?' (Ridley, *Palmerston*, pp. 102-103).
- 10 Grey to Princess Lieven, 1 August 1830: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, p. 33.
- 11 Palmerston to Sullivan, 1 August 1830: Bell, *Palmerston*, I, p. 90.
- 12 Article II of the Quadruple Alliance of 20 November 1815 contained an undertaking by the Powers to consult together 'if the same Revolutionary Principles which upheld the last *criminal* usurpation should again, under other forms, convulse France.' See *British and Foreign State Papers* (hereafter *BFSP*), vol. I, p. 171. The italics are mine.
- 13 See A.C.F.Beales, 'Wellington and Louis Philippe, 1830' in *History*, New Series, vol. XVIII (1933-1934), p. 353. Webster believes that Wellington's fear of Congresses has been exaggerated. See 'Palmerston, Metternich and the European System, 1830-1841' in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. XX (1934), p. 130.
- 14 C.J.Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, p. 81.
- 15 Beales, 'Wellington and Louis Philippe', pp. 353-356. See Wellington's 'Memorandum upon the Existing State of our Relations with France, founded upon the Treaties of 1815-1818 Etc.' in *Despatches, Correspondence and Memoranda of Field Marshall Arthur, Duke of Wellington* (ed. 2nd. Duke of Wellington, 2nd. Series, 8 vols., London, 1867-1880), vol. VII, pp. 162-169.
- 16 Additional Article III of the Treaty of Paris of 30 May 1814 begins: 'The establishment of a just Balance of Power in Europe requiring that Holland should be constituted so as to be enabled to support her independence through her own resources.....' (*BFSP*, II, pp. 276-277).
- 17 Hobhouse to unknown correspondents, 31 August 1830: Broughton Papers, British Museum Additional Manuscripts 36466.
- 18 William Cobbett, *Eleven Lectures on the French and Belgic Revolutions and the English Borough Mongers* (London, 1830 [1835?]).
- 19 Holland to Brougham, 7 September 1830: Brougham Papers, D.M.S. Watson Library, University College London. No specific references for these papers can be given.
- 20 Holland to Brougham, 13 September 1830: Brougham MSS.
- 21 Grey to Princess Lieven, 13 August 1830: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, p. 49.
- 22 Grey to Holland, 9 September 1830: Grey MSS., box 35, file 3.
- 23 Grey to Holland, 19 September 1830: Grey MSS., box 35, file 3.
- 24 Grey to Holland, 9 September 1830: Grey MSS., box 35, file 3.
- 25 Russell to Holland, 13 September 1830: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51677.
- 26 Holland to his son, Henry Fox, 5 October 1830: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51751.

- 27 Grey to Holland, 19 September 1830: Grey MSS., box 35, file 3.
- 28 Grey to Holland, 9 October 1830: Grey MSS., box 35, file 3.
- 29 There had been troop movements in the Rhine Provinces which would have allowed for a quick mobilisation against the Belgians.
- 30 Trevelyan, *Grey*, p. 68; Davis, *Age of Grey and Peel*, pp. 38-39.
- 31 Grey to Adair, 10 October 1830: Grey MSS., box 1, file 3. Grey had written a similar, though less full letter to Holland two days earlier.
- 32 Holland Journal, 21 January 1832: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51868.
- 33 See below, chapter III, pp. 65-74. Holland wished to see the Prince of Orange made Viceroy of Belgium: to Henry Fox, 9 September 1830: Holland MSS.; Add. Mss. 51751.
- 34 Grey to Howick, 14 March 1830: Grey MSS., box 25, file 4.
- 35 George IV had been enraged by Grey's support of Queen Caroline during her trial in 1820. On a personal level, his enmity may have stretched back as far as the 1780's, when Grey succeeded where George had failed in becoming the lover of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire. Mr. Michael Brock, in *The Great Reform Act* (London, 1973), p. 345 (note 58), lends his weight to this theory.
- 36 Princess Lieven to her brother, General Benckendorff, 20 July 1830: *Letters of Princess Lieven*, p. 224.
- 37 *Hansard*, 2nd. Series, XXV, 765. Grey objected to the lack of any coherent policy with regard to the country's agricultural problems. Since 1828 there had been speculation that Wellington was considering him for a variety of posts, including the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, the Paris Embassy and even the Foreign Office. See *The Journal of Mrs. Arbuthnot 1820-1832* (ed. F. Bamford and the Duke of Wellington, 2 vols., London, 1950), vol. II, pp. 178, 384, and Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, pp. 220-221. Aberdeen believed that Wellington could have overcome royal opposition to Grey if he had wished - the King's enmity, according to Aberdeen, 'had its origin only in caprice'. Princess Lieven grasped the essential reason for Wellington's reticence. As 'a power, not a man', Grey would not have entered the Duke's Cabinet on Tory terms. See Princess Lieven's letter to Grey, 6 November 1829: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, I, p. 349.
- 38 'Here then I am, declared against the ministers, and although without any formal union, supported by the favourable disposition of all parties'. Grey to Princess Lieven, 2 July 1830: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, p. 20.
- 39 Grey had so described Lansdowne, Holland and the rest in one his 'letters from exile' to Princess Lieven in December 1829: *Ibid.*, I, pp. 388-390.
- 40 For the classic statement that the July Revolution had a definite effect upon the election, see J.R.M. Butler, *The Passing of the Reform Bill*, (London, 1914), pp. 85-89. It is decisively countered by Norman Gash in 'English Reform and the French Revolution in the General Election of 1830' in *Essays presented to Sir Lewis Namier* (ed. R. Pares and A.J.P. Taylor, London, 1956), pp. 258-288.

- 41 Gash, 'English Reform and the French Revolution', p. 269.
- 42 Graham to Brougham, 2, 4 September 1830: Brougham MSS.
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 Grey to Howick, 9 March 1830: Grey MSS., box 25, file 4.
- 45 A. Aspinall, *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party* (London, 1927), p. 181.
- 46 For a full and cogent discussion of the fall of the Wellington administration, see Brock, *Reform Act*, pp. 87-130.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.
- 48 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, I, 8.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 42-43.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 208.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 245-247 (8 November 1830).
- 52 Ridley (*Palmerston*, p. 105) wrongly ascribes Wellington's downfall to Brougham's reform motion. It was never debated.
- 53 Grey to Fox, December 1802: Grey MSS., box 10, file 1.
- 54 Hon. Charles Grey, *Life and Opinions of Earl Grey*, p. 399.
- 55 Trevelyan, *Grey*, passim, esp. pp. 108-112, 183-186.
- 56 Tierney to Grey, October 1809: *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- 57 Mitchell, *Whigs in Opposition*, p. 30; Roberts, *The Whig Party*, p. 311.
- 58 Trevelyan, *Grey*, p. 160.
- 59 W.M. Praed, *Political and Occasional Poems* (London, 1881), pp. 288-289.
- 60 Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, p. 420.
- 61 Trevelyan, *Grey*, p. 246.
- 62 For Tory criticisms, see *Journal of Mrs. Arbuthnot*, II, p. 405 (29 November 1830).
- 63 Brougham to Althorp, letter endorsed '1833': Spencer Papers, Althorp House, Northamptonshire. See also Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 419-420.
- 64 Noted by Holland in his Journal, 19 July 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869.
- 65 *Ibid.*, May 1833: Add. Mss. 51869 (f. 582).
- 66 Duchesse de Dino, *Memoirs 1831-1835* (ed. Princess Radziwill, London, 1909), p. 107.
- 67 Hobhouse, *Recollections*, III, p. 95 (15 March 1828).
- 68 Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, p. 419; Holland Journal, May 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869 (f. 582).
- 69 King Leopold to Grey, 13 August 1840: Grey MSS., box 38, file 10.

- 70 Palmerston to Grey, 15 July 1834: Grey MSS., box 45, file 5.
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 Sir C.K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841* (2 vols., London, 1951), vol. I, p. 31. This work is an essential adjunct to any study of foreign policy in this period.
- 73 Lady Holland to Henry Fox, 19 November 1830: *Letters to Her Son 1821-1845* (ed. Earl of Ilchester, London, 1946), p. 111. Grey's letter to Holland offering him the post has not survived.
- 74 Lansdowne to Grey, 18 November 1830: Grey MSS., box 38, file 10.
- 75 Princess Lieven to Benckendorff, 20 November 1830: *Letters of Princess Lieven*, p. 275; Temperley, *Political Sketches of Princess Lieven*, pp. 163-168.
- 76 'Palmerston and Peel are the best on each side': Grey to Howick, 9 March 1830: Grey MSS., box 25, file 4.
- 77 Bell, *Palmerston*, I, p. 55.
- 78 Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, I, p. 383.
- 79 Grey summoned Palmerston on 16 November (Broadlands Papers, National Register of Archives, GC/GR/1933), two days before Lansdowne suggested him for the Foreign Office. It is not clear which post Grey had in mind for Palmerston on the 16th., but there is a tantalising clue in a letter from him to Holland on that day: 'I am to see Palmerston at nine, having already determined to do as you advise' (Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51555).
- 80 Spencer Walpole, *Life of Lord John Russell* (2 vols., London, 1889), vol. II, p. 63.
- 81 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 32-34.
- 82 Bell, *Palmerston*, I, p. 98.
- 83 The War Office clerks celebrated his resignation by placing lamps in their windows. Ridley, *Palmerston*, p. 98.
- 84 See Sir E. Hertslett, *Recollections of the Old Foreign Office* (London, 1902), pp. 60-80, for an entertaining description of life in the Foreign Office under Palmerston.
- 85 Palmerston to Temple, 7 May 1833: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, p. 160.
- 86 Holland to Granville, 19 July 1830: Granville Papers, Public Record Office, PRO 30/29/404.
- 87 Holland Journal, 20 December 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51868.
- 88 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 31. Canning of course had to overcome the considerable prejudice of the King.
- 89 Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, p. 467.
- 90 *Ibid.* Brougham praises his 'excellent temper'. Graham twice paid tribute to Palmerston's patience and forbearance in Cabinet (letters to Palmerston, 1 December 1832, 3 June 1834: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/28, 60).

- 91 See Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 31-41, for a discussion of the characters of members of Grey's Cabinet. For an analysis of the working methods of the Cabinet during this period, see A. Aspinall, 'The Cabinet Council, 1785-1835' in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. XXXVIII (1952), pp. 145-252.
- 92 Holland to Grey, 24 November 1830: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2. The ravages of gout restricted Holland's movements to about one hundred yards per day. Lansdowne to Palmerston, 13 November 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/LA/41.
- 93 They also seemed peculiarly ill-suited to their ministerial tasks. See *Quarterly Review*, vol. XLIV (January 1831), p. 316, and the 'HB' cartoon, 'Drawing for Twelfth Cake, a Hint to Cabinet Makers', reproduced in Butler, *Reform Bill*, p. 150.
- 94 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 41.
- 95 One of the problems involved in reconstructing Cabinet policy at this time is that William IV's papers have been destroyed (see *The Taylor Papers* (ed. E. Taylor, London, 1913), p. 1). Thus we are dependent on private archives for any royal correspondence or minutes recording Cabinet decisions and disagreements. The Broadlands Papers include a number of letters to and from the King, which, at least in the realm of foreign policy, go a long way to remedy the deficiency. The 3rd. Earl Grey published a selection of the correspondence between his father and the King on the subject of Reform, which throws some light on foreign policy and includes a few Cabinet minutes [*Correspondence of King William IV and Earl Grey* (ed. Henry, 3rd. Earl Grey, 2 vols., London, 1867)].
- 96 Granville to Palmerston, 20 August 1832: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 41.
- 97 This practice is mentioned approvingly by Hobhouse (*Recollections*, V, p. 15), and Graham (letter to Palmerston, 25 August 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR, 21). It seems to have died out due to the pressure of work on Foreign Office clerks. See Webster, 'Lord Palmerston at Work, 1830-1841' in *Politica*, vol. I, (August 1934), pp. 130-147.
- 98 Grey stressed the accessibility of documents in response to Durham's complaint about the lack of information which was available to Cabinet ministers. Grey to Durham, 28 August 1831: Grey MSS., box 12, file 1.
- 99 For Grey, Althorp's presence in the Cabinet was a *sine qua non* for the success of the ministry (see Sir D. Le Marchant, *Memoir of John Charles Viscount Althorp, Third Earl Spencer* (London, 1876), p. 259). Melbourne's first administration was dismissed by the King in December 1834 as a direct result of Althorp's elevation to the Lords on the death of his father.
- 100 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 38. Unfortunately, no source is given for this remarkable statement.
- 101 Althorp to Palmerston, letter endorsed '1831' (almost certainly August): Spencer MSS., box 7.
- 102 Holland Journal, entry covering September 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51870 (f. 700).
- 103 *Collected Works* (11 vols., Edinburgh, 1872), vol. VIII, *passim*.

- 104 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 35-36. Melbourne's sister, Lady Cowper, was Palmerston's mistress. They married in 1839.
- 105 See above, chapter I, p. 30.
- 106 Althorp to Palmerston, 15 January 1834: Broadlands MSS., GC/SP/11.
- 107 Goderich to Palmerston, 3 June 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GO/26.
- 108 See below, chapter V, pp. 170-178.
- 109 Greville, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 66-67 (19 November 1830).
- 110 Holland to Grey, 18 November 1830: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2.
- 111 Russell to Lady Holland, 'Sunday' (21 November 1830?): Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51680.
- 112 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 40.
- 113 Holland Journal, 20 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.
- 114 Prince Adam Czartoryski, *Memoirs* (ed. A.Gielgud, 2 vols., London, 1888), vol. II, p. 259.
- 115 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 40n.
- 116 Holland to Brougham, 31 December 1831: Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 451-452.
- 117 L.J.Sanders, *The Holland House Circle* (London, 1908), p. 54.
- 118 Canning protested in 1827 that he could not be Prime Minister with Lady Holland in the Cabinet (*The Melbourne Papers*, (ed. L.J.Sanders, London, 1889), p. 479).
- 119 Russell had hoped for the Under-Secretaryship (Tavistock to Russell, 17 November 1830: Russell MSS., PRO 30/22 1A) and was subsequently appalled by Palmerston's bullying methods. Durham, in an embittered letter to Grey (25 August 1831: Grey MSS., Durham-Grey Letters, vol. B6), hinted that he had hoped to be offered the Foreign Office. Following his mission to St. Petersburg in 1832, Durham, 'Radical Jack', was suspected by Palmerston of using his support among radicals in the Commons and his new found friends abroad to mount a *coup* to replace him at the Foreign Office. See Ridley, *Palmerston*, p. 159.
- 120 He succeeded in reducing the Vote of Supplies for three years in succession between 1832 and 1834. See the table in Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, Appendix I, p. 339.
- 121 'I have found you the best of colleagues, and . . . look back on our friendship with the most heartfelt satisfaction': Graham to Palmerston, 3 June 1834: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/60.
- 122 See Felicity Ranger, 'Sir George Shee' in *The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts' Report of the Secretary to the Commissioners 1970-1971* (HMSO, London, 1971), pp. 33-43; C.Middleton, 'John Backhouse and the Origins of the Under-Secretaryship for Foreign Affairs 1822-1842' in *Journal of British Studies*, vol. XIII, no. 2 (May 1974), pp. 36-39.
- 123 See E.Jones Parry, 'Under Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs

- 1782-1855' in *English Historical Review*, vol. XLIII (1934), pp. 308-318; Middleton, 'Backhouse', pp. 24-25. R. Jones' recent study, *The Nineteenth Century Foreign Office* (London, 1971), is disappointingly thin on the period before 1860.
- 124 A. Aspinall, *Politics and the Press c. 1750-1850* (London, 1949), pp. 244, 255; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 65.
- 125 Shee to Palmerston, 14 August 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/SH/98. Webster (*Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 34n.) wrongly attributes this letter to Backhouse.
- 126 Brougham to Holland, letter endorsed '1833': Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51564.
- 127 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 183.
- 128 See, for example, Greville, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 58-59 (15 February 1834).
- 129 Palmerston to Minto (British Ambassador at Berlin), 19 February 1833: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 43.
- 130 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XIX, 394-465 (9 July 1833). For the government's fears of defeat, see Le Marchant's Diary, 9 July 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries* (ed. A. Aspinall, London, 1952), pp. 334-335; Palmerston to Granville, 9 July 1833: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/414.
- 131 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XVIII, 238-299 (3 June 1833). The Commons overwhelmingly reversed the Lords' vote three days later: *Ibid.*, 391-444.
- 132 Professor Temperley makes nice distinctions between the principles of Castlereagh, Canning and Palmerston in *England and the Near East: The Crimea* (London, 1936), pp. 59-60.
- 133 Howick (by that time 3rd. Earl Grey) to his brother, Charles Grey, 21 October 1865: Grey MSS., box 95, file 4.
- 134 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, p. 326.

CHAPTER THREE

- 1 It is not my intention to discuss in detail the diplomatic history of the Belgian State, but rather to examine British Cabinet attitudes at certain crucial stages when British intervention was contemplated. For a full full description of the complex negotiations surrounding the Belgian question, see Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 194-276, II, pp. 515-521; F. de Lannoy, *Les Origines Diplomatiques de L'Indépendance Belge: la Conférence de Londres 1830-1831* (Louvain, 1903); S.T. Bindoff, *The Scheldt Question to 1839* (London, 1945).
- 2 State Paper of 5 May 1820: *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, p. 632.
- 3 Palmerston to Granville (British Ambassador in Paris), 25 March 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 57-60 (italics Palmerston's).

- 4 Palmerston to Holland, 9 April 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 5 Holland to Grey, 7 April 1831: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2.
- 6 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 107.
- 7 See Hume's speech in the House of Commons, 18 February 1831: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, II, 693-699.
- 8 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 98; G.Pallain (ed.), *Ambassade de Talleyrand à Londres 1830-1834* (Paris, 1891), p. 17n.
- 9 See Grey's speech of 2 November 1830: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, I, 43-44, and also the contributions of Lansdowne (*Ibid.*, 245-247) and Hume (*Ibid.*, 208).
- 10 Palmerston to Cowley (British Ambassador in Vienna), 26 December 1830: Foreign Office Records, Public Record Office, FO 7/220 no. 33.
- 11 Russell to Lady Holland, letter endorsed 'Sunday' (almost certainly 21 November 1830): Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51680. Holland had written in similar vein to his son on 9 August: *Ibid.*, Add. Mss. 51751.
- 12 J.Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy* (London, 1912), p. 49.
- 13 Webster (*Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 123) doubts Talleyrand's claim, although Palmerston supports him in a letter to Granville of 22 July 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 91-92.
- 14 Grey to Palmerston, 20 December 1830: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1943; Talleyrand to Madame Adelaide, 13 December 1830: *Memoirs of the Prince de Talleyrand* (ed. Duc de Broglie, trans. Mrs. A.Hall, 5 vols., London, 1891), vol. III, p. 222.
- 15 'She says that our ministers are greatly changed since they came into office and that they are all much alarmed, especially Earl Grey, who, she thinks, views the Fr. Revolution in a very different light': Aberdeen to Wellington, 30 December 1830: *Despatches, Correspondence and Memoranda*, VII, p. 386.
- 16 See Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 121-122 for Palmerston's objections to the Prince's candidacy.
- 17 Heytesbury, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, informed Palmerston that Russia's assent to the independence of Belgium was given on the understanding that it left open the possibility of the Prince assuming the throne (30 January 1831: PRO FO 65/191 no. 20).
- 18 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 122.
- 19 Palmerston to Grey, 10 January 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 20 Grey to Palmerston, 10 January 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1950.
- 21 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 123.
- 22 Palmerston to Granville, 14 January 1831: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404.
- 23 Holland to Grey, 7 January 1831: Grey MSS., box 35, file 2.
- 24 Grey to Holland, 7 January 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51555.

- 25 Protocol no. 11 of the London Conference: *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 759-761. Most historians refer to this source when citing the protocols. They were first published in 1833, in *Parliamentary Papers*, vol. XLII, pp. 275-543, and can also be found in the *Journals of the House of Commons* for the same year (vol. CLXXXVIII, pp. 1042-1139).
- 26 Grey to Palmerston, 21 January 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1956.
- 27 *The Early Correspondence of Lord John Russell* (ed. Rollo Russell, 2 vols., London, 1913).
- 28 Holland to Russell, letter endorsed 'Tuesday, 1831' [!]: *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 10-11. The editor places this letter directly before that of 27 January. The most plausible date of this letter, in view of Holland's remarks about fresh territorial demands by the French and the selection of Lamb rather than Adair for the Vienna Embassy, would seem to be 25 January. As the neutrality protocol of 20 January took Holland by surprise, the letter could not have been written on the previous Tuesday (18 January).
- 29 Holland to Russell, 27 January 1831: *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.
- 30 The leading authorities (W.E.Lingelbach, 'Belgian Neutrality: its Origins and Interpretation' in *American Historical Review*, vol. XXXIX (1933-1934), pp. 48-60 and Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 125-126) do not mention Russell's apparent contribution. His principal biographers, Spencer Walpole and J.Prest (London, 1973) are also silent.
- 31 For example, in a letter to Holland, endorsed 'January 1831' (Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51677), Russell suggests, *inter alia*, that Belgium should be neutral and her boundaries guaranteed by the Powers.
- 32 Palmerston to Granville, 7 January 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 27-29; Talleyrand to Sebastiani, 16 January 1831: Pallain, *Ambassade de Talleyrand*, p. 167.
- 33 Lingelbach demonstrates convincingly that this was France's ambition at this stage: 'Belgian Neutrality', pp. 58-60. Talleyrand frequently revived his partition plans during the two years of negotiations.
- 34 Deplored both by Grey and Palmerston in letters to Granville on 21 January: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404. The previous day Grey had written to the Comte de Flahault, who was on his way to London on a special and unexplained mission, urging the French Government to reconsider the candidacy of the Prince of Orange as the best means of preserving European peace (Grey MSS., box 15, file 1).
- 35 Grey was much disturbed by the partisan activity of both Conference Commissioners and renewed his calls for them to abstain from interference in a letter to Palmerston on 22 January: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, p. 822.
- 36 Mentioned by Grey to Palmerston, 26 January 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1956.
- 37 Grey to Palmerston, 22 January 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, p. 822.
- 38 In view of Heytesbury's despatch of 31 January - see above, note 17.
- 39 William IV to Palmerston, 23 January 1831: Broadlands MSS., RC/A/18.

- 40 Britain and France could find no common ground on alternative candidates. Palmerston made it clear that Otto of Bavaria was unacceptable, while Louis Philippe refused to consider Charles, Archduke of Austria. The French suggestion of the Neapolitan Prince Charles, nephew of the French Queen Marie Amélie, never found favour. Granville discussed these matters most pointedly in a letter to Grey of 24 January 1831: Grey MSS., box 18, file 7.
- 41 Talleyrand to Sebastiani, 16, 25 January 1831: Pallain, *Ambassade de Talleyrand*, pp. 172-174, 185-188; Bindoff, *Scheldt Question*, pp. 159-160; Lingelbach, 'Belgian Neutrality', pp. 59-60.
- 42 The protocol of 27 January fixed the status of Antwerp as a commercial belonging to Belgium: *BFSP*, XVIII, p. 765 (Article XI).
- 43 Referred to by Russell in a letter to Holland of 26 January 1831: Russell MSS., PRO 30/22 1B.
- 44 Grey to Palmerston, 26 January 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1961.
- 45 'I think there is a great deal in favour of Le Beau's arguments in favour of the Duc de Leuchtenberg' (*Ibid*). Le Beau was a member of the Belgian mission which came to London to discuss the choice of a sovereign.
- 46 Holland to Russell, 27 January 1831: *Early Correspondence*, II, pp. 11-13.
- 47 Russell to Grey, 28 January 1831: Grey MSS., box 50A, file 6.
- 48 *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 761-765.
- 49 Grey was quick to see that this protocol was hastily drafted and unsuited to the task of providing a financial settlement for Belgium and Holland. He was less surprised than Palmerston at the French Government's disavowal of it: to Palmerston, 28 January (terms of protocol), 31 January (disavowal); Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1963, 1965.
- 50 Granville to Palmerston, 31 January 1831: Granville MSS., PRO 30/22/404.
- 51 Palmerston to Grey, 1 February 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1966. A shortened version of this letter is reprinted by Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, pp. 816-817.
- 52 Protocol no. 14, 1 February 1831: *BFSP*, XVIII, p. 774.
- 53 Palmerston to Granville, 2 February 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 36-37.
- 54 See Londonderry's speech of 5 March 1832: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, X, 1104-1107.
- 55 Temperley, *Political Sketches of Princess Lieven*, pp. 174-178.
- 56 Grey to Princess Lieven, 1 February 1831: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, p. 153.
- 57 Palmerston to Grey, 1 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 58 Ponsonby to Grey, 4 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 48, file 3.
- 59 Palmerston to Grey, 6 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.

- 60 Palmerston to Granville, 15 February 1831: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404. The paragraph from which this phrase is taken is omitted by Bulwer and Ashley (*Palmerston*, II, pp. 40-42).
- 61 He also deplored Sebastiani's public disavowal of the protocol of 27 January and defended Ponsonby against French accusations of meddling in the election: Grey to Flahault, 17 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 15, file 1.
- 62 Louis Philippe told a Belgian deputation that both Belgium and France would be plunged into war if the Duc de Nemours were to accept the throne. See *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, p. 136.
- 63 *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 779-785.
- 64 According to Palmerston, Talleyrand actually presented one of the drafts, 'to strengthen the hands of his government against the violent party': to Granville, 23 February 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, p. 45; to Grey, 22 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 65 Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 387-395.
- 66 *BFSP*, XVIII, p. 780.
- 67 Rough notes by Grey, in Grey MSS., box 42, file 4; these are undated, but they are almost certainly a draft of his speech in the Lords on 2 November 1830 (*Hansard*, 3rd. Series, I, 39-44).
- 68 Grey to Holland, 'Monday night' (probably 21 February 1831): Grey MSS., box 35, file 3.
- 69 Holland to Grey, 22 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2.
- 70 He feared that the delay thus caused would induce Talleyrand to withhold his signature from the protocol, particularly as Talleyrand was unwilling to endorse the confirmation of Belgian independence. In the event, Talleyrand signed the protocol on 23 February, in defiance of his instructions (Palmerston to Grey, 22 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.).
- 71 From 30 November onwards, Falck, the Dutch plenipotentiary, had been excluded from conference discussions and relegated to the same status as Van der Weyer, the Belgian envoy.
- 72 Hume's motion to the House of Commons of 18 February was masterfully answered by Palmerston. He defended the Government's apparent intervention in Belgium on the grounds of diplomatic necessity and the lack of any *a priori* Belgian national rights. Althorp and Graham defended British intervention on similar grounds. Robert Grant, the brother of Charles, the President of the Board of Trade, made an equivocal speech about intervention which worried Palmerston. See *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, II, 693-715; Palmerston to Grey, 22 February 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 73 Annexed to protocol no. 26 (26 June 1831): *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 803-805.
- 74 It had been clear by April 1831 that Leopold was the only candidate for the throne in view of the lack of support for the Princes of Naples and Orange. Following the visit of a Belgian deputation to London, terms were agreed with Leopold and he was elected King by the Belgian Congress on 4 June. He insisted as a precondition of his acceptance that the Belgians should accept the Eighteen Articles. The Congress finally did so on 9 July,

- one month after the deadline set by the London Conference, and only then because delegates were misled as to the terms governing the Dutch possession of Luxemburg. See Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 135, 137n.
- 75 First broached by Talleyrand in January 1831 and continually revived. Baron Stockmar, Leopold's closest associate, believed partition to have been Talleyrand's aim throughout. See Baron von Stockmar, *Memoirs*, (ed. F. Max Müller, 2 vols., London, 1872), vol. I, pp. 258-259.
- 76 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, IV, 296-314 (24 June 1831).
- 77 For the King's Speech, see *Ibid.*, 84-87, esp. 85 (21 June 1831).
- 78 *Ibid.*, 299.
- 79 See Henry Fox's letter to his father, 30 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51731.
- 80 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, IV, 305-316, esp. 310.
- 81 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 138.
- 82 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, V, 311-325 (26 July 1831). Louis Philippe had further enraged the Tories by talking of 'the tricolore fluttering under the walls of Lisbon' (to obtain redress for injuries suffered by French citizens), where Britain had always been assumed to have had a dominant diplomatic interest. See below, chapter V, pp. 149-150.
- 83 Palmerston answered similarly in the Commons next day: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, V, 396-404. Privately he described the speech as 'boastful and arrogant' and 'too full of pretence': Palmerston to Granville, 25 July 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 92-94.
- 84 Zuylen, the Dutch plenipotentiary, handed the letter to Palmerston without giving any indication of its contents or of the imminence of the Dutch invasion: Palmerston to Grey, 3 August 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 85 Annex to protocol no. 28 (25 July 1831): *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 807-808.
- 86 Annex to protocol no. 29, (4 August 1831): *Ibid.*, pp. 818-820.
- 87 Palmerston to Grey, 3 August 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 88 Palmerston to Sir Charles Bagot (British Ambassador to The Hague), 5 August 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 139.
- 89 Grey to Palmerston, 3 August 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2012. Holland mentions the meeting in his Journal (3 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867).
- 90 Mentioned by Palmerston in his letter to Granville of 11 August 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 139. Bulwer and Ashley (*Palmerston*, II, p. 98) omit the relevant passage.
- 91 Leopold wrote to Grey on 2 August requesting naval assistance (Grey MSS., box 40, file 4). In fact the Cabinet acted before the letter was received.
- 92 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 138n.
- 93 Brougham to Grey, 5 August 1831: Brougham MSS. A savagely doctored version of this letter appears in his *Life and Times*, III, pp. 123-124.

- 94 Grey to Palmerston, 6 August 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2014.
- 95 Palmerston to Grey, 'late evening', 6 August 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 4.
- 96 Protocol no. 31, 6 August 1831: *BFSP*, XVIII, pp 824-825.
- 97 Palmerston to Grey, 5 August 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 4. Even Talleyrand, who was soon to revive his favourite partition scheme, was slow to appreciate the need for a quick decision. The protocol of 5 August (*BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 822-824) had involved a whole day's discussion; the moderate Grey thought it too conciliatory (to Palmerston, 6 August 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2014).
- 98 Durham to Grey, 6 August 1831: Grey MSS., Grey-Durham Correspondence, vol. B6.
- 99 'You are the most amiable of colleagues on account of the good humour with which you tolerate the utmost freedom of discussion on every paper and every plan which you propose': Graham to Palmerston, 4 December 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/28. Cf. Brougham, *Life and Times*, III p. 468.
- 100 Holland Journal, 6 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867. Most unfortunately, half of the relevant page (f. 68r.) has been torn out.
- 101 'What is to be done with these damned Dutch and Belgians . . . I believe the best way would be to draw a cordon round Holland and Belgium by sea and land and leave them to fight it out': Grey to Holland, 29 August, 3 September 1832: *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, pp. 151-152.
- 102 Grey to Palmerston, 9 August 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2016. For the text of the Protocol of 6 August, see *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 824-825.
- 103 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, V, 886-892 (6 August), 933-935 (8 August), 1270-1316 (12 August).
- 104 *Ibid.*, 968-1033 (9 August 1831).
- 105 Palmerston to Granville, 11 August 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 98-100.
- 106 Bulow immediately reported this to Palmerston (Palmerston to Grey, 12 August 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, pp. 817-818). Grey, who had heard of the development from Graham, thought that Bulow must have misunderstood Talleyrand: Grey to Palmerston, 12 August 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2017.
- 107 Palmerston to Granville, 13 August 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 103-105. Again he mentions the strength of parliamentary opinion as an important factor.
- 108 Grey to Granville, 13 August 1831: Grey MSS., box 18, file 7.
- 109 Grey to Sir Herbert Taylor (William IV's secretary), 12 August 1831: *William IV-Grey Correspondence*, vol. I, pp. 326-328.
- 110 Holland Journal, 14 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.

- 111 Palmerston to Granville, 16 August 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, pp. 108-110. As Dr. Kenneth Bourne has shown (*The Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902* (Oxford, 1970), p. 218), Bulwer and Ashley misdate the letter 17 August.
- 112 Althorp to Brougham, letter endorsed 'Wednesday 1831': Spencer MSS., box 7. The subject matter of this letter dates it fairly certainly at 17 August: 10 August is the only plausible alternative. The doubt as to the exact date of the letter in no way diminishes its importance.
- 113 Palmerston to Granville, 18 August 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 111-113.
- 114 Protocol no. 33 (18 August 1831): *BFSP*, XVIII, P. 830.
- 115 Holland Journal, 19 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.
- 116 The destruction of the dykes and the insults suffered by Adair and Lord William Russell are described in Palmerston's letters to Bagot, 20, 23 August 1831: Palmerston Letter Books, British Museum Additional Manuscripts 48466. See also Grey to William IV, 22 August 1831: *William IV-Grey Correspondence*, I, pp. 336-339.
- 117 Palmerston to Granville, 26 August 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 119-123.
- 118 Protocol no. 41 *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 846-847.
- 119 Holland Journal, 19 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.
- 120 *Ibid.*, 2 September 1831.
- 121 Palmerston to Grey, 3 September 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 4.
- 122 Palmerston to Granville, 3 September 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, p. 126.
- 123 Grey to Palmerston, 3 September 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, pp. 823-824. Webster, like other commentators, does not discuss the difference of opinion.
- 124 Holland Journal, 4 September 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.
- 125 Palmerston to Grey, 5 September 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 4.
- 126 The new terms were an implied recognition of Holland's superior strength, but still proved unacceptable to the Dutch: *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 893-901. For the Treaty itself, see *Ibid.*, pp. 645-664.
- 127 French pretensions received support from both Lord Holland and Granville. Palmerston had always been adamant that no concession should be made: see, for example, his letter to Granville, 13 April 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 65&n., 66.
- 128 'I don't understand Talleyrand's letter . . . he seems dissatisfied with the protocol in spite of the fact that he helped to prepare it': Palmerston to Grey, 19 April 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3. Talleyrand and Grey had exchanged letters on the subject (Grey MSS., box 54, file 2) on 17 April which showed the former's unease at the terms.

- 129 *BFSP*, XVIII p. 921. The protocol was officially communicated to France on July 14 (*Ibid.*, p. 921, no. 2.).
- 130 . . . 'Les Places élevées pour menacer la France et non pour protéger les Belges seront démolies. Une neutralité reconnu par l'Europe et l'amitié de France assurent à nos voisins une indépendance dont nous avons été le premier appui.' The speech is printed in *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 638-641.
- 131 Referred to in Grey's letter to Princess Lieven, 25 August 1831 *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, P. 269. Wellington's memorandums, together with a judicious Foreign Office summary of the problem, are in the Grey MSS., box 7, file 2.
- 132 Palmerston to Granville, 18 August 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 111-113. The strength of feeling was a consolation in view of the moderate tone of the Cabinet towards the continuing French military presence.
- 133 Holland Journal, 23 August 1831: Holland MSS, Add. Mss. 51867.
- 134 Russell to Holland, letter endorsed '1831': *Ibid.*, 51677.
- 135 Palmerston to Granville, 23 August 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 113-116.
- 136 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 146.
- 137 Mentioned in Talleyrand's letter to the Princesse de Vaudemont, 3 October 1831: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, IV, pp. 215-216. Talleyrand expected all the fortresses specified by La Tour Marbourg during his visit to Brussels in August to be destroyed.
- 138 Not printed in any official publication, but extensively referred to by Palmerston in his letters at this time.
- 139 Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, IV, pp. 184-188; Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, p. 95.
- 140 Palmerston to Adair, 16 November 1831; Palmerston Letter Books, Add. Mss. 48446.
- 141 *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 664-669.
- 142 Palmerston to Granville, 15 December 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 146.
- 143 Holland to Palmerston, letter endorsed '1831': Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 144 Holland to Grey, 14 December 1831: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2.
- 145 Holland Journal, 14 December 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51868.
- 146 Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, IV, p. 236n.
- 147 Louis Philippe to Talleyrand, 16 December 1831: *Ibid.*, pp. 240-243.
- 148 Leopold to Palmerston, 18 December 1831: Broadlands MSS., RC/M/41.
- 149 Durham to Grey, letter endorsed 'December 1831': Grey MSS., Grey-Durham Correspondence, vol. B6.

- 150 Durham had attacked Grey bitterly in a series of letters about his low Cabinet status after his work on the drafting of the Reform Bill was completed. He sought an earldom and a greater share in the formation of government policy, complaining that he saw no Foreign Office documents. Grey was greatly pained by the outbursts of his son-in-law, whose natural vanity and egotism combined with his personal griefs to unbalance his mind at this time (Durham to Grey, Grey to Durham, 25 August 1831: Grey MSS., *Ibid.*, and box 12, file 1). See the comments of Trevelyan (*Grey*, pp. 304-306) and Chester New (*Lord Durham*, (Oxford, 1929), p. 149). There were some very embarrassing scenes in full Cabinet between Grey and Durham, such as that of 5 December 1831, described with malicious glee by Greville: *Memoirs*, II, pp. 231-232.
- 151 Holland to Palmerston, letter endorsed '1831' (most probably 19 December 1831): Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 152 Holland Journal, 20 December 1831, contains a full and valuable account: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51868.
- 153 Holland wrote in exactly the same terms to Brougham on 24 December: Brougham MSS.
- 154 See Palmerston's letters to Grey, 27, 29 November, 8, 9, 10 December 1831: Grey Mss., box 44, file 5.
- 155 Granville to Palmerston, 21 December 1831: PRO F.O. 27/432 no. 520.
- 156 Grey to Palmerston, 23 December 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 157 Palmerston to Grey, 24 December 1831: Grey MSS., box 45, file 1.
- 158 Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, pp. 100-101. The French threatened Leopold with a withdrawal of support in the event of a renewed Dutch attack.
- 159 Holland Journal, 21-24 December 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51868.
- 160 Grey to Palmerston, 25 December 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1. Reprinted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, pp. 826-827.
- 161 Grey to Palmerston, 27 December 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2070.
- 162 Holland Journal, 21-24 December 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51868.
- 163 Holland to Brougham, 26 December 1831: Brougham MSS. A savagely edited form of this letter appears in Brougham's *Life and Times*, III, pp. 447-449.
- 164 Holland to Brougham, 27 December 1831: Brougham MSS.
- 165 Brougham to Holland, 29 December 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51563.
- 166 Holland to Brougham, 31 December 1831: Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 451-452.
- 167 As late as December 29, Leopold urged Stockmar, then in London, to press for better terms for France: Leopold to Palmerston, 29 December 1831: Broadlands MSS., RC/M/46; Stockmar, *Memoirs*, I, pp. 213-230.
- 168 *Ibid.*, p. 233.

- 169 On 23 January. See *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, p. 149.
- 170 Palmerston first heard of the Russian resolve on 26 December (to Granville, Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404). Prussia and Austria also delayed their ratifications at the Tsar's instigation.
- 171 'This childish quarrel is not worthy of war and occurs at a time when all the moral influence of the other four powers may be required to prevent Russia from detaching herself from the Alliance': Palmerston to Granville, 26 December 1831: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404.
- 172 Holland to Granville, 19 January 1832: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/409.
- 173 Palmerston to Granville, 19 February 1832: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/413.
- 174 See Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 148-176 and especially Bindoff, *The Scheldt Questions*, pp. 183-219. The peripheral aspects of the Belgian negotiations are beginning to interest historians: see J. M. Stengers, 'Leopold I et les chemins de fer 1830-1832' in *Mélanges Offertes à G. Jacquemyns* (Brussels, 1968).
- 175 The Eastern Powers were undoubtedly hoping that the Reform issue would topple the Grey ministry and bring Aberdeen, a champion of the Dutch, back to the Foreign Office. After Wellington's abortive attempt to form a ministry between 9 and 15 May 1832, the Powers could delay, but not prevent a final settlement.
- 176 Grey to Palmerston, 1 June 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2111.
- 177 Palmerston to Grey, Grey to Palmerston, 24 October 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 5, Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2049; Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, p. 86.
- 178 Leopold to Grey, 3 June 1832: Grey MSS., box 40, file 4. A selection of the correspondence between these two during the Belgian negotiations appears in J. Gallant, 'De Briefwisseling van Konig Leopold met Lord Grey in de Howick Papers te Durham' in *De Brug*, 2/3 (1973).
- 179 Bindoff, *The Scheldt Question*, p. 159.
- 180 Annex to protocol no. 67: BFSP, XVIII, pp. 125-131.
- 181 Grey to Palmerston, 21 June 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2118.
- 182 Palmerston to Granville, 22 June 1832: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/413.
- 183 Bindoff, *The Scheldt Question*, p. 190.
- 184 Palmerston to Bligh, 6 July 1832: Bligh MSS., British Museum Additional Manuscripts 41284; Heytesbury to Palmerston, 11 August 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/HE/146.
- 185 William IV to Palmerston, 20, 22 July 1832: Broadlands MSS., RC/A/73-74. The King's inveterate hostility towards France probably turned him against the project.
- 186 Grey to Palmerston, 30 July 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2099.

- 187 For the background to the *Thème*, see Bindoff, *The Scheldt Question*, pp. 190-193.
- 188 Leopold to Grey, 16 August 1832: Grey MSS., box, 40, file 4.
- 189 Grey to Palmerston, 23 August 1832: Grey MSS., box, 44, file 1.
- 190 Grey's absence raised several eyebrows, including those of Lady Holland: *Letters of Harriet, Countess Granville* (ed. F. Leveson-Gower, 2 vols., London 1894), vol. II, p. 130.
- 191 Althorp to Palmerston, 15 September 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/SP/9.
- 192 Graham to Palmerston, letter endorsed '18 September 1832': Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/25.
- 193 Grey to Palmerston, 18 September 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 194 Grey described the various views to Palmerston on 26 September: *Ibid.*
- 195 Protocol no. 70: *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 184-190.
- 196 Palmerston to Granville, 2 October 1832: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404.
- 197 Palmerston to Grey, 27 September 1832: Grey MSS., box 45, file 2.
- 198 Althorp to Earl Spencer, 6 October 1832: Spencer MSS., Althorp-Spencer Letters vol. II; Holland Journal, '1832' (Holland had at this time discontinued daily entries, so folio numbers will be cited): Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869, ff. 567-568.
- 199 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 168-169.
- 200 Holland Journal, '1832': Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869 ff. 567-568.
- 201 Palmerston to Holland, 6 October 1832: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 202 Reprinted in New, *Durham*, pp. 218-220.
- 203 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 170&n., 171. New (*Durham*, pp. 216-221) bases his case on Palmerston's letter to Durham of 5 October 1832 in which two courses are put forward; he argues from this that Palmerston had not yet made up his mind. It is more likely that Palmerston wished Durham to come to his own decision. Cf. his letter to Holland of 6 October (note 201).
- 204 New's enthusiastic view of Durham's achievement - 'single-handed, by sheer force of keen analysis and lucid argument, Durham carried all before him' (*Durham*, p. 220) - reflects the tendency towards hero-worship that Durham's biographers seem unable to avoid. See S.J.Reid, *Life and Letters of the First Earl Durham* (2 vols., London, 1906), vol. I, pp. 229-233; L. Cooper, *Radical Jack* (London, 1956), pp. 105-107.
- 205 Durham to Leopold, 26 October 1832: New, *Durham*, p. 221.
- 206 On 22 October: *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 258-263.
- 207 The blockade was very unpopular with British merchants but the Tories were unable to turn the resentment to parliamentary advantage. Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 173.

- 208 Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, p. 87. Dr. Bartlett makes use of the *Letters of Viscount Althorp 1793-1833* (private edition published by his nephew, Viscount Althorp, 1881), which I was unable to consult. There is no copy of this work at Althorp House but there is a copy in the National Library of Scotland. I am most grateful to Dr. Bartlett and the Earl Spencer for their help in attempting to trace this book.
- 209 Holland to Brougham, 27 October 1832: Brougham MSS.
- 210 Palmerston's defence of British intervention in the Commons in December 1831 was in the best Canningite tradition: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, IX, 105; quoted in H.W.V. Temperley and L.M. Penson, *Foundations of British Foreign Policy 1792-1902* (London, 1938), p. 94.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 Grey to Palmerston, 26 December 1830: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1947; *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, V, 930 (8 August 1831). The Polish revolt had been mentioned in the King's Speech of 21 June 1831 (*Ibid.*, IV, 84), but had provoked only one passing response (from Hunt: *Ibid.*, 204). For full discussions of the revolt itself, see R.F. Leslie, *Polish Politics and the Revolution of November 1830* (London 1956); E. Kukiel, *Czartoryski and European Unity, 1790-1861* (Princeton, 1955), pp. 171-209. Also valuable is J.H. Gleason, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain: A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion* (Harvard, 1950), pp. 107-134.
- 2 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 257-261.
3. 'An Appeal to the Allies and the English Nation on Behalf of the Poles', in *Edinburgh Review*, vol. XLIV (January 1814).
- 4 For example, Grey's speech in the Lords, 21 April 1814: *Hansard*, 1st. Series, XXVIII, 455; Mackintosh's speech in the Commons, 20 April 1815: *Ibid.*, XXX, 744. Admittedly, Whig speakers were more vociferous about the plight of Naples, Genoa and Sardinia.
- 5 Kukiel, *Czartoryski and European Unity*, pp. 119-135; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I pp. 342-361.
- 6 Poles living in other countries were guaranteed separate national institutions: see Article I of the Treaty of Vienna in *BFSP*, IV, p. 11.
- 7 Lamented by Czartoryski in his *Memoirs*, II, pp. 259-261.
- 8 Grey to Sir Herbert Taylor, 6 April 1831: *William IV-Grey Correspondence*, I, pp. 209-210.
- 9 Brougham to Holland, 29 December 1832: Brougham MSS.
- 10 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 258-259. Brougham was not a Member of Parliament in 1814.
- 11 Carlisle to Holland, 18 December 1830: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51578.
- 12 Sebastiani to Talleyrand, 25 December 1830: Pallain, *Ambassade de Talleyrand*, pp. 152-153nn.

- 13 Grey to Palmerston, 26 December 1830: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1947.
- 14 Palmerston to Heytesbury, 31 December 1830: Broadlands MSS., GC/HE/146.
- 15 Holland to Grey, 20 December 1830: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2. At a National Guard dinner, Lafayette had proposed a toast 'aux canoniers Français, Belges et Polonais'.
- 16 Palmerston to Granville, 14 January 1831: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404.
- 17 Grey's letters to Princess Lieven throughout this period reveal his sympathies clearly. See, for example, his letter of 27 January 1831: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, p. 147.
- 18 Granville to Palmerston, 7 January 1831: PRO FO 27/426 no. 1.
- 19 Grey to Palmerston, 26 December 1830: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/1946.
- 20 See the Commons debate of 18 March 1831, with the interjections by O'Connell and O'Gorman Mahon: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, II, 693-727.
- 21 For a description of the break with Russia and the beginning of the campaign, see Leslie, *Polish Politics and the Revolution of 1830*, pp. 134-171.
- 22 Palmerston to Holland, 20 March 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 23 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 200-221. Palmerston's nearest approach to actual intervention in Italy was his idea to guarantee Piedmont against French invasion. It was never discussed by the Cabinet, as Franco-Austrian tension quickly eased.
- 24 Heytesbury to Palmerston, 25 February 1831: PRO FO 65/190 no. 39: Leslie, *Polish Politics and the Revolution of 1830*, p. 163.
- 25 Article I: *BFSP*, IV, p. 11.
- 26 Palmerston to Heytesbury, 22 March 1831: PRO FO 65/190 no. 11. The jacket of this despatch is marked 'Highly approved of, W.R.'
- 27 Palmerston to Heytesbury, 22 March 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/HE/147.
- 28 Palmerston to Granville, 29 March 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 60-61.
- 29 Grey to Holland, 1 April 1831: Grey MSS., box 35, file 3.
- 30 Heytesbury to Palmerston, 30 April 1831: PRO FO 65/191 (separate and secret).
- 31 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 187-188.
- 32 Palmerston to Heytesbury, 3 May 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/HE/149.
- 33 Palmerston to Granville, 13 May 1831: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404. This paragraph has been omitted by Bulwer and Ashley: *Palmerston*, II, pp. 77-79.
- 34 Talleyrand to Sebastiani, 5 March 1831: Pallain, *Ambassade de Talleyrand*, pp. 256-258.
- 35 Talleyrand to Sebastiani, 14 May 1831: *Ibid.*, pp. 338-343.
- 36 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, IV, 84-87 (21 June 1831).

- 37 Princess Lieven to Grey, 17 June 1831: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, pp. 243-245.
- 38 William IV to Grey 18 June 1831: *William IV-Grey Correspondence*, I, p. 300. The King suggested that the mention of the war be included in 'the general catalogue of civil commotions which disturb Europe'.
- 39 The episode had an ironical postscript, for Grey reported to Princess Lieven that Matuscewitz, the Russian plenipotentiary at the Conference, had objected to the term 'contest' and would have preferred 'revolt': *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, p. 247 (27 June 1831).
- 40 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, p. 320.
- 41 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, IV, 204 (21 June 1831).
- 42 Casimir Périer to Talleyrand, 7 July 1831: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, IV, pp. 162-164.
- 43 Palmerston to Granville, 12 July 1831: Granville MSS., PRO 30/29/404.
- 44 Princess Lieven to Benckendorff, 24 July 1831: *Letters of Princess Lieven*, pp. 303-307. Durham may have thought at this stage that the possible disappearance of Palmerston's parliamentary seat at Bletchingly as a result of the Reform Bill would increase his chances of becoming Foreign Secretary.
- 45 Holland to Grey, 10 July 1831: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2.
- 46 Holland Journal, 20 July 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 21 July 1831.
- 48 *Journal of the House of Commons*, vol. CLXXXVI (1831), part 2, p. 737; W.Wilks, *Lord Palmerston in Three Epochs* (London, 1854), p. 16; *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, V, 930 (8 August 1831).
- 49 *Journal of the House of Commons*, vol. CLXXXVI (1831), part 2, pp. 753 797, 830, 847.
- 50 Broadlands MSS., CAB/A/2-12. The question was discussed between 21 August and 6 September 1831.
- 51 Palmerston to Heytesbury, 21 September 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/HE/151.
- 52 Palmerston was furious at this breach of international law, but he did not alter his policy as a result. He ordered Cowley to protest to the Austrian Government, armed with quotations from Vattel's treatises. Palmerston to Cowley, 19 June 1831: PRO FO 7/220 no. 16; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 188.
- 53 Heytesbury to Palmerston, 10 October 1831: PRO FO 65/193 no. 196.
- 54 Grey to Palmerston, 8 November 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2061.
- 55 Made for instance by Southgate (*Most English Minister*, pp. 88-89). Palmerston commented to Russell in 1863 that Grey had been more anxious to avoid any quarrel with Russia: Palmerston to Russell, 26 February 1863: Bell, *Palmerston*, I, p. 165.
- 56 Grey to Palmerston, 12 November 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2062.

- 57 Holland Journal, 17 November 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51868.
- 58 'But the poor Poles - Chad's despatches went right to my heart': Grey to Palmerston, 16 November 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2063.
- 59 Palmerston to Heytesbury, 23 November 1831: PRO FO 65/190 no. 52. This despatch, together with other relevant correspondence, appears in *Parliamentary Papers*, vol. LXXV (1863) and *BFSP*, XXXVII, pp. 1413-1444.
- 60 Palmerston to Heytesbury, 12 March 1832: PRO FO 65/198 no. 35.
- 61 Grey to Brougham, 1 January 1832: Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, p. 165.
- 62 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, p. 331. Grey was prepared to entertain Czartoryski in a private capacity, exciting Princess Lieven's wrath thereby: Grey to Princess Lieven, 1 January, Princess Lieven to Grey, 3 January 1832: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, pp. 310-311, 318.
- 63 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 323-325.
- 64 *Ibid.*, pp. 327-328.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 326.
- 66 Taylor, *Trouble Makers*, pp. 42-43.
- 67 Gleason, *Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain*, p. II5.
- 68 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 183; Taylor, *Trouble Makers*, pp. 42-43.
- 69 Ridley, *Palmerston*, p. 161; *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XIX, 416-423 (9 August 1833).
- 70 Gleason, *Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain*, pp. 120, 125-130.
- 71 Palmerston to Durham, 3 July 1832 (instructions): PRO FO 65/200 no.2; Palmerston to Lamb, 30 June 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/BE/419; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 191.
- 72 For the Commons debate of 28 June 1832, see *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XIII, 1115-1152. For Princess Lieven's reaction, see her letter to Grey, 29 June 1832: *Lieven-Grey Correspondence*, II, p. 359.
- 73 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 191. Both the King and the Tsar protested at the language used in the debate.
- 74 I have been unable to rediscover the source of this quotation, but I am convinced that it is genuine.
- 75 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, p. 338.
- 76 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 191-195. For the over-sympathetic view of Durham's biographers, see New, *Durham*, pp. 211-212. Durham's lack of influence at St. Petersburg is reminiscent of his visit to Brussels the previous November. Adair, the British Ambassador, had written to Holland that Durham did not perform a major role: 'Invariably I send him my despatches to read, *after they are signed*, before I send them off' (8 November 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 57610).
- 77 Holland to Fox, 15 July 1834: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51753.

- 78 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 195-199.
- 79 Parliament voted the Polish refugees £10,000 per annum from 1834 to 1852.
- 80 See Wilks' shrewd polemic: *Lord Palmerston in Three Epochs*, pp. 15-21.
- 81 Palmerston to Bligh, 16 July 1833: Bligh Papers, British Museum Additional Manuscripts 41285. For the debate of 9 July 1833, see *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XIX, 394-465. The government was very anxious as to the the outcome: Littleton Diary, 9 July 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, pp. 344-345.
- 82 Czartoryski, *Memoirs*, II, p. 326.
- 83 Palmerston's 'Memorandum in reply to Lord Holland', 8 March 1840: Broadlands MSS., GC/HO/139; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 284.
- 84 Grey to Holland, 10 February 1826: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51554; above, chapter I, pp. 25-26.
- 85 Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea*, p. 59.
- 86 Aberdeen to Gordon, 21 November 1829: F.S.Rodkey, 'Lord Palmerston and the Rejuvenation of Turkey, 1830-1830' in *Journal of Modern History*, vol. I (1929), p. 570.
- 87 Russian territorial ambitions in Turkey were thereby settled once and for all: Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea*, p. 57.
- 88 See F.E.Bailey, *British Policy and the Turkish Reform Movement. A Study in Anglo-Turkish Relations 1826-1853* (Harvard, 1942), p. 46 for Mehemet's reasons for turning towards Syria.
- 89 Grey to Palmerston, 19 June 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2117. The letter of Palmerston's to which this is a reply has not survived.
- 90 S. Lane Poole, *The Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe* (2 vols., London, 1888), vol.I, p. 512; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 279-281.
- 91 Palmerston to Grey, 6 September 1832: Grey MSS., box 45, file 2. See also M.Vereté, 'Palmerston and the Levant Crisis 1832' in *Journal of Modern History*, vol. XXIV (1952), pp. 145-146.
- 92 Grey to Palmerston, 9 September 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 93 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 200.
- 94 Ahmet Houlousi to Grey, 24 September 1832: Grey MSS., box 56, file 5. The letter was delivered on 4 November.
- 95 Grey delayed his reply for a month.
- 96 Palmerston to Grey, 5 November 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 97 Palmerston to Mandeville, 5 December 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/MA/274.
- 98 Palmerston to Lamb, 22 May 1838: Broadlands MSS., GC/BE/503; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 283-284.
- 99 Althorp to Spencer, 6 January 1833: Spencer MSS., Althorp-Spencer Correspondence, vol. 3.

- 100 Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, p. 91.
- 101 Grey to Palmerston, 23 April 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2233. This letter is reprinted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, p. 832. See also Lane Poole, *Stratford Canning*, I, p. 512.
- 102 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XX, 900 (28 August 1833).
- 103 Graham to Holland, undated (December 1832?): Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51542. Dr. Bartlett (*Great Britain and Sea Power*, pp. 90-92) overestimates the amount of support which Graham gave Palmerston over intervention in Turkey.
- 104 The memorandum (PRO FO 78/211) is reprinted, with misattributed marginal comments, in Crawley, *Greek Independence*, pp.237-245.
- 105 See below, Appendix II, pp. 198-202.
- 106 The memorandum was probably written in Paris: Lane Poole, *Stratford Canning*, II, pp. 24-27.
- 107 Bailey, *British Policy and the Turkish Reform Movement*, p. 48.
- 108 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 281n., 282.
- 109 William IV to Palmerston, 7 January 1833: Broadlands MSS., RC/A/206. The King was perpetually suspicious of Russia and anxious that the Mediterranean fleet should be strengthened.
- 110 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 273. Vereté, in 'Palmerston and the Levant Crisis', probably overstresses Palmerston's resolution over the need to assist the Sultan, in his anxiety to prove his thesis that the marginal comments on the Canning memorandum are not Palmerston's.
- 111 Palmerston to Ponsonby, 7 August 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/PO/659.
- 112 Writing to Melbourne in 1835, Palmerston considered that such a decision would have restrained Mehemet and thus prevented the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi: Broadlands MSS., GC/ME/26. This letter is reprinted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix C, pp. 839-840.
- 113 Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea*, p. 63.
- 114 See Palmerston's speech in the Commons, 11 July 1833: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XIX, 579-581. There were well authenticated rumours of a treaty between the two powers: Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, p. 165; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 303.
- 115 Holland to Grey, 25 January 1833: Grey MSS., box 34, file 3.
- 116 Grey to Holland, 25 January 1833: Grey MSS., box 35, file 4.
- 117 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 285-287.
- 118 However, he did wish to see Britain intervene navally: Lamb to Palmerston, 17 January 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/BE/72.
- 119 Palmerston to Grey, 28 January 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 4; Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea*, p. 65.
- 120 Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, p. 155.
- 121 Palmerston to Granville, 29 January 1833: Vereté, 'Palmerston and

- the Levant Crisis', p. 150.
- 122 See Webster, 'Palmerston, Metternich and the European System 1830-1841', in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. XX (1934), pp. 133-136, and *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 290-300.
- 123 *Ibid.*, pp. 285-289; Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, pp. 157-162.
- 124 Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea*, p. 66.
- 125 *Ibid.*, p. 63; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 287.
- 126 Grey to Althorp, 8 April 1833: Spencer MSS., box 8.
- 127 Graham to Parker, 6 April 1833: Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, p. 91. See also C.S.Parker, *Life and Letters of Sir James Graham* (2 vols. London, 1907), vol. I, pp. 151-160.
- 128 Talleyrand to Broglie, 23 April 1833: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, V, pp. 102-103.
- 129 Talleyrand to Broglie, 26 April 1833: *Ibid.*, p. 104.
- 130 Palmerston and Metternich could not agree on the location of a conference and the Eastern Powers refused to co-operate with France, following Roussin's blustering behaviour at Constantinople. Palmerston, sick of Russian and Austrian duplicity during the Belgian negotiations, suspected an Austro-Russian agreement over the partition of Turkey. See Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 295-300.
- 131 Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, p. 95.
- 132 Palmerston to Grey, 9 May 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 4. Most regrettably, no record has survived of any Cabinet discussions about the dispatch of ships. Palmerston refers to the need to avoid a Franco-Russian collision in a letter to Temple of 7 May 1833: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 157-158.
- 133 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 303-304; Bailey, *British Policy and the Turkish Reform Movement*, p. 49&n.
- 134 Palmerston to Hutt, 20 November 1838: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 305. See Temperley, *England and the Near East*, pp. 72-73 (n. 79) and M.S.Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923. A Study in International Relations* (London, 1966), pp. 84-85, for a discussion of the real meaning of the Straits clause.
- 135 For example on 28 August 1833: *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XX, 900 and on 17 March 1834 (*Ibid.*, XXII, 318-330).
- 136 *Ibid.*, XIX, 579-581; Southgate, *Most English Minister*, pp. 65-66.
- 137 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 306-307.
- 138 *Ibid.*, p. 308.
- 139 'It would be vain to conceal from ourselves that the government is seriously damaged, both in the eyes of the country and even of the House of Commons itself': Brougham to Grey, 26 May 1833: Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 265-270.

- 140 Rodkey, 'Palmerston and the Rejuvenation of Turkey', p. 513; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 283-313.
- 141 Russell to Holland, 30 September 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51677.
- 142 Grey to Palmerston, 16, 18 September 1833: Grey MSS., box 44, file 2. These letters are reprinted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, pp. 833-835.
- 143 Stanley to Palmerston, 9 October 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/DE/63.
- 144 Holland to Grey, 11 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 34, file 4.
- 145 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 315-316.
- 146 Palmerston to Grey, 8 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 5; reprinted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, pp. 819-820. Grey to Palmerston, 10 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 44, file 2.
- 147 See F.M.Walker, 'The Rejection of Stratford Canning by Nicholas I' in *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, vol. XL (1967), pp. 50-73.
- 148 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 309-311, 360-365.
- 149 *Ibid.*, pp. 308-309. See also R.L.Baker, 'Palmerston and the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi' in *English Historical Review*, XLIII (1928), pp. 83-88.
- 150 Baker reprints Palmerston's despatch to Ponsonby of 6 December 1833.
- 151 Webster (*Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 333) implausibly suggests the dispersal of the Cabinet as the reason.
- 152 Graham to Parker, 10 December 1833: Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power*, p. 94.
- 153 *Ibid.*; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 333-334.
- 154 Rodkey, 'Palmerston and the Rejuvenation of Turkey', p. 573. Wellington countermanded the instructions in January 1835: Temperley and Penson, *Foundations of British Foreign Policy*, p. 121.
- 155 Palmerston to Melbourne, 14 April 1835: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix C, pp. 839-840.
- 156 Aspinall, *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party*, pp. 161, 248-249; C.W. Crawley, 'Anglo-Russian Relations 1815-1840' in *Cambridge Historical Journal*, vol. III (1930), p. 61.

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 See above, chapter I, pp. 28-30.

- 2 Palmerston to Grey, Grey to Palmerston, 16 January 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3, box 44, file 1.
- 3 Grey to Palmerston, 12 April 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 4 Palmerston to Grey, 12 April 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 5 Palmerston to Granville, 12 April 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston II*, pp. 63-65.
- 6 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 240-241. In a letter to Sebastiani of 19 April, Talleyrand implies that it was a Cabinet decision: *Memoirs*, IV, pp. 97-98.
- 7 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 240-241; Palmerston to Granville, 18 April 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 70-73.
- 8 Grey to Palmerston, 15 May 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 9 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 241.
- 10 *Hansard*, 3rd Series, IV, 296-319 (24 June 1831); *Ibid.*, V, 311-325 (26 July 1831), 786-816 (5 August 1831). There were several debates on commercial relations with Portugal, for example in the Lords on 5 September 1831: *Ibid.*, VI, 1096-1131. Webster briefly mentions the importance of vested interests in the discussion of Portuguese affairs: *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 238-240.
- 11 Dom Miguel had asked for British assistance. See Palmerston's letter to Granville, 10 June 1831: Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, 86-87nn.
- 12 For the exact nature of Britain's treaty obligations towards Portugal see Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, Appendix II, pp. 539-540.
- 13 Project on Portugal enclosed in Holland's letter to Grey, 16 June 1831: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2.
- 14 Talleyrand to Sebastiani, 13 March 1831: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, IV, pp. 73-75.
- 15 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 242.
- 16 The speech is reprinted in *BFSP*, XVIII, pp. 638-641.
- 17 Palmerston to Granville, 26 August 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 242.
- 18 Holland Journal, 10 September 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.
- 19 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 242. Elaborate arrangements were made to ensure that the royal visitors were treated in accord with their equivocal status: Palmerston to Grey, 10 July 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 4.
- 20 Holland to Grey, 1 August 1831: Grey MSS., box 34, file 2; Grey to Holland, 2 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51555.
- 21 Holland Journal, 23 September 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51867.

- 22 Grey to Palmerston, 29 September 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, p. 825.
- 23 *Ibid.*, I, pp. 242-243.
- 24 Grey to Palmerston, 29, 30 October 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 243-244.
- 25 Palmerston to Grey, 3 November 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 5.
- 26 Grey to Holland, 30 October 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51555.
- 27 Holland to Grey, 2 November 1831: Grey MSS., box 34, file 3.
- 28 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 242.
- 29 Grey to Palmerston, 29 October 1831: Grey MSS., box 44, file 3.
- 30 Lansdowne to Palmerston, 13 November 1831: Broadlands MSS., GC/LA/41.
- 31 Holland Journal, 1-10 December 1831: Holland MSS., 51868. For the reference to Portugal in the King's Speech, see *Hansard*, 3rd Series, X, 3.
- 32 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 244-246.
- 33 Palmerston to Grey, 8 April 1832: Grey MSS., box 45, file 1.
- 34 Graham to Holland, 22 April 1832: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51542.
- 35 Holland to Grey, 24 April 1832: Grey MSS., box 34, file 3.
- 36 Palmerston to Holland, 20 April 1832: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 37 Grey to Palmerston, 26 April 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 38 Holland to Grey, 24 April 1832: Grey MSS., box 34, file 3.
- 39 Ridley, *Palmerston*, p. 167. Presumably Cabinet approval was forthcoming.
- 40 Palmerston to Russell, 18 July 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/RU/1488.
- 41 Palmerston to Holland, 20 April 1832: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 42 *Hansard*, 3rd Series, XIII, 1045-1049; 1060-1070. The speech was a veiled attack on the King's approval of the repressive Six Resolutions imposed by Austria and Prussia on the German Diet. William was naturally furious. For Palmerston's explanation, sanctioned by the Cabinet, see Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, pp. 799-800; Bulwer and Ashley, *Palmerston*, II, pp. 415-418 (5 August 1832).
- 43 Le Marchant Diary, 1 August 1832: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 278.
- 44 Palmerston to Holland, 7 August 1832: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 45 Grey to Palmerston, 23 August 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 46 Holland to Brougham, 24 August 1832: Brougham MSS.
- 47 Althorp to Palmerston, 26 August 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/SP/8.
- 48 Graham to Palmerston, 31 August 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/22.

- 49 Graham to Palmerston, 20 September 1832 (enclosed in Grey to Palmerston, 26 September 1832): Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2149.
- 50 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 250-251.
- 51 Grey to Palmerston, 5 November 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 52 Graham to Palmerston, 23 November 1832: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/51.
- 53 *Ibid.*
- 54 Grey to Palmerston, 27 November 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, file 1.
- 55 Grey to Palmerston, 27 November 1832, enclosing the opinions of Brougham, Graham and Holland: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2180.
- 56 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 251-253.
- 57 Grey to Palmerston, Palmerston to Grey, 8 December 1832: Grey MSS., box 44, files 1 & 3; Lane-Poole, *Stratford Canning*, II, pp. 24-27.
- 58 Hoppner's memorandum to Palmerston of 26 December 1832; 'Observations on the State of Portugal and the Functions which now Govern it, with respect to England and Spain', is reprinted in C.S.B. Buckland, 'Richard Belgrave Hoppner' in *English Historical Review*, XXXIX (1924), p. 383.
- 59 Lane-Poole, *Stratford Canning*, II, pp. 27-32; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 370-372.
- 60 Palmerston to Grey, 9 March 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 3; to Holland, 5 April 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51599.
- 61 H. Livermore, *A New History of Portugal* (Cambridge, 1966), p. 276; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 374. The career of Russell and his indiscreet wife during the mission can be followed in Georgiana Blakiston, *Lord William Russell and his Wife, 1814-1845* (London, 1972), pp. 248-310.
- 62 Lane-Poole, *Stratford Canning*, II, pp. 25-26.
- 63 *Hansard*, 3rd Series, XVII, 238-299 (3 June 1833). The relevant passage in the King's Speech reads: 'I have abstained from all interference except as was required for the protection of British subjects resident in Portugal': *Ibid.*, XV, 87 (5 February 1833).
- 64 Holland Journal, 4 June 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869.
- 65 *Hansard*, 3rd Series, XI, 897-898 (20 March 1832).
- 66 *Ibid.*, XVIII, 270-271.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 292.
- 68 See above, chapter I, pp. 3-4.
- 69 *Hansard*, 3rd Series, IX, 321 (16 December 1831).
- 70 Holland Journal, 4 June 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869.
- 71 *Hansard*, 3rd Series, XVIII, 376-377 (5 June 1833), 391-444 (6 June). The voting was 361 to 98.

- 72 Holland Journal, 6 June 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869.
- 73 *Hansard*, 3rd. Series, XVIII, 410-420; Ellenborough Diary, 7 June 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 337.
- 74 *Hansard*, 3rd Series, XVIII, 422-435.
- 75 *Ibid.*, 435-440. Ellenborough's comment was 'he is not improved': *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 337 (7 June 1833).
- 76 Comments on Palmerston's minute of 14 July 1833: Broadlands MSS., CAB/A/18; Holland Journal, 14 July 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51859; Le Marchant Diary, July 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 367.
- 77 Holland to Grey, 16 July 1833: Grey MSS., box 34, file 4.
- 78 Stanley to Holland, 16 July 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51566.
- 79 Grey to Palmerston, 2 August 1833: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 377.
- 80 *Ibid.*, Talleyrand to Broglie, 5 August 1833: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, V, p. 144
- 81 Palmerston to Grey, 4 August 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 5.
- 82 Palmerston to Grey, 5 August 1833: *Ibid.*
- 83 Grey to Palmerston, 8 September 1833: Grey MSS., box 44, file 2.
- 84 Princess Lieven to Benckendorff, 30 August 1833: *Letters of Princess Lieven*, p. 345.
- 85 Grey to Brougham, 21 September 1833: Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 306-307; Grey to Palmerston, 23, 26 September 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2252,2253; Grey to Holland, 25 September 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51556.
- 86 Holland Journal, 24-29 September 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51869. For Brougham's opinion of Dom Pedro, see Le Marchant Diary, August 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 368.
- 87 Russell to Holland, 24 September 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51677.
- 88 Palmerston to Lord William Russell, 21 September 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/RU/1510.
- 89 Grey to Palmerston, 29 September 1833: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 384-385.
- 90 Palmerston to Grey, 4 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 5.
- 91 Stanley to Palmerston, 4 October 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/DE/62.
- 92 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 384.
- 93 See Talleyrand to Broglie, 2 August 1833: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, V, p. 143.
- 94 Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, p. 177.
- 95 Grey to Palmerston, 9 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 44, file 2. Understandably, Holland was in complete agreement: letter to Grey, 11 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 34, file 4.

- 96 Le Marchant Diary, 14 September 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 371.
- 97 Holland to Grey, 8 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 34, file 4.
- 98 Brougham to Broglie, 13 October 1833 (two letters): Brougham MSS. These letters are not reprinted in Brougham's *Life and Times*, presumably because they are at variance with his later opinion. See also Le Marchant Diary, October 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 375.
- 99 Russell to Holland, 15 October 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51677.
- 100 Grey to Brougham, 25 October 1833: Grey MSS., box 8, file 3. A mutilated version of this letter appears in Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 310-312.
- 101 Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, pp. 176-177.
- 102 Palmerston to William IV, 29 September 1833: Broadlands MSS., RC/A/88. Earlier that month, the King had made an unfortunate speech at a regimental dinner in which he described the French as 'our natural enemies': Grey to Holland, 14 September 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51556; Greville, *Memoirs*, III, p. 34 (10 September 1833); Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 27.
- 103 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 385.
- 104 Grey to Palmerston, 20 December 1833: Grey MSS., box 44, file 2.
- 105 Palmerston to Grey, 21 December 1833: Grey MSS., box 45, file 5.
- 106 Graham to Palmerston, 6 December 1833; also his letters of 14, 21, 23 December: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/52, 53-55.
- 107 Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, V, p. 187-200; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 386.
- 108 Talleyrand to Broglie, 3 January 1834: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, V, pp. 198-199.
- 109 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 387-388.
- 110 Document 31 in Grey MSS., box 49, file 4.
- 111 Webster (*Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 388) places the meeting a day early.
- 112 It should be mentioned at this point that the accounts of Princess Lieven (to Benckendorff, 24 January 1834: *Letters of Princess Lieven*, pp. 364-365) and Le Marchant (Diary, 27 March 1834: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 377) are unreliable, particularly that of the Princess.
- 113 Howick Journal, 15 January 1834: Grey MSS; Althorp to Spencer, 17 January 1834: Spencer MSS., Althorp-Spencer Correspondence Vol. 3.
- 114 Holland Journal entry covering January-June 1834: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51870 (ff. 702-704).
- 115 Howick Journal, 15 January 1834: Grey MSS.
- 116 Stanley to Palmerston, 4, 9 September 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/DE/62-63.

- 117 Le Marchant Diary, 11 January 1834: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 376; Ellice to Grey, letter endorsed 'January 1834': Grey MSS., box 13, file 4.
- 118 Palmerston to Lord William Russell, 18 January 1834: Broadlands MSS., GC/RU/1520; quoted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 388.
- 119 Holland Journal, January-June 1834: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51870 (f.706).
- 120 Althorp to Spencer, 17 January 1834: Spencer MSS., Althorp-Spencer Correspondence, Vol. 3.
- 121 Howick Journal, 15 January 1834: Grey MSS; Howick to Major Charles Grey (his brother), 17 January 1834: *Ibid.*, box 95, file 2.
- 122 Howick Journal, 15 January 1834: Grey MSS.
- 123 *Ibid.*, 6 August 1833; Le Marchant Diary, 9 August 1833: *Three Early Nineteenth Century Diaries*, p. 369; Holland Journal, 3-8 August 1833: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51870.
- 124 'If there be any intention of sending . . . indeed anything above 5000 men, I am inclined to think it would be necessary to give notice to the Treasury, and even to incur considerable expense': Stanley to Palmerston, 4 October 1833: Broadlands MSS., GC/DE/62.
- 125 Brougham to Grey, 31 December 1833, 14 January 1834: Brougham MSS; partly reprinted in Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 319-321, 327-328.
- 126 Holland Journal, January-June 1834: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51870 (f. 705).
- 127 The letter appears in Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, p. 329. Carlisle was not in town at the time.
- 128 Brougham to Grey, 14 January 1834: *Ibid.*, p. 330.
- 129 Lansdowne to Grey, 15 January 1834: Grey MSS., box 38, file 10.
- 130 Holland to Grey, 14 January 1834: Grey MSS., box 34, file 4.
- 131 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 389.
- 132 William IV to Grey, 15 January 1834: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/2293.
- 133 Howick Journal, 15 January 1834: Grey MSS. More than thirty years later, he misleadingly described these events in a letter to his brother which reveals his deeply rooted prejudice against Palmerston: Howick to Major Charles Grey, 21 October 1865: *Ibid.*, box 95, file 4.
- 134 Holland to Brougham, 15 January 1834: Brougham MSS.
- 135 Brougham to Grey, 15 January 1834: Brougham, *Life and Times*, III, pp. 331-332.
- 136 Althorp to Palmerston, 15 January 1834: Broadlands MSS., GC/SP/11. Althorp wrote in similar terms to his father two days later: Spencer MSS., Althorp-Spencer Correspondence, Vol. 3.
- 137 Graham to Palmerston, 16 January 1834: Broadlands MSS., GC/GR/59.

- 138 Grey to Lady Grey, 16 January 1834: Grey MSS., box 29, file 23.
- 139 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 35-37.
- 140 Temperley, *Foreign Policy of Canning*, p. 379.
- 141 *Hansard*, 2nd Series, XVI, 398 (13 December 1826).
- 142 See above, chapter 1, pp. 19-20.
- 143 Holland to Grey, 18 January 1834: Grey MSS., box 34, file 4.
- 144 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 389. Both the Portuguese and Spanish governments were amazed at the decision: Comte de Rayvenal (the French ambassador at Madrid) to Talleyrand, 21 February 1834: Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, V, pp. 223-224.

CHAPTER SIX

- 1 Palmerston to Villiers, 16 January 1831: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 390.
- 2 *Ibid.*, pp. 389-391; Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, p. 178.
- 3 Grey to Palmerston, 30 March 1834: Grey MSS., box 44, file 2.
- 4 Palmerston to William IV, 12 April 1834: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix B, pp. 804-807.
- 5 Holland had discontinued daily entries in his Journal by this time and he offers only general and retrospective comments on the last months of the ministry.
- 6 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 397.
- 7 For the terms of the Treaty, see *BFSP*, XXII, pp. 124-134.
- 8 Palmerston to Temple, 21 April 1824: Bulwer and Ashley *Palmerston*, II, pp. 180-181.
- 9 Holland Journal, entry covering September 1833 - July 1834: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51870 (ff. 712-713).
- 10 Aspinall, *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party*, p. 194, gives a comprehensive survey of the various occasions when the future of the ministry was in doubt.
- 11 Howick Journal, 29 January 1834: Grey MSS.
- 12 J.T. Ward, *Sir James Graham* (London, 1967), pp. 131-140.
- 13 Holland Journal, entry covering September 1833-July 1834: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51870 (ff. 720-721).
- 14 Palmerston to Grey, 25 April 1834 (Quadruple Alliance), 1 June 1834 (Belgium): Grey MSS., box 45, file 5.
- 15 Palmerston to Minto, 15 July 1834: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 42n.
- 16 Palmerston to Grey, 15 July 1834: Grey MSS., box 45, file 5.
- 17 Grey to Palmerston, 16 July 1834: Grey MSS., box 44, file 2.

- 18 Palmerston to Melbourne, 14 April 1835: Broadlands MSS., GC/ME/26/3-4; reprinted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix C, pp. 839-849.
- 19 King Leopold to Palmerston, 21 November 1834: Broadlands MSS., RC/M/113.
- 20 Duchesse de Dino, *Memoirs 1831-1835* (ed. Princess Radziwill, London, 1909), p. 94 (19 June 1834).
- 21 Melbourne to Grey, 11 April 1835: *The Melbourne Papers* (ed. L.C. Sanders, London, 1889), p. 267. Lansdowne seems to have been the prime mover according to Lord Holland (Journal, 10 April 1835: Holland MSS., Add. Mss., 51870. Holland had briefly resumed daily entries at this time but most unfortunately there is a gap during the crucial period 10-15 April).
- 22 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 419.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 420; Grey to Melbourne, 14 April 1835: Broadlands MSS., GC/ME/26/2; Grey to Princess Lieven, 15 April 1835: Lieven-Grey Correspondence, III, p. 100.
- 24 Melbourne to Palmerston, 14 April 1835: Broadlands MSS., GC/ME/26/2 (minute); reprinted in Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, II, Appendix C, p. 839.
- 25 Palmerston to Melbourne, 14 April 1835: Broadlands MSS., GC/ME/26/3-4; similarly reprinted by Webster.
- 26 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, pp. 417-418.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 420n.
- 28 Russell to Grey, 12 April 1835: Grey MSS., box 50A, file 5.
- 29 Holland to Fox, 17 April 1835: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51754. This letter contradicts the assertion of W.M. Torrens (*Memoir of William Lamb, Second Viscount Melbourne* (2 vols., London, 1878), vol. I, p. 369) that Holland was anxious to see Palmerston excluded from the Foreign Office. Palmerston was Holland's choice if Grey could not be persuaded.
- 30 Bell, *Palmerston*, I., pp. 203-204; Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 420.
- 31 See 'Δ' (J. R. Thursfield), 'Notes on the Greville Memoirs' in *English Historical Review*, vol. I (1884), pp. 116-132; F.A. Dreyer, 'The Whigs and the Political Crisis of 1845' in *Ibid.*, vol. LXXX (1965), pp. 514-537.
- 32 Howick to Russell, 14 December 1845: Grey MSS., miscellaneous, box 219.
- 33 Henry Fox to Holland, 30 August 1831: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51751.
- 34 Henry Fox to Holland, 13(6?) January 1832: Holland MSS., Add. Mss. 51751.
- 35 'Earls Grey and Spencer' in *Edinburgh Review*, vol. CLXVII (January 1846), p. 14.

APPENDIX II

- 1 Enclosed in a letter to Palmerston, 23 December 1832: PRO FO 78/211.
- 2 Crawley, *Greek Independence*, p. 212 (the memorandum, together with the marginal comments is reprinted on pp. 237-245); Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea*, p. 63.
- 3 M. Vereté, 'Palmerston and the Levant Crisis', p. 143.
- 4 Palmerston to Granville, 5 November 1832: Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 284 &n.
- 5 Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, I, p. 184.
- 7 Holland to Grey, 25 January 1833: Grey MSS., box 34, file 4.
- 8 See above, Chapter 1, pp. 23-26.
- 9 Comment on the Canning memorandum: Crawley, *Greek Independence*, p. 241.

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