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0521440904 - Transition of Power: Britain's Loss of Global Pre-eminence to the United States, 1930-1945

B. J. C. McKercher

Excerpt

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Prologue

Power and purpose in Anglo-American relations, 1919–1929

The Americans seem to me to have made the great mistake of taking for granted that what suited them & seemed just to them must at once appear equally suitable & just to all the world.

Austen Chamberlain, August 1927¹

This is a study of power. More particularly, it is a study of how power has been lost and won in international politics, of how Great Britain, the greatest of the great Powers in 1930, came to surrender its pre-eminence to the United States by the end of the Second World War. In this context, it shows how British leaders responded to the American question in their diplomacy; and why the British side of this relationship evolved as it did. What constitutes ‘power’ is a vexed question. Political scientists have devised theoretical models to find an answer; but in the recent words of one of them: ‘Even if they were substantially correct, these statements would not be very satisfying, if only because all forms of guessing are not equally imprecise.’² For thirty years, international historians have embarked on the same crusade, particularly American ‘revisionists’, whose explanations for their country’s advent as the world’s leading Power have touched its logical corollary – Britain’s enfeeblement.³ Concentrating on the crude connexion between wealth and national potency, they have been joined lately by Paul Kennedy, who provides the apotheosis of economic determinism respecting Britain and the United States. ‘Austria-Hungary was gone, Russia in revolution, Germany defeated,’ he observes about the situation after the

¹ Chamberlain to Mary Carnegie [his stepmother], 7 Aug. 1927, AC 4/1/1278.

² A. L. Friedberg, *The Weary Titan. Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline, 1895–1905* (Princeton, 1988), 11. His introductory chapter discusses the theoretical literature.

³ The seminal work is W. A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland, 1959), esp. 108–201. Cf. L. C. Gardner, *Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy* (Madison, 1964); G. Kolko, ‘American Business and Germany, 1930–1941’, *Western Political Quarterly*, 15(1962), 713–28; C. P. Parrini, *Heir to Empire: United States Economic Diplomacy, 1916–1923* (Pittsburgh, 1969).

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First World War; 'yet France, Italy, and even Britain itself had also suffered heavily in their victory. The only exceptions were Japan, which further augmented its position in the Pacific; and, of course, the United States, which, by 1918 was indisputably the strongest Power in the world.'⁴

But this is disputable, the reason hinging on the one-dimensional nature of 'power' sketched by economic determinists. Lately a subtler, yet more satisfying definition of this difficult concept and its relation to foreign policy has emerged amongst British international historians.⁵ As economic determinists argue convincingly, 'power' is measurable in quantifiable statistics like gross national product, volume of trade, and industrial capacity. Just as tangibly, a point ignored by American revisionists and glossed over in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, it can be computed in the numbers of troops, ships, aeroplanes, and other implements of war, and their strategic dispositions, available to support diplomatic initiatives.⁶ As Kennedy rightly shows, national strength can be shown by the ultimate test – going to war. *But* it can also be shown by threatening war. And along similar lines, it can be determined by the strength of allies thrown into the balance in either war or peace. Less palpably, 'power' also entails the willingness and ability of leaders to use these resources, and the prestige of their state, to scare off potential opponents. Put coarsely, 'power' is also a matter of will, tied to perceptions of potential threat entertained by those same opponents.⁷

The more subtle definition asserts that 'power' is each of these things and all of them. In peacetime, the essence of power is 'influence', using a state's corporeal resources with abstract ones tied to prestige, perception, and will. In simplest terms, as Gordon Martel argues, power

⁴ P. M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers. Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York, 1987), xix, 274–343. Along similar lines is C. Barnett, *The Audit of War. The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation* (1986). For a more subtle view, see A. Orde, *The Eclipse of Great Britain. The United States and British Imperial Decline, 1895–1956* (NY, 1996), 99–159.

⁵ D. French, *The British Way in Warfare, 1688–2000* (1990), esp. 175–201; B. J. C. McKercher, 'Wealth, Power, and the New International Order: Britain and the American Challenge in the 1920s', *DH*, 12(1988), 411–41; D. Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled. British Policy and World Power in the Twentieth Century* (1991), 5–37. Also see the special issue of the *IHR*, 13(1991) on 'The Decline of Great Britain': G. Martel, 'The Meaning of Power: Rethinking the Decline and Fall of Great Britain', 662–94; K. E. Neilson, '"Greatly Exaggerated": The Myth of the Decline of Great Britain before 1914', 695–725; J. R. Ferris, '"The Greatest Power on Earth": Great Britain in the 1920s', 726–50; B. J. C. McKercher, '"Our Most Dangerous Enemy": Great Britain Pre-eminent in the 1930s', 751–83.

⁶ Kennedy provides tables on 'Military and Naval Personnel of the Powers, 1880–1914', 'Warship Tonnage of the Powers, 1880–1914', 'War Expenditure and Total Mobilized Forces, 1914–1919', and more: Kennedy, *Great Powers*, 203, 274, 324, 332.

⁷ Orde, *Eclipse*, *passim* does not dismiss 'will'.

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determines who gets what, when, where, and how. But power is not absolute. Great Powers, including interwar Britain and the United States, no matter what their real or perceived strength is, never obtain everything they seek, when they seek it, or in the manner they seek it. Power is relative, something economic determinists admit in inter-state relationships. But power is also relative according to circumstance, to the way particular situations mould it, and by it not transcending time and space unaltered. Using tables and charts to evaluate the tangibles is counter-productive. Doing so only freezes the tangibles in a time and space continuum that is fluid and varying, saying nothing about the realities of international politics shaped as much by prestige, perception, will, and human agency.

This is why Anglo-American relations in the decade and a half after 1930 is arresting. A pervading idea in twentieth-century international history, particularly amongst economic determinists, is that the United States had eclipsed Britain by 1918. The argument is that Britain was rapidly declining as a world Power because of its supposedly weakening economy. This argument has several strands. First, within the anti-German coalition between 1914 and 1918, the British loaned vast sums of money to their allies to prosecute the war. To do this, some British overseas investments were sold and loans floated abroad, chiefly in the United States. By 1918, Britain had become a net debtor and the United States a net creditor, the opposite of 1914. Second, when the war ended, British industrial demand prompted by the fighting abated, putting large numbers of workers on the dole just when two million soldiers were being demobilised; this produced chronic unemployment that bedevilled interwar governments wedded to free trade and fiscal orthodoxy. Finally, given the structure of Britain's manufacturing base and the conservatism of British investors, Britain's legacy as the first industrial nation, British industry fell behind that of other Powers. Conversely the American economy, tied to innovative technologies and investors more willing to take risks, produced an accumulation of vast wealth. This accumulation compounded the gains that the war had provided for American industry and agriculture.

This pervasive idea is misconceived. No doubt exists that by 1918–19, Britain had lost economic and financial ground to newer industrial Powers compared to the mid-Victorian period. In 1860, Britain produced 19.9 per cent of the world's manufactures, the United States only 7.2 per cent.⁸ By 1928, the figures were, respectively, 9.9 and 39.3 per cent, and a similar trend occurred in the production of

⁸ Table 2 in P. Bairoch, 'International Industrialization Levels from 1750 to 1980', *JEEH*, 11(1982), 275.

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basic industrial commodities like coal, pig iron, steel, and more.⁹ The case of Britain's change relative to the United States mirrored that of Britain relative to the other great Powers.¹⁰ This is not surprising. As the nineteenth century progressed, other states saw in British industrial and financial innovation the way of the future. What is surprising is that 'declinologists' should argue that Britain declined because its edge as the first industrial nation eroded in relative terms. As the most recent work shows, British economic strength since the seventeenth century had been based more on its financial resources and expertise than industrial output. In this sense, Britain entered the First World War as the world's leading Power.¹¹ And when peace returned in 1918, Britain was much stronger economically than it had been in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1855, British gross domestic product amounted to £620 million.¹² By 1918, it had reached £5,266 million. In every major industrial commodity, British production by the early 1920s vastly exceeded that of the third quarter of the nineteenth century.¹³ In the field of trade, the life-blood of the British economy, the Americans only drew even by the 1920s; and the arrival of the Great Depression

⁹ For instance:

Coal production (in millions of tons)

	<i>Britain</i>	<i>United States</i>
1854	64.7	7.4
1920	229.5	568.7

Pig iron production (in thousand of tons)

	<i>Britain</i>	<i>United States</i>
1860	3,827	2,873
1920	8,035	67,604

Steel production (in thousands of tons by all processes)

	<i>Britain</i>	<i>United States</i>
1876	828	597
1920	9,067	46,183

The above reflect the earliest dates for both countries with available figures. B. R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge, 1990), 247, 249, 281, 283, 288–9; Department of Commerce, *Historical Statistics of the United States. Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, DC, 1975), 589–90, 599–600, 693–4.

¹⁰ See coal, crude petroleum, natural gas, non-ferrous metal ore, non-metallic mineral production, and more in B. R. Mitchell, *European Historical Statistics 1750–1970* (1975), 353–483. Cf. P. Bairoch, 'Europe's Gross National Product: 1800–1975', *JEEH*, 5 (1976), 273–340, esp. tables 4 and 5, 280–81.

¹¹ P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, vol. I: Innovation and Expansion 1688–1914* (1993).

¹² Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics*, 828–29. '1920' does not include southern Ireland's GDP.

¹³ See note 8, above.

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prevented them from overtaking the British in this important indicator of economic strength.¹⁴ Although its financial dominance had been eroded by 1918, the London money market still competed effectively with New York.¹⁵ Consequently, the argument that pre-eminence is pinned to a state being economically hegemonic is ill-conceived. Relative decline in manufacturing, accumulating capital, and investment does not necessarily produce a concurrent political and strategic decline. Granted, Britain's economy was smaller than its American counterpart as the Great War ended; but it remained powerful, stronger than fifty years before. Thus, the term 'decline' is inappropriate when discussing Anglo-American relations in the interwar period. It is a loaded word, evoking the image of Britain irrevocably moving down the slippery slope to second-rank status, with the United States rising inevitably to become a superpower.

In the interwar period, as throughout the twentieth century, British diplomacy remained the preserve of an elite. In its broadest definition, this group included those responsible for making and implementing foreign policy in the Cabinet and Civil Service, MPs and peers on the government and opposition benches, and journalists, writers, and private organisations with an interest in external affairs.¹⁶ Admittedly, the circle of those in government that determined Britain's external policies had widened considerably compared to that at the turn of the century. This included not only the Foreign Office, but the Treasury, the service ministries, and, depending on the question, other departments of state.¹⁷ In addition, the Great War had spawned non-governmental groups concerned with foreign policy, from the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) to the League of Nations

¹⁴ About 25 per cent of British national wealth by the end of the 1920s came from external sources – including exports, re-exports, and sales of gold and silver bullion – approximately \$6.5 billion; the American total was in the order of 5 per cent to 6 per cent, roughly \$6.4 billion. McKercher, 'Wealth, Power', 433, and the relevant notes.

¹⁵ P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, vol. II: Crisis and Deconstruction 1914–1990* (London, New York, 1993), 49–75.

¹⁶ D. C. Watt, 'The Nature of the Foreign-Policy-Making Elite in Britain', in Watt, *Personalities and Policies. Studies in the Formulation of British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century* (1965), 1–15. Cf. M. G. Fry, *Illusions of Security. North Atlantic Diplomacy 1918–22* (Toronto, 1972); B. J. C. McKercher, *The Second Baldwin Government and the United States, 1924–1929: Attitudes and Diplomacy* (Cambridge, 1984); K. E. Neilson, *Strategy and Supply. Anglo-Russian Relations, 1914–1917* (1985).

¹⁷ F. T. A. Ashton-Gwatkin, 'Thoughts on the Foreign Office, 1918–1939', in B. J. C. McKercher and D. J. Moss, eds., *Shadow and Substance in British Foreign Policy, 1895–1939. Memorial Essays Honouring C. J. Lowe* (Edmonton, 1984), 181–202; Lord Strang, 'The Formulation and Control of Foreign Policy', *Durham University Journal*, 49(1957), 98–108.

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Union (LNU).¹⁸ Increased public awareness of international politics, it was surmised, would help prevent another 'July crisis' and other Sommes. Still, the interwar elite remained small. Domestic affairs preoccupied most ministers, their bureaucratic advisers, the political parties, and the wider public. In peacetime, general interest in foreign policy might suddenly develop in moments of crisis but, just as quickly, recede as other issues came to the fore. Moreover, after September 1939, as the war crisis required speedy policy decisions, the circle constricted.

In this way, British foreign policy in the quarter-century after 1919 evolved via a massive series of individual transactions carried out within an array of closely linked groups of individuals. Collectively, these groups formed the 'foreign-policy-making elite'. It had several distinguishing features: the continuity of its membership over time; the comparatively free debate within its ranks; and the fixed, though not necessarily inviolable, barrier controlling the flow of information about these debates to the public or, rather, the various publics in whose names its members acted, whose interests they believed they served, and from whom, through the political process, they derived their authority. Because of its special nature, British foreign policy in these years also differed from its domestic cousin. Whereas politicians, civil servants, parliamentarians, journalists, and others could experience first-hand the daily swirl of the country's economic, political, and social climate, the same did not hold true for international affairs. For those who advised, decided on, and implemented foreign policy, who criticised in Parliament, or commented in the press, books, and articles, a mass of second-hand information conditioned much of what they thought. This arrived by despatch and telegram to Whitehall, by conversation with British and other diplomats temporarily in London, from British and other travellers, writers, and journalists who had been abroad, and from the importation of books and magazines. Of course, some knowledge came from personal experience but, usually, this was limited. Politicians, Foreign Office officials, and other civil servants attended conferences or held discussions in foreign capitals. Journalists and writers toured occasionally to gather material for their jottings. And in peacetime, these people, along with others who could afford to do so, sometimes took holidays in Europe, the Empire, and other places. Consequently,

¹⁸ D. Birn, *The League of Nations Union, 1918-1945* (1981); J. A. Thompson, 'The League of Nations Union and the Promotion of the League Idea in Great Britain', *AJPH*, 18(1972), 52-61; C. Thorne, 'Chatham House, Whitehall, and Far Eastern Issues, 1941-1945', in Thorne, *Border Crossings. Studies in International History* (New York, 1988), 163-92, esp. 164-5.

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both inside and outside of government, foreign policy existed as a sphere where images formed the basis of knowledge about what was happening in the wider world.¹⁹

Interwar British foreign policy derived from and was shaped by the attitudes of those in government who created it and those outside who sought to influence its direction. What held true for foreign policy in general was particularly so for policy concerning the United States. By the end of the Great War, the foreign-policy-making elite contained three broad lines of thought.²⁰ On one end of the spectrum, based on pan-Anglo-Saxonism, 'atlanticism' entailed attitudes about Britain and the United States being natural allies through a supposed shared history and the common ties of culture, language, and politics. After 1918, 'atlanticist' thinking held that joint Anglo-American economic, diplomatic, and naval efforts could safeguard international peace and security, despite American failure to join the League of Nations and the discord created by war debts and the naval question.²¹ When a Labour government took office in June 1929, James Ramsay MacDonald, the strongly 'atlanticist' prime minister, emphasised the need for creating strong Anglo-American bonds. 'I do not believe real peace will come', he wrote to an American friend, Senator William Borah, 'until you and we stand together and proclaim from the house tops together that in that respect we have the same mission and inspiration.'²²

At the other end of the spectrum stood 'Imperial isolationism'. Thinking here held the Empire to be the cornerstone of Britain's global pre-eminence; thus the Imperial edifice had to be preserved at all costs and, if possible, its economic and political strength enhanced. To maintain a strong and cohesive Empire, Britain had to keep

¹⁹ B. J. C. McKercher, 'The British Diplomatic Service in the United States and the Chamberlain Foreign Office's Perceptions of Domestic America, 1924–1927: Images, Reality, and Diplomacy', in McKercher and Moss, eds., *Shadow and Substance*, 221–47. More generally, P. Conrad, *Imagining America* (New York, 1980); R. L. Rapson, *Britons View America: Travel Commentary, 1860–1935* (Seattle, 1971).

²⁰ D. C. Watt, 'United States Documentary Sources for the Study of British Foreign Policy, 1919–39', in Watt, *Personalities and Policies*, 211–22. This paragraph is based on their fruitful use in Fry, *Illusions of Security*; McKercher, *Baldwin Government*; B. J. C. McKercher '“The Deep and Latent Distrust”: The British Official Mind and the United States, 1919–1929', in B. J. C. McKercher, ed., *Anglo-American Relations in the 1920s: The Struggle for Supremacy* (1991); D. C. Watt, *Succeeding John Bull. America in Britain's Place, 1900–1975* (Cambridge, 1984).

²¹ Cf. W. V. Griffin, *Sir Evelyn Wrench and His Continuing Vision of International Relations During 40 Years* (New York, 1950); P. Kerr and C. P. Howland, 'Navies and Peace: Two Views', *FA*, 8(1929), 20–40; W. T. Layton, 'The Forthcoming Economic Conference of the League of Nations and Its Possibilities', *JRILA*, 6(1927), 2–24; A. Salter, 'The Economic Conference: Prospects of Practical Results', *JRILA*, 6(1927), 350–67.

²² MacDonald to Borah, 26 Aug. 1929, MacDonald PRO 30/69/673/1.

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extra-Imperial commitments to a minimum. Sir Maurice Hankey, the secretary to both the Cabinet and Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) from 1916 to 1937, embodied such sentiments. Richard Casey, an Australian diplomat in London, reported in early 1928: '[Hankey] said that he sometimes had periods of wondering whether we were well advised in these islands to adopt the policy of involving ourselves in Europe's troubles to the extent we do, rather than an isolationist policy.'²³ By 1918, 'Imperial isolationism' saw the United States as the principal threat to the Empire because of Washington's demand for naval parity together with American economic penetration of important parts of the Empire like Canada. Just as they turned against foreign pressures threatening Imperial strength, 'Imperial isolationists' directed their ire against those within the Empire who were perceived to be undermining Imperial unity, whether dominion politicians, like William Lyon Mackenzie King, the Canadian sovereigntist premier, or colonial nationalists, like Mahatma Gandhi.²⁴

The third line of reasoning – 'world leadership' – reckoned that Britain could never distance itself from great Power politics. The war demonstrated that continental problems could not be ignored; after 1918, to ensure peace and security, British diplomatists had to maintain and exert influence on continental affairs. Sir Austen Chamberlain, the foreign secretary from November 1924 to June 1929, arrogated for Britain a leading European role through active participation in the League and commitments to regional security arrangements like the 1925 Locarno treaty. After leaving office, he argued the 'world leadership' case before the RIIA: given Europe's geographic proximity to Britain, the Continent stood first in Britain's diplomatic priorities.²⁵ But because Britain was a global Power, 'world leadership' could not neglect other parts of the earth, particularly the Far East, where Britain and other imperial Powers like Japan had sizable interests.²⁶ To protect and sustain Britain's pre-eminence, British foreign policy had to be outward looking. There could be no retreat into the Empire, nor a reliance on friendly relations with a single Power, like the United States. To a large

²³ Casey to Bruce [Australian premier], 29 Mar. 1928, in W. J. Hudson and J. North, eds., *My Dear P. M. R. G. Casey's Letters to S. M. Bruce 1924–1929* (Canberra, 1980), 322–3.

²⁴ For example: 'The Canadian election was rather a disappointment, except for the fact that MacKenzie King is eclipsed temporarily'; in Casey to Bruce, 5 Nov. 1925, *ibid.*, 103.

²⁵ A. Chamberlain, 'Britain as a European Power', *JRIIA*, 9(1930), 180–8. Cf. A. Chamberlain, *The League* (1926).

²⁶ R. A. Dayer, *Finance and Empire: Sir Charles Addis, 1861–1945* (New York, 1988); J. R. Ferris, 'A British "Unofficial" Aviation Mission and Japanese Naval Developments, 1919–1929', *JSS*, 5(1982), 416–39.

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degree, 'world leaders' were the disciples of Lord Palmerston, who once said that 'Britain has no eternal friends or enemies, only eternal interests.'

In the interwar period, 'world leadership' dominated the foreign-policy-making elite. This came as much from the cold realism, and pragmatism, that marked its reasoning as it did from inherent weaknesses in 'atlanticism' and 'Imperial isolationism'. For men like Chamberlain, foreign policy entailed ascertaining what precisely British interests were and, when other Powers had to be considered, what were theirs. If interests differed, they had to be weighed and a compromise found. If a compromise proved impossible, then British policy had to remain firm. This is how Chamberlain succeeded over the difficult diplomacy surrounding Locarno.²⁷ He was a francophile. But as little would be achieved by supporting Paris over Berlin, he endeavoured to be the 'honest broker' in the Locarno negotiations because favouring one side would destroy the chances for a settlement.²⁸ Afterwards, he continued showing an even hand to make the 'Locarno system' work. This does not mean that 'world leaders' were neutral in their personal beliefs – Chamberlain never was; but it does mean that when pursuing policy, they tried not to let sentiment interfere with their reasoning.²⁹ Whilst not always repressing sentiment, 'world leaders' tended to have a clearer perception of the world and the problems confronting Britain.

Interwar advocates of 'world leadership' were not a homogeneous group. There were those whose ideas about foreign policy had been shaped before 1914 and had not changed as a result of the war; and there were others, on the whole but not exclusively, a younger group affected by the war, who saw danger in adhering to some pre-1914 methods of conducting foreign policy. In positions of influence until the rise of Neville Chamberlain to the premiership in May 1937, the older group clung to what has been labelled 'Edwardian' precepts of foreign policy.³⁰ During the reign of Edward VII (1901 to 1910), thanks to Britain's isolation caused by the Boer War, the 'Victorian' notion of eschewing foreign commitments was superseded by another arguing that Britain could best maintain the balances of power in Europe and

²⁷ J. Jacobson, *Locarno Diplomacy. Germany and the West, 1925–1929* (Princeton, 1972), 3–67.

²⁸ Selby [Chamberlain's private secretary] to Phipps [*chargé*, British Embassy, Paris], 10 Mar. 1925, Chamberlain FO 800/257; Chamberlain to his wife, 3 Feb. 1926, AC 6/1/636.

²⁹ B. J. C. McKercher, 'Austen Chamberlain's Control of British Foreign Policy, 1924–1929', *IHR*, 6(1984), 570–91. For balanced criticism of 'Locarno diplomacy', see J. Jacobson, 'The Conduct of Locarno Diplomacy', *RP*, 34(1972), 62–81.

³⁰ For the seminal discussion of 'Edwardianism', see K. E. Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar: Anglo-Russian Relations, 1894–1917* (Oxford, 1996), ch. 1.

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elsewhere by combining with Powers that shared British interests and concerns in opposing potential adversaries.³¹ Accordingly, in the 1920s, the Washington and Locarno treaties mirrored the pre-1914 Anglo-Japanese alliance and the *ententes* with France and Russia. After 1919, however, the 'Edwardians' were gradually opposed by those who felt that British differences with potential adversaries in Europe and other places could better be settled by bilateral arrangements. Thus, the difference between the two divisions of 'world leaders' was not over diplomatic ends but, rather, over means. Although this difference did not affect British foreign policy in the decade and a half after 1918, it began to do so by the latter half of the 1930s.

The thinking of the other two wings of the foreign-policy-making elite lacked such clarity. 'Atlanticism' contained a glaring defect: that Americans would join with Britain to maintain the post-1918 international status quo, an integral part of which was the British Empire. Despite their own empire in Latin America and the Philippines, Americans claimed to be anti-colonial. For instance, at the Washington conference in 1921–2, Senator Oscar Underwood, an American delegate, criticised proposals for foreign dictation in Chinese local affairs: Americans 'would be very much opposed to the [Washington] treaty if they felt that the government of the United States had in any way coerced China into an obligation that is not clearly satisfactory to China'.³² In addition, some ethnic groups in the United States like German Americans were virulently anglophobic, whilst others gave financial succour to Irish republicans and Indian nationalists.³³ The assumption that Washington would always support Britain and its Empire in moments of crisis was folly. The flaw in 'Imperial isolationist' reasoning came from blindness to the fact that not all parts of the Empire wanted to continue either being under British domination or having close ties with London;³⁴ retreating into the Empire would not necessarily augment Britain's strength.

It follows that some elite members did not hold one line of thought to the exclusion of the others. In some cases, for instance, during a crisis,

³¹ C. Howard, *Splendid Isolation* (1967); G. Monger, *The End of Isolation: British Foreign Policy, 1900–1907* (1963); Z. S. Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Policy, 1898–1914* (Cambridge, 1969).

³² Meeting 31, Committee on Pacific and Far Eastern Questions, 3 Feb. 1922, FO 412/117.

³³ See Washington embassy reports on the activities of 'Indian seditiousists' in the United States in 1928: FO 371/12814/41/41 to FO 371/12815/8951/41.

³⁴ Cf. J. M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power. Indian Politics, 1915–1922* (Cambridge, 1972); D. Harkness, *The Restless Dominion: The Irish Free State and the British Commonwealth of Nations, 1921–31* (London, Dublin, 1969); P. Wigley, *Canada and the Transition to Commonwealth: British–Canadian Relations, 1917–1926* (Cambridge, 1977).