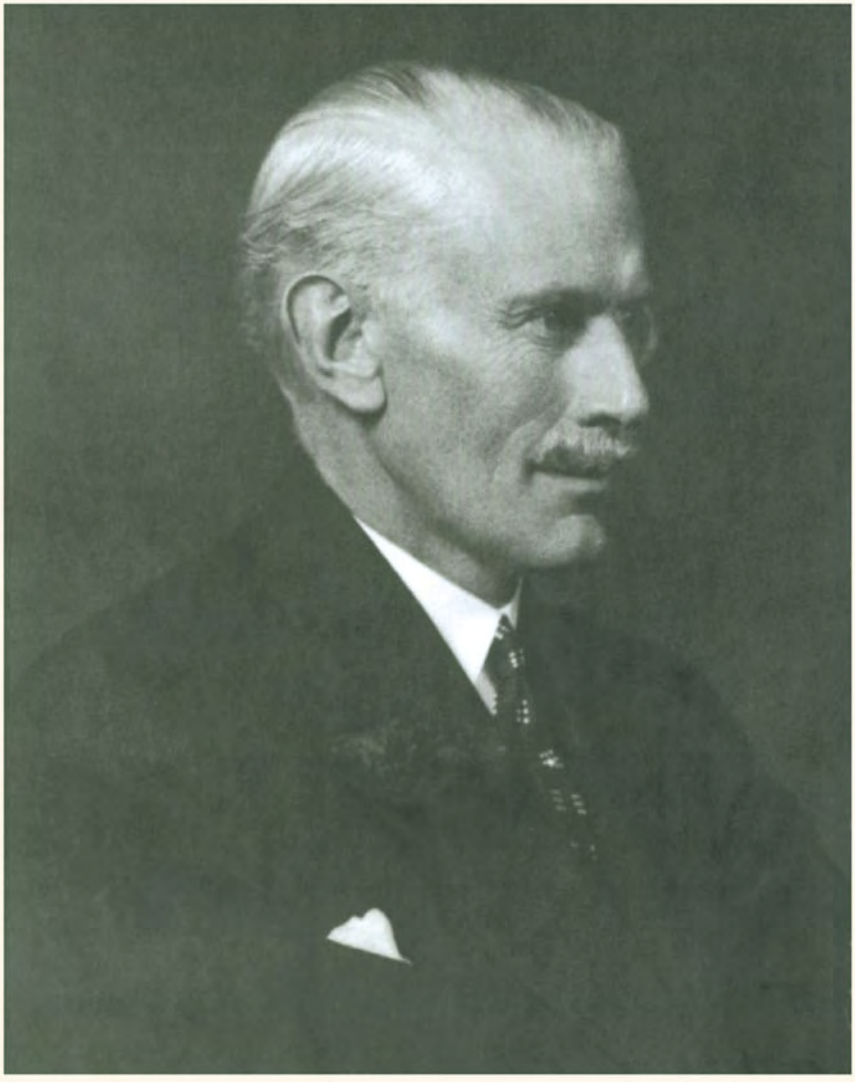


SEARCHING FOR SECURITY IN A NEW EUROPE

The Diplomatic Career of Sir George Russell Clerk

GERALD J. PROTHEROE

Also available as a printed book
see title verso for ISBN details

Searching for Security in a New Europe

During the First World War, Sir George Russell Clerk was a senior Foreign Office official strongly sympathetic to the cause of the ‘oppressed nationalities’ of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1919 Clerk was forced to put these ideals to the test when the Allies dispatched him to Budapest to construct a Hungarian government with whom they could make peace. In 1920 he became the first British minister to the newly created succession state of Czechoslovakia.

This biographical study of Sir George Russell Clerk focuses on his significant role as a nation-builder in the New Europe carved out of the First World War until his eventual downfall at the hands of Anthony Eden and retirement in 1937. Drawing on extensive research, this study attempts to shed new light on a key figure in British and European diplomacy.

Gerald J.Protheroe is Adjunct Associate Professor of Social Sciences at New York University and the Head of the History Department at The Browning School in New York.

Diplomats and diplomacy

Series Editors: Peter Catterall and Erik Goldstein

ISSN: 1478–7237

This series aims to provide a primarily biographical approach to the study of diplomacy and international relations in the twentieth century. How have diplomats and foreign ministers tackled not only the traditional business of managing relations between states, but also the rise of multilateral negotiations, the proliferation of international organisations and the increasing significance of economic diplomacy? This series seeks to contribute to an understanding of how diplomacy and international relations developed in the twentieth century.

Oliver Franks and the Truman Administration
Anglo-American relations 1948–1952
Michael F.Hopkins

Searching for Security in a New Europe
The diplomatic career of Sir George Russell Clerk
Gerald J.Protheroe

Locarno Revisited
European diplomacy 1920–1929
Edited by Gaynor Johnson

Searching for Security in a New Europe

The diplomatic career of Sir George Russell Clerk

Gerald J.Protheroe

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2006 by Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada by Routledge 270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016 USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group
This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2006.

" To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge's collection of thousands of eBooks please go to http://www.ebookstore.tandf.co.uk/."

© 2006 Gerald J.Protheroe

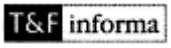
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data A catalog for this book has been requested

ISBN 0-203-49144-0 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0-203-60813-5 (Adobe eReader Format)
ISBN10 0-7146-5511-2 (Print Edition)
ISBN13 978-0-7146-5511-6 (Print Edition)



Taylor & Francis Group is the Academic Division of T&F Informa plc.

Contents

	Acknowledgements	vi
	Abbreviations	vii
	Introduction	1
1	Empire, world war and a New Europe 1898–1919	3
2	Nation-building in the New Europe: Hungary 1919	37
3	Nation-building in the New Europe: Czechoslovakia 1920–6	64
4	Repairing relationships: the New Turkey 1926–33	104
5	‘Ripe for a mighty enterprise’: France 1934–5	133
6	The crisis of security: France 1935–7	149
	Conclusion	175
	Notes	178
	Bibliography	201
	Index	211

Acknowledgements

Many debts have been incurred throughout the course of writing this biography. I must thank the National Portrait Gallery for allowing me to use Walter Stoneman's portraits of Sir George Clerk taken in 1931 and 1947. I would like to thank Ms Christine Penney and her staff at Special Collections, Birmingham University. I am most grateful to Lady Avon for her kind permission to draw on Sir Anthony Eden's diaries and private correspondence. I would also like to thank the Earl of Derby for permission to use the correspondence of Lord Derby deposited in the Liverpool Record Office; Sir Henry Rumbold for permission to draw on his grandfather Sir Horace Rumbold's papers in the Bodleian Library; Sir Colville Barclay for permission to use Sir Robert Vansittart's letter to Anthony Eden of 14 September 1936 in the Eden papers; Christopher Seton-Watson for permission to make use of R.W.Seton-Watson's papers in the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at London University; and the Bodleian Library for allowing me to consult the papers of Sybil, Lady Colefax. I am grateful to the editors of *Diplomacy and Statecraft* for permission to reproduce some sections of my article 'Sir George Clerk and the Struggle for British influence in Central Europe, 1919–1926'. Finally, I must thank the Royal Bank of Scotland, in so far as they have copyright ownership of Sir George Clerk's personal correspondence, for permission to use the small number of letters written by him, which are held in the private collections outlined above. Unpublished Crown copyright material in the Public Record Office in Kew is reproduced with the gracious consent of Her Majesty the Queen.

This biography of Sir George Clerk emanated from an earlier dissertation on Clerk's role as the first British Minister to the new successor state of Czechoslovakia in the 1920s. I must thank Professor Donald Cameron Watt of the London School of Economics for his support of this work in its most embryonic stage. I would also like to thank Dr Zara Steiner for her insight and encouragement. But my greatest debt of thanks must go to Professor Erik Goldstein of Boston University for his patience, his interest in Clerk and his unfailing support for this biography. Last but not least, my thanks must also go to friends in London and other parts of the United Kingdom who have borne my summer visits with fortitude and a somewhat bemused tolerance. And, of course, I must thank my wife, Paula, for the many sacrifices she has made to allow this book to come to fruition and for her constant support.

Every reasonable effort has been made to trace the owner of copyright materials in this book. In some cases this has proved to be impossible. The author and publisher will be glad to receive any information leading to any further acknowledgements and in the meanwhile offer sincere apologies for any omissions.

Abbreviations

BD	Great Britain, Foreign Office, *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898–1914*
BDFA	Great Britain, Foreign Office, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*
CAB	Cabinet Office Papers
DBFP	Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–39*
DDF	France, Quai d'Orsay, *Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1932–9*
DGFP	Germany, Auswärtiges Amt, *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918–45*
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
FO	Foreign Office Papers
FRUS	United States, Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States*
HO	Home Office Papers

Introduction

The collapse of single-party dictatorship in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union itself in 1991 constituted a watershed in the political, economic and military history of Europe, which continues to pose an enormous challenge to that continent in the present century and to the Western alliance, which helped to protect it. In 1919, the collapse of autocracy and supranational empires in Central and Eastern Europe presented the Allied and Associated Powers with unprecedented opportunity to shape the political and economic construction of the successor states. In that year, Sir George Russell Clerk had become private secretary to the acting British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon. During the Great War, Clerk had been head of the War Department at the Foreign Office in London. During this period, he had become the premier contact within the Foreign Office for a number of Balkan political refugees and their British patrons, *The Times* journalist Henry Wickham Steed, and the young Scottish historian R.W.Seton-Watson. Through the patronage of these men, little known spokesmen for 'oppressed nationalities' Frano Supilo and Thomas Masaryk argued the case for their revolutionary cause: the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Sir George Clerk listened sympathetically. He became the central link in a chain connecting refugees and patrons with the upper echelons of the Foreign Office. By the end of 1916, this loose connection of individuals had transformed itself into an effective pressure group with its own publication. The primary aim of *The New Europe* periodical was to educate British public opinion about the plight of 'oppressed nationalities'. It hoped to influence the political nation and political establishment of Great Britain, and bring about the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its replacement by new nation states organized on a liberal democratic basis. Sir George Clerk was not a contributor to *The New Europe*. Nevertheless, he was held in the highest esteem by that publication.

In the autumn of 1919, Clerk was entrusted by the Supreme Council of the Allies with the task of settling the conflict between Hungary and Romania, and establishing a government in Hungary with whom the Allies could negotiate a peace treaty. These missions to Budapest and Bucharest can be viewed as test cases for the political principles that *The New Europe* wished to establish as the basis of international relations in Europe. It was no coincidence that, after the successful termination of these missions, Sir George Clerk proceeded to Prague to become the first British minister to the newly independent successor state of Czechoslovakia, whose president, Thomas Masaryk, Clerk had first encountered as a refugee in wartime London. In Prague between 1920 and 1926, Clerk raised British prestige and influence to a position unparalleled in the interwar era, whilst his personal popularity with the Czechs was not equalled until the later era of Sir Philip Nichols.[1] In Angora between 1926 and 1933, Clerk presided over a gradual but very real rapprochement between Great Britain and another important successor state, the first Turkish Republic of Kemal Atatürk, an event of the greatest significance for both countries.

After just a few months in Brussels, in the winter of 1933, Clerk reached the apex of his diplomatic career when he was appointed ambassador to France where he served until 1937. From 1919 to 1933, Clerk had acquired a consummate knowledge of the successor states of the New Europe and a profound understanding of their political psychology and diplomatic policies, which should have stood him in good stead in France. But it was clear that his embassy in Paris proved to be anticlimactic, and that the challenge of dispelling the mutual misconceptions, which governed the relationship between Great Britain and France amidst the turbulence of the 1930s and the threat of Nazi Germany, proved too daunting a task for Clerk as it did for subsequent ambassadors. The major purpose of this study is, first, to examine the role of Sir George Clerk in Central Europe and the Near East in the interwar period and explore the effectiveness of his nation-building diplomacy in Hungary in 1919; to assess the nature of his relationship with Czech and Turkish leaders between 1920 and 1933, and evaluate the success of his personal diplomacy within the broader context and constraints of British policy during this period; second, to examine the nature of his failure in France, and shed light on the personality and career of a diplomat of some considerable stature whose preference for anonymity, by obscuring his achievements, has rendered his name in certain quarters synonymous with failure and ridicule.

1
Empire, world war and a New Europe 1898–1919

> Sir George Clerk, the first British Minister at Prague, is known as one of the most enlightened of the higher Foreign Officials, and as especially sympathetic to the cause of the smaller Slavonic nations.
>
> (*The New Europe*, 11 September 1919)

Sir George Russell Clerk (1874–1951) was the only son of General Sir Godfrey Clerk (1835–1908) who, after a successful military career in India, had become groom-in-waiting to Queen Victoria, and later to Edward VII.[1] Clerk's grandfather was Sir George Russell Clerk (1800–89), who had risen through the ranks of the East India Company to occupy a high position in the Indian Civil Service.[2] His great-grandfather was John Clerk, 'a gentleman of property in Scotland and Gloucester'.[3] The Clerks were a Lowland Scots gentry family who had advanced in English society through India, the army and the court. Clerk was educated at Eton and New College, Oxford, where he took a third-class honours in Literae Humaniores in 1897.[4] He showed an early penchant for adventure and travel, and in 1897 he initially considered replacing Sir Robert Morant, the noted Victorian educationalist, as tutor to the young Crown Prince of Siam. Clerk was ready to take up the post, but Morant told him: 'If you want to do your job you had better look out for your coffin.' He spent the year instead travelling abroad and studying foreign languages.[5]

Clerk entered the Foreign Office on 22 December 1898, as the sun was setting on what, many years later, he called 'that great period of our history, the Victorian age'.[6] Entrance into the Foreign Office was dependent upon examination, and the Diplomatic Service and the Foreign Office had yet to undergo amalgamation. Entrance to the examination was strictly dependent on the patronage of the foreign secretary and Lord Salisbury's private secretary, Eric Barrington. Clerk was doubly fortunate. In 1898, ten of the fourteen senior Foreign Office officials had been educated at one of the five great public schools: Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Rugby and Charterhouse, with Eton a particularly dominant influence. Barrington was a formidable barrier. 'Even by the standards of his day,' it has been suggested, 'Barrington was considered a snob, anxious to maintain the high social tone of his office. Junior clerks took great pains with their dress before entering his presence.'[7] Clerk's legendary reputation for sartorial elegance may have had its origins in the process of securing Barrington's favour. But in 1898 it was undoubtedly Clerk's background and his father's connections at Court that did most to further his nomination process.

The Foreign Office in the age of Lord Salisbury and the permanent undersecretary, Thomas Sanderson, was dominated by colonial disputes and imperial policy. The rise of Imperial Germany under its aggressive Emperor Wilhelm II created new political, economic, military and industrial challenges. It ultimately led to a reorientation of British foreign policy towards the European continent, and greater emphasis on balance-of-power considerations. Within the Foreign Office, 'reformers' led by Francis Bertie, assistant under-secretary 1894–1903 and ambassador to France between 1905 and 1918, and Charles Hardinge, permanent under-secretary from 1906 to 1910, desired a British foreign policy that clearly recognized the primacy of the German threat to British power and which elevated European over imperial considerations. The cornerstones of their policy were closer ties with Republican France and Imperial Russia. These reformers, or 'Edwardians' as they have been called, were 'new men' with 'new ways', deeply committed to the pursuit of their objectives. Bertie was prepared to use his connections with Edward VII to secure promotions for his allies in order to influence policy formulation.[8]

The Bertie—Hardinge group advocated administrative reform in order to bring about a more vigorously continental and anti-German policy. The Victorian practice of foreign-policy formulation concentrated responsibility for policy-making firmly in the hands of the upper echelons of the Foreign Office to the exclusion of the junior clerks. Vincent Corbett, a member of the Foreign Office, lamented the impact of this 'drudgery', which transformed 'keen and ambitious youngsters' into 'apathetic government clerks', ploughing laboriously on 'with one eye on the clock…awaiting the day when they would be entitled to retire on a pension'.[9] In 1906, a Central Registry was established with the full support of the 'reformers', enabling the role of first-division clerks to be transformed into 'advisers engaged in the policy-making process'. Officials were encouraged to state their opinions; subordinates actively sought responsibility and decision-making.

Hardinge and his successor as permanent under-secretary, Sir Arthur Nicolson, promoted a policy of encouraging 'new men' to gain greater experience abroad and cross the boundaries between the Diplomatic Service and the Foreign Office.[10] This initiative had only mixed success, however, since entry into the Diplomatic Service was circumscribed by the need to have a private income of at least £400 per annum, and exchanges were still the exception rather than the rule. The gravity of the threat posed by Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century served to act as a catalyst for change within the Foreign Office itself, bringing talented individuals to the fore who had a broader experience to draw upon in the process of policy formulation and instituting structural changes, enabling such individuals to play a fuller part in that process.

Clerk's early career put him in the forefront to take advantage of these new developments. On 12 March 1901, he was appointed an acting third secretary in the Diplomatic Service. A few days later, he was appointed secretary to the Duke of Abercorn's special embassy to the courts at Copenhagen, Stockholm, St Petersburg, Berlin and Dresden to announce the accession of the Prince of Wales to the throne. In August 1902, he was in attendance on Prince Albert of Belgium at the coronation of Edward VII.[11] In 1903, he especially requested to be transferred abroad. In April, he left London to serve as an assistant in the British agency in Ethiopia under Sir John Lane Harrington. He stayed in Addis Ababa for just over four years. The posting gave Clerk considerable responsibility. Within two months of his arrival at the legation he found

himself in temporary charge of the agency until the following April. He learned the Amharic language, which firmly reflected the political realities of the remarkable empire of Menelik II, and had close contact with this 'slave of Christ and the Virgin Mary' as the Negus was designated.[12]

Between 1896 and 1906, Menelik's kingdom had undergone dramatic territorial expansion, which was very much in contrast with the general African experience at the hands of the Great Powers in the age of European imperialism. Having destroyed and humiliated an Italian army at Adowa in 1896, Menelik and his *ras* chieftains had raced to consolidate their territorial claims in the Ogaden at the expense of the British protectorate over Somaliland, in the southwest in Kaffa and the Boran Galla, and in the western region bordering Sudan especially in the Beni Shagul. In May 1897, a convention and border annex settled the Somali frontier problem and the western border with Sudan was settled by a treaty of May 1902. British policy towards Menelik was defensive rather than offensive, even after the collapse of Mahdist power at Omdurman and the successful resolution of the Fashoda crisis of 1898. But Clerk's arrival in 1903 found his superior Harrington in the midst of a diplomatic war with Léonce Lagarde of France and Frederico Ciccodicola of Italy over the Djibouti to Addis Ababa railway concession. Anglo-Italian co-operation was fostered by the need to suppress the Somali proto-nationalist movement led by the 'Mad Mullah' Muhammad Abd-Allah Hassan, but the railway question hung fire until the three Great Powers could satisfactorily define their positions, responsibilities and interests in the country. Clerk admired Ethiopia, although whether this was an example of the modification of the 'contrived and arbitrary European definitions of racism', which the aftermath of Adowa has been alleged to have induced, is more difficult to say.[13] The Ethiopians were 'beautifully mannered…very receptive and…many of them have all the best instincts of civilization in them,' Clerk recalled years later. He remembered Haile Selassie as a small boy in the emperor's entourage. He wore 'those black satin cloaks…with little gold or brass buttons, a very fine white scarf showing, and beautifully white cotton trousers'.[14] In December 1906, Harrington and Menelik settled the border question of the Boran Galla, which left a southern frontier treaty to be concluded to settle the border between Ethiopia and British East Africa and Uganda.[15] The negotiations were tortuous. Harrington and Clerk were, Menelik mischievously alleged, 'unkind and brutal' in their dealings with him.[16] Clerk used many diplomatic tools to extract concessions from Menelik, on occasions buying his acquiescence with consignments of patent leather hats that, Menelik insisted, all Ethiopian boys at Court should wear, reminding Clerk of 'small boys of my own school so far as headgear was concerned'.[17]

Ethiopia was a challenging assignment for the young Clerk. Robert Skinner, who led an American diplomatic mission to Ethiopia in 1903, observed that because two-thirds of Ethiopian frontier bordered British and Egyptian territory, it was easy to comprehend 'how these long imaginary lines may give rise to complicated questions requiring a strong hand and a steady head'.[18] Perhaps Clerk was more temperamentally equipped to exercise these qualities than Harrington. The latter was something of a loose cannon. He was inordinately rude to Menelik from the day he presented his credentials, and the emperor requested that he not return when he took a year's leave in December 1906. Both Harrington and Ciccodicola were alleged to have taken Abyssinian women and lived 'in a native hut and in native style' on their arrival in Addis Ababa in order to appease the

expectations of their hosts. Nevertheless, in London, Harrington was deemed to have done well: the French government had not obtained sole control of the railroad; Anglo-Italo-Ethiopian co-operation had been achieved to track down the 'Mad Mullah'; frontier and commercial agreements had been concluded and a Bank of Abyssinia had been established. Despite Menelik's entreaties, Harrington returned to Addis Ababa in January 1908 with a 'rich American wife', the daughter of a Michigan senator, before leaving for good some months later.[19]

Clerk was particularly active during this time in attempting to curb the Ethiopian slave trade. Major Henry Darley, who spent many years living amongst the native peoples of British East Africa, recalled Clerk's work on behalf of the Toposa people, part of what Darley called 'the Masai spear' stretching from the Dinkas of the Nile near Khartoum to the eastern slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro, with an almost Kiplingesque enthusiasm.

> It was Sir *[sic]* George Clerk who descended the Abyssinian hills with a large following of Abyssinians, in pursuit of an Abyssinian pillager who had been raiding the whole country. Sir George was alone, as the representative of the British Government, in the midst of at least a thousand Abyssinians.

When his own soldiers began raiding slaves in Toposa, Clerk 'immediately visited every tent in camp, seized the captives and set them free to return to their homes'. On his return to Maji in Ethiopia, he discovered that slaves still remained with the band. So 'he sat down on the trail with his rifle across his knees, took each slave as he passed him, and sent them all home'. According to Darley, the Ethiopians gave Clerk the nickname of 'the Buffalo' because of their belief that 'when he gets his head set, nothing turns him but death'. Darley believed that Clerk and others did much to curb the worst excesses of the Ethiopian slave trade in the border regions of the Sudan and Uganda at this time. Darley hailed the young diplomat: 'Sir George Clerk.—Salaam, Sana!'[20]

In July 1906, a Tripartite Pact was signed in London between Great Britain, France and Italy. The three Great Powers agreed to 'maintain intact the integrity of Ethiopia' and 'to protect their respective interests'. The status quo, as defined by previously signed agreements, was to be maintained and neutrality and non-intervention in the internal affairs of Ethiopia were formally pledged. Any departure from this principle required the consent of all three powers. Further articles settled the railway question. Ethiopia did not participate in any of these negotiations, and Menelik did not respond to the arrangement until December 1906. His reply was hardly effusive. Great Britain gained much from the pact. Both Harrington and Lord Cromer in Cairo were strongly committed to the maintenance of Ethiopian independence. The pact also strengthened the entente cordiale by neutralizing Anglo-French colonial differences in the horn of Africa. But the pact contained ambiguities. In 1906, the arrangement reflected Italian military and diplomatic weakness in the aftermath of cataclysmic defeat at Adowa.[21] In 1935, as Clerk laboured in the wake of Laval's diplomatic evasions in Paris to contain the new Italian Caesar Benito Mussolini, it was a licence for a new *imperium* in Africa.

Africa was bound to exert its toll as time wore on. Both Harrington and Clerk were vulnerable to prolonged sickness in 1906 and 1907. By the end of 1906, the legation was in such disorder that William Tyrrell, Sir Edward Grey's private secretary, wanted to

replace both men with Thomas Hohler. Tyrrell gave Hohler three specific objectives when he met him in London just before Christmas 1906: to conclude the southern frontier treaty with Ethiopia, to get Menelik to name an heir, and to stop the international arms trade emanating from Djibouti. When Hohler finally arrived in Addis Ababa in April 1907, Clerk was again in sole charge of the agency, and he feared that Clerk might resent his arrival. That Clerk did not do so was due not only to an old friendship that existed between them, but also perhaps to Clerk's own acknowledgement that he was not fit enough to perform the diplomatic duties of his office. As soon as Hohler arrived, Clerk relapsed into a severe fever with a temperature of 106. In May, it was feared that he would die, and it was decided to recall him immediately. He departed Addis Ababa on 20 May 1907. It was left to Hohler to complete the negotiations for the southern frontier treaty.[22] It was not for many years that Clerk was able to identify the strain of malaria, which almost brought his Abyssinian venture and his diplomatic career to a premature end at this time.[23]

On 13 February 1907, Clerk was promoted to acting second secretary in the Diplomatic Service. Nevertheless, in May 1907, he rejoined the Foreign Office as an assistant clerk. On 21 October 1910, he returned to the Diplomatic Service as an acting first secretary. Four days later, he was posted to Constantinople, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Many years later, Clerk recalled those halcyon days before the Great War when 'the life of a young diplomat was cast upon pleasant lines'. It seemed then that every diplomatic post offered some special attraction, he observed, 'but of them all perhaps Constantinople offered most'.[24]

British policy towards the Ottoman Empire for much of the nineteenth century had been to support the integrity of the Ottoman Empire as a buffer against Russian expansion towards India. But under Gladstone the British government found it impossible to adhere to this policy because of Ottoman atrocities against its Christian minorities. Moreover, the shift in British strategic priorities from Constantinople and the Straits to Egypt and the Suez Canal in 1882 lessened the significance of the Ottoman Empire for British policy-makers. The Anglo-Russian entente of 1907 symbolized the growing marginalization of the Ottoman Turks in the eyes of the Liberal government of Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith. Nevertheless, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, was conscious of the dangers emanating from such matters as the Macedonian question and the need to maintain British commercial interests at Constantinople. In July 1908, the Liberal government adopted a cautious but sympathetic attitude to the Young Turks revolution in Salonica, which had led to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Constantinople. The British embassy at Pera did not seem to share this attitude. The new ambassador was Sir Gerard Lowther. The first dragoman was Gerald Fitzmaurice. Both were highly critical of the new government. Lowther saw the Young Turk leadership as a Jacobin imitation of the French Revolution 'and its godless and levelling methods'. Fitzmaurice saw the events of 1908 as an 'international Jewish freemason conspiracy', whilst Lowther too referred to 'the Jew Committee of Union and Progress' that he believed was influenced by the occult.[25] Writing many years later, Clerk painted the picture in somewhat less sensational terms when he arrived there in 1910:

> My older-established colleagues all told me that the glamour of the East had gone and that Constantinople was merely a dingy travesty of its former glories. Almost the only reform with which they would credit the Young Turks was the extinction of the dogs, but even they were regretted.

In contrast to his colleagues, Clerk remained fascinated by Constantinople. The Galata Bridge 'was still a stream of motley many-coloured humanity,' he recalled. It was possible to witness the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mehmed Rifaat Pasha, conversing with the cheese seller on the way to his office and be told: 'I have sufficient for my needs and my life is peaceful and happy, whereas you know not from day to day how long your head may be upon your shoulders.' At the *Cercle d'Orient* one could eat some of the best food and wine in Europe, and see Mehmed Talaat Pasha 'embracing the Armenian deputy whom he was to send to his death or watch Enver saluting Nazim Pasha, the Minister of War, whom he shot in the Sublime Porte'.

> And above all there was the joy of the work. The Ambassador might be worried, the First Dragoman mysterious, but how exciting it was to watch the play of the rival forces, to follow from within intrigue and counter-intrigue, to see M.Huguenin over his daily bottle of champagne…maturing with some Armenian and Levantine collaborator the latest development of the Bagdad Railway, or to go…and watch Marschall von Bieberstein playing chess while driving yet another German nail into the Turkish coffin.[26]

As Clerk worked away in the chancery of the embassy, British policy towards the Ottoman Empire continued to unravel. Lowther's anti-Semitic characterization of the Turkish leadership was now supplemented by the perception that pan-Islamism and pan-Turanianism also animated the Young Turkish movement, and that it was closely cultivating relations with Imperial Germany. In the Foreign Office Sir Arthur Nicolson, the Permanent Under-Secretary, shared these new concerns, although the renewal of the Albanian rebellion in March 1911 also prompted him to accept the possibility of imminent Turkish disintegration. In September 1911, as hostilities broke out between the Ottoman Empire and Italy over Tripoli, the British government was torn between its concern within the British Empire for the reaction of Islamic opinion to this new act of Italian aggression and its fear that condemnation would cement Italy more firmly in the camp of the Triple Alliance.

On 26 February 1912, Clerk rejoined the Foreign Office. He had been in Constantinople just over a year. He had taken the opportunity to learn Turkish. His first-hand experience of the Constantinople embassy would have been a considerable asset as British policy towards the Ottoman Empire continued to evolve. Events in the Balkans were developing quickly. Within two weeks of Clerk's return, Serbia and Bulgaria had signed a secret treaty of alliance and friendship, and despite the best efforts of Sir Louis Mallet, the Turcophile head of the Eastern Department, Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, the Foreign Office was unwilling to consider any rapprochement with the Turks. In October 1912, the first Balkan war began.

British public opinion was strongly sympathetic to the Balkan states, as was the Asquith government who were eager to maintain the Anglo-Russian entente. The British were willing to accept the liquidation of the Turkish Empire in Europe, but did not wish to see any challenge to Turkey's rule as an Asiatic power. This was a delicate policy to maintain. When the second Balkan war broke out in June 1913, the Foreign Office was fully prepared to acquiesce in the Turkish reoccupation of Edirne even though this was a violation of the Treaty of London signed in May. In October 1913, Sir Louis Mallet replaced Lowther as British ambassador at Constantinople. Eyre Crowe, the Assistant Under-Secretary, became head of the Eastern as well as the Western Departments of the Foreign Office. Grey and Crowe now adopted a more circumspect attitude to Turkish affairs. Influenced by Mallet's more optimistic reports about the character of the Turkish leadership and the prospects for the empire, they showed little inclination to intervene in the Armenian and Kurdish questions, and responded with moderation to the appointment of Liman von Sanders as head of the German military mission in Constantinople. Nor did the Foreign Office give any real encouragement to the representatives of Arab nationalism and Zionism who approached the Foreign Office, thus maintaining the official policy of preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.[27]

In October 1913, Clerk was promoted to senior clerk. From March to August 1913, Crowe had been absent due to illness, and Clerk had become the acting head of the Western Department. In 1914, he also assumed the position of head of the Eastern Department.[28] Clerk was part of a new mould that emerged in the Foreign Office during these years. A university graduate, linguist and geographer, he had travelled widely. He had witnessed Kaiser Wilhelm extolling the virtues of Anglo-German entente;[29] he had served in Ethiopia, the only independent African state to withstand the march of European imperialism. He had served in Turkey, at a crucial moment in its existence, gaining expertise in Balkan politics, a region of vital importance to British policy-makers between 1914 and 1939. In 1914, Clerk was a Foreign Office official of remarkably diverse experience. It was his flexibility and understanding of 'new ways' and his willingness to listen to the case of the 'oppressed nationalities' of Central Europe that made him such an attractive proposition to the Scottish historian R.W.Seton-Watson and Henry Wickham Steed of *The Times*, and other proponents of Austro-Hungarian dismemberment as they laboured to gain access to the Foreign Office in the early years of the Great War. This attraction was sometimes difficult to discern, submerged as it was beneath a rather intimidating aristocratic appearance. For Clerk assiduously cultivated the image of the quintessential nineteenth-century diplomat, a profile more in keeping with reaction and *noblesse oblige*, than the liberal nationalist ideals of *The New Europe*. His colleague, Lancelot Oliphant, called him 'the *beau idéal* of diplomatists'.

> Tall, thin, with a good figure, always faultlessly dressed, with his eye-glass so much a part of him that it needed no ribbon, he would be noticeable in any gathering, and if addressed would at once put the stranger at ease by his welcoming smile.[30]

'Austere but attractive' was the comment Lewis Einstein, the American diplomat, discovered in the Chancery files of the American legation in Prague when he consulted

them in 1921. He was never struck 'by any special austerity on his part, but the second part of the description fitted him better,' Einstein observed.

> Few men are completely true to type, but George Clerk's appearance of an old-world diplomat was so perfect that even Metternich would have been impressed. Yet behind this antique perfection lay hidden a keen and very up-to-date humour, a talent for enjoying the very best of life, and a real gift for friendship.[31]

In June 1914, the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the Duchess Sophie set in train a course of events that were to lead in August to the outbreak of the First World War. Clerk, Crowe, Nicolson and Grey carefully monitored the aftermath of the assassination. Clerk made a detailed analysis of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia and the Serbian reply. On 28 July, he minuted:

> A careful comparison of the Austrian Note and the Servian reply shows that the latter has been read at Vienna with a fixed determination to find it unsatisfactory, for it swallows nearly all the Austrian demands 'en bloc,' and it is difficult not to consider such reservations as are made quite reasonable.

Crowe was blunter: 'If Austria demands absolute compliance with her ultimatum it can only mean that she wants a war,' he minuted. On 28 July, Sir Edward Goschen, the British ambassador in Berlin, informed Grey of a conversation in which Bethmann Hollweg, the German Chancellor, had affirmed that war had to be avoided, but rejected a British proposal for an international conference, whilst placing the blame for war exclusively on the shoulders of Imperial Russia. 'Not much comfort in this,' Clerk noted, 'especially as Vienna has rejected discussion with St. Petersburg.' 'I suppose Germany wishes Russia to join with the other Powers in keeping the ring while Austria strangles Servia,' observed Nicolson. When the Belgian Foreign Ministry assured the British government on 2 August that it had no reason to suspect Germany of an intention to violate neutrality, Clerk observed laconically: 'It is impossible for the German troops to get out of Luxemburg without crossing Belgian territory except through a narrow bottle-neck into France.'[32]

When the Great War broke out on 4 August 1914, Crowe proposed that the Eastern and Western Departments be amalgamated into a War Department with Clerk as its head. This department was meant to assume responsibility for 'general political, naval and military questions connected with the war', censorship and Eastern Europe. An expanded Treaty Department would deal with contraband and blockade matters, and the Commercial Department would deal with trade. Crowe was initially meant to supervise all these departments, but after taking a short holiday in September 1914, he returned to find a new arrangement in place: Sir Arthur Nicolson would supervise the War Department and Crowe would assume responsibility for the economic affairs of the Treaty and Commercial Departments. Much controversy has surrounded this reorganization, which has been seen as a reflection of differences between Grey and Tyrrell and Nicolson and Crowe.[33] Clerk was not an intriguer. He had established good

relations with both Grey and Tyrrell. The latter later strongly supported Clerk's succession at Paris in 1934.[34] He was also held in high esteem by Hardinge, who resumed as permanent under-secretary in 1916.[35]

The War Department consisted of six clerks. The assistant under-secretary was Lancelot Oliphant. In the 'third room' sat Rowland Sterling, Eustace Percy, C.Howard Smith and Harold Nicolson. Both Percy and Nicolson later became enthusiastic adherents of the ideals of *The New Europe* promoted by R.W.Seton-Watson. The strain of war exacted an enormous toll on the diplomats of the Foreign Office. Despite its size, the workload was considerable. It was little wonder that Sir John Tilley described Clerk in the early months of the Great War as 'on duty night and day, sleeping in his office room'.[36]

At least until the last year of the Great War, it is clear that the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was never a war aim of the British government. Asquith's Guildhall speech of 9 November 1914 confined itself to a general statement that the rights of smaller nationalities would have to be placed upon unassailable foundations.[37] The War Cabinet discussed war aims again in August 1916. Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the General Staff, showed little enthusiasm for new states in Central Europe. A.J. Balfour, the First Lord of the Admiralty, was at least inclined to consider the possibilities of an independent Bohemia. In a rather radical departure from the statement of war aims made hitherto, the Foreign Office was prepared to contemplate a zone of Slav states between Russia and Germany, but its permanent officials, Tyrrell and Paget, struggled with the complexity of the issues. In 1916, for example, they advocated the inclusion of Bohemia in a future Polish state.[38] Nor was any real progress made with the advent of the Lloyd George coalition. In the spring of 1917, Lloyd George held a series of meetings with the Emperor Karl's envoy, Prince Sixte de Bourbon.[39] In December 1917, Jan Smuts, Philip Kerr and Mensdorff again explored the possibilities of a separate peace at Geneva.[40] In his Caxton House speech to the Trade Unions on 5 January 1918, Lloyd George categorically denied that the destruction of Austria-Hungary was a British war aim.[41]

In 1914, both Henry Wickham Steed and R.W.Seton-Watson had become converts to the cause of dismemberment. Both had been formerly strong proponents of the Habsburg 'mission' in Central Europe. The pace and direction of their conversion followed different paths. By 1910, the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Agram high treason trial and the Friedjung libel action had convinced Wickham Steed that the Austrian Empire was corrupt, an empty vehicle for pan-German expansionism.[42] R.W.Seton-Watson held a great admiration for the Hungarian nationalist leader Kossuth. But after visiting Hungary in 1906, he had become profoundly disillusioned with the Hungarian policy of Magyarization and ultimately concluded that it offered no solution to the nationalities question, which bedevilled the Empire. Seton-Watson turned instead to Austrian liberalism. The outbreak of the Great War on 4 August 1914, however, shattered his belief in the capacity of the Austrian Empire for reform. In 1914 both Wickham Steed and Seton-Watson, close friends since meeting in Vienna late in 1905, became crusaders for the 'oppressed nationalities' of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and potential advocates of its dismemberment.[43]

Clerk had been particularly assiduous in establishing close contacts between the Foreign Office and the press. In 1914, he had a strong rapport with Wickham Steed, and

it was through Steed that Seton-Watson was first able to cross the Foreign Office threshold and make Clerk's acquaintance. Some years later, Clerk mischievously recalled the spirit of those times:

> Then came the war. We grew familiar with mysterious gentlemen in varying types of frock-coats who, after a preliminary period of close supervision, if not actual imprisonment, by the police, had managed to establish, often with the aid of influential British journalists, a certain tolerant acceptance of their presence and who were then able to develop the claims of unknown and uncouthly named nationalities which had, unbeknown to British statesmen, been groaning for centuries under Habsburg oppression. Croats, Slovenes, Walloons, Jugoslavs, Lithuanians, Estonians, Latvians, Georgian princes, Czechoslovak professors, turned up in mysterious ways, and we learnt to accept it as natural that the obvious *komtaji* in frock-coat and elastic-side boots, talking a jargon of Italian, lingua franca and broken English, was one of the leaders of new thought in Europe and really represented something that bore upon the war and had ideas that were at least worth considering.[44]

One of the first of the leaders of new thought in Europe' to appear in London in late August 1914 was a Pole, Dr Joseph Retinger. The partition of Poland in the eighteenth century and the resurgent power of Polish nationalism in the nineteenth century had often cemented alliance between the three great eastern states of Austria, Prussia and Russia whether in the Holy Alliance as interpreted by the Austrian Chancellor Metternich, or later in the *Dreikaiserbund* as envisioned by the German Chancellor Bismarck. The outbreak of war in 1914 between the Dual Alliance of Germany and Austria-Hungary and Imperial Russia offered the Poles a significant bargaining counter to improve their status. On 7 August 1914, the Russian Grand Duke and commander-in-chief of the Russian armies, Nikolai Nikolaievich, issued a proclamation offering the Poles unity and autonomy at the end of the war in return for their support during it. It was clear that the British government, unless it wished to alienate Russia, had no alternative but to support the imperial *démarche*. Retinger represented the Supreme National Committee of Galician Poles, and he requested that the British government guarantee Russian promises. In his interview with Clerk at the Foreign Office on 31 August, Clerk unequivocally rejected any Franco-British guarantee of Russian promises. However, he minuted:

> I would however submit with all deference that it is well worth while to get Polish feeling wholeheartedly with us and that if an occasion offers itself of welcoming the measure announced by the Grand Duke Nicholas in a way which can be made known in Poland it would have an encouraging effect there and would make it morally difficult for Russia to evade her pledge.

Sir Arthur Nicolson did not share Clerk's moral scruples. 'We should leave this matter alone,' he minuted. 'I was asked to see this gentleman but declined to have anything to do

with so foolish a matter.' Sir Edward Grey disagreed: 'I do not think he should be snubbed… Mr. Clerk might tell him that H.M.Govt. were in thorough sympathy with the Russian manifesto, and that it was welcomed cordially by public feeling here.'[45] This was as far as the matter could be taken. In August 1914, the principal British war aim was the defeat of Germany and the restoration of Belgium. The British government said very little about its war aims after November 1914. Asquith, in particular, seemed to follow a policy, perhaps wisely, of the less said the better.

A second representative of 'new thought' in October 1914 was the Croat, Frano Supilo. He met Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed on 13 and 14 October in London, and the latter quickly arranged for him to see Clerk and Tyrrell, Grey's private secretary. Whatever Supilo's aspirations were for the South Slavs at this time, he was not immediately impressed with what he heard. The growing possibility of Turkey joining the war on the side of the Central Powers made the Allies particularly concerned with the diplomatic and military balance in this war. They were, therefore, in the process of enticing Italy into the conflict making them, rather than the Slavs, the rampart against German pressure towards the Mediterranean. Supilo visited London again on 21 December, and Steed took him to see both Grey and Asquith. He was distressed to find that the Prime Minister seemed to consider that 'large parts of Dalmatia should go to Italy'.[46] He saw Clerk on 29 December, and on 7 January 1915 he submitted a 'Memorandum Respecting the Southern Slavs' to the Foreign Office, which was later circulated to the King and the War Cabinet.[47]

In the same month, at Steed's behest, Seton-Watson travelled to Rotterdam in neutral Holland where he had a series of clandestine meetings with the Czechoslovak nationalist, Thomas Masaryk. The fruits of those discussions, the 'Memorandum on Conversations with Masaryk' and the subsections 'The Future of Bohemia' and 'Points re England' were received in the Foreign Office on 5 November. Seton-Watson later observed:

> Until the occasion when I brought this memorandum to Mr. George Clerk… I had never once crossed the threshold of our Foreign Office, or had any relations whatsoever with any of its members. It was Steed who introduced me to Clerk, who was quick to realise the importance of Masaryk's memorandum, supplemented as it was by still more secret information about submarines and plans of mobilization, and who from that time onwards was a sympathetic listener on all such subjects, and always ready to lay matters of urgency before his chief, Sir Edward Grey.[48]

Seton-Watson's memory may not have served him entirely correctly. Clerk had evidently encountered the Scottish historian, possibly late in September 1914. On 2 October 1914, Seton-Watson had submitted a memorandum on the South Slavs to the Foreign Office. Clerk may have requested this document on his own initiative without securing official approval. In this memorandum, Seton-Watson had attacked Austro-Hungarian rule over the South Slavs and Italian claims to Dalmatia. He advocated the creation of a federal Yugoslav state consisting of Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Slovenia.[49]

In his memorandum submitted to the Foreign Office on 5 November 1914, Masaryk put forward a 'maximum' programme. It was designed to capture the strategic interest of the Foreign Office in the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and establish the legitimacy and viability of the new nation state of Czechoslovakia. Masaryk stressed the strategic weakness, as he saw it, of the Central Powers. 'To weaken or crush Austria-Hungary is the effectual way of weakening Germany,' he observed. Austria-Hungary was, in his view, simply an empty shell, a tool of German and pan-German imperialism, an empire which had lost its *raison d'exister*. Second, Masaryk put forward the case for an 'independent Bohemia', which could be forged only on the anvil of total German defeat. And in 'Points Re England', British statesmanship was to provide the inspiration for this ambitious plan.

> The role of Britain in the future settlement should be the 'Brain Policy.' She should have a plan, and the European public ought to know it. This will (1) give direction to the evolution of events and (2) win the sympathies of Europe. This ought to come *now*.[50]

Masaryk's memorandum was a powerful weapon of propaganda. It advanced the legitimacy of the claims of 'oppressed nationalities'. It undermined the legitimacy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But its greatest merit was that it sought to convince Allied diplomats and public opinion that the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary was a *sine qua non* of the defeat and destruction of Imperial Germany. The Allies might ponder the military problem of the Western Front, but its solution, both politically and militarily, lay in the Balkans. Clerk was clearly impressed by Masaryk. On 7 December he wrote: 'Professor Masaryk is a man of great weight among the Czechs, and the ideas here advanced are serious and worth bearing in mind.'[51] Masaryk returned to this theme with even greater force in May 1915 when he submitted his 'Confidential Memorandum' entitled Independent Bohemia' to the Foreign Office. In this document, Masaryk offered a powerful apology for the doctrine of nationalism. The aim of the war, Masaryk stated, was to 'regenerate' Europe. Only the doctrine of nationality applied on a liberal democratic basis could overcome the forces of pan-Germanism and *'Drang nach Osten'*. As for Austria, it was an artificial state, 'the Catholic Turkey'. By raising the spectre of the 'Drive to the East', Masaryk hoped to touch another nerve in the British psyche, the German nationalist threat to the Indian Empire. But the significance of 'Independent Bohemia' lay in its claim to Bohemian integrity, not on racial but on historic grounds. In short, a future Czechoslovak state would include the German minorities of northwest Bohemia who had lived there for centuries. It hardly portended well for the future of Masaryk's plan that such was the declining condition of the Foreign Secretary's eyesight, it was felt that he might not be able to absorb the whole document. Wickham Steed suggested that Clerk might make an abstract for Grey to read.[52] Clerk, perhaps daunted by the sheer scale of Masaryk's proposals, was more cautious in his judgement than hitherto. 'The Allies have a long way to go before this is practical, but the paper should be borne in mind,' he minuted.[53]

The First World War was not over by Christmas 1914, as many of its military planners had anticipated. As early as October 1914, Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War, had predicted stalemate along the Western Front.[54] Furthermore, Russian defeats at

Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes on the Eastern Front had encouraged the Ottoman Empire to move closer towards the Central Powers, leading the Allies to suspect collusion and military co-operation. On 5 November 1914, the Allies declared war on the Ottoman Empire.[55] The 'loss' of the Ottoman Empire was a significant military and strategic blow to the Allied cause for which the Foreign Office and the British ambassador in Constantinople, Sir Louis Mallet, received considerable criticism.[56]

The British declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire on 5 November 1914 was a moment of incalculable importance in the history of the Near East and for the future relationship between the Islamic and Western worlds in the Middle East. In November, the British Prime Minister Asquith disavowed that the war in any way represented a 'crusade' against Islam. Nevertheless, the war would, he affirmed, ring the death-knell of the Ottoman Empire and its dominion in both Europe and Asia.[57] The immediate problem posed by Turkish entry was the weakened strategic position of the Balkan states. The War Cabinet set about the task of formulating an allied eastern strategy to alleviate the military threat to Serbia and Russia. Maurice Hankey, the Cabinet Secretary, envisaged an allied assault through the Dardanelles, while David Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, pondered the possibilities of Salonica and Gallipoli.[58]

In Egypt, the British Agent and Consul-General, Lord Kitchener, had established a strong rapport with Abdullah, the second son of Sharif Husayn of Mecca, and his subordinates were fully alive as to the strategic value of an alliance with Arab nationalism. Proclamations meant to sway the Arabs were issued from Cairo, which were apparently not authorized by the Foreign Office in London.[59] These proclamations also alienated the India Office who were particularly concerned about the susceptibilities of Muslims in India and the future status of the Caliphate.

It has been suggested that there was an incoherence about Britain's Middle Eastern policy even before the appointment of Sir Henry McMahon as High Commissioner in Egypt in January 1915, and that this can be attributed to no small extent to the physical, psychological and mental failings of Sir Edward Grey. There seems much to support this contention. Left to their own devices, the permanent officials of the Foreign Office would have steered clear of the Sharif and the whole issue of the Caliphate. In the first month of the war, Crowe discouraged an initiative by an Ottoman officer Aziz Ali al-Misri to organize Arab resistance against the Turks, whilst in October 1914 Clerk assured Sayyid Talib, a Basra magnate, that the interests of Islam were best safeguarded by 'the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish empire'.[60] Nicolson, Crowe and Clerk wished to avoid entanglements, and adopted a cautious policy towards the various initiatives that were emanating from Cairo, but the situation was fraught with complexity. In April 1915, the British government authorized the establishment of an interdepartmental committee under the chairmanship of Sir Maurice de Bunsen to consider British desiderata in Asia, rendered even more complex by British negotiations with Russia over Constantinople, which had prompted the French government to raise its own territorial claims with regard to Syria and Cilicia.

The de Bunsen committee held thirteen meetings from 12 April to 28 May 1915. Clerk was the Foreign Office representative. At the fourth meeting on 17 April, Sir Mark Sykes, a Conservative MP, had outlined schemes entailing two alternatives: the partition of Asiatic Turkey among the Allies or the maintenance of the Turkish empire in Asia

with the establishment of European zones of commercial and political interest. Clerk made a careful assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of both schemes at this meeting. Partition was desirable on seven grounds. These included (1) oil; (2) Indian colonization; (3) the consolidation of British power in the Persian Gulf; (4) the engagements with the Sheiks of Kuwait and Mohammerah concerning Basra; (5) an eventual British granary; and (7) the suppression of any German *'Drang nach Osten'*. The most important consideration, Clerk focused on, was (6) the opportunity partition offered to British commerce and industry. The arguments against partition were considerable. His six objections focused on (1 and 2) the overextension of British power and responsibility that incorporation of such a large territory entailed; (3) the alienation of both France and Russia; (4) the adverse effect partition would have on the Islamic world especially in India; (5) its impact on Arab development 'to the south of the new British possession' where 'there was no potential wealth'—an Arab state and Caliphate was therefore impossible. Clerk's sixth observation was particularly crucial:

> The necessity of carrying the war much further than the mere driving of the Turk from Constantinople, involving, in fact, a complete reversal of the policy we have announced *urbi et orbi*, that our quarrel is with the Turco-German Government and not with the Turkish nation.

With regard to the second scheme, the following British interests had to be considered: (1) oil; (2) the redemption of pledges to Arab chiefs; (3) the recognition of Britain's position in the Persian Gulf; (4) equality of commercial opportunity throughout Asiatic Turkey and the securing of industrial opportunity in Mesopotamia; (5) the settlement of Armenian and other religious questions; (6) and the elimination of German competition. The advantages of the second scheme were, in Clerk's view, that it was easier to effect *vis-à-vis* Turkey, and would conciliate the Islamic world, as well as being consistent with existing British declarations of policy. The major disadvantage was that the ineffective nature of the Turkish government might force Great Britain into assuming the gradual burden of a protectorate without authority or recognition, and into a position with France and Russia 'such as we were drifting into in the neutral zone in Persia', and into active interference between the Arab and the Turk. If partition were pursued, Clerk observed, it would be essential to secure the port of Alexandretta despite the objections of France. If Turkey remained dominant in Asia, it was essential that she concede spheres of influence to each of the Allies for 'all industrial enterprises'.

At the fifth meeting held at the Foreign Office on 21 April, Sir Maurice de Bunsen emphasized how much he had been impressed by Clerk's argument that the expulsion of the Turks from Constantinople would not mean the destruction of Turkey as an Asiatic power and that a further military campaign would be necessitated. Consequently, he recommended the committee embrace the second alternative as the basis of the committee report. At this meeting Sir Thomas Holderness, the India Office representative, raised the question of Arabia, which 'we had more or less undertaken…should be independent'. The second alternative precluded in Holderness's view the possibility of 'an independent sovereign Arabian state'. Holderness wished to use the agreement with Kuwait of 29 July 1913, which secured the sheikdom as an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire, as a guide for proceeding with the Arabs.

Clerk supported this view. He emphasized that there were two difficulties with regard to Arabia: first, that there was no single person who could be placed in control of the country; and, second, that in any case the Arabs had not responded to the very marked advances made to them by His Majesty's Government since the outbreak of the war. This final point was perhaps not to be regretted 'as to some extent it freed the hands of His Majesty's Government *vts-à-vts* of the Arab'. Nevertheless, Clerk felt it was important that the committee understood the commitments made by the British government, both to other powers with regard to Arabia, and to the Arabs themselves. He cited four important statements: Sir George Buchanan's observations to Sazonov in Petrograd on 11 March that Arabia and its Islamic Holy Places had to remain under independent Muslim control; Kitchener's letter to Abdullah of 1 November 1914; Sir Francis Wingate's statement of 14 April 1914; and Asquith's Guildhall speech of 9 November 1914.[61]

It was clear that in the spring of 1915 Clerk's own views on the future of the Ottoman Empire were in the process of crystallizing. He rejected partition of the Middle East by the Great Powers and advocated the establishment of autonomous Arab states under Turkish sovereignty except where delimitation agreements had already been made. He was clearly sceptical of the pan-Arab claims of the Emir of Mecca and of pan-Arabism in general. But he was cognizant of the implications of British commitments to other powers and especially to the Arabs themselves. Clerk was dubious about the claims of Sharif Husayn to be the protector of the Arabs and he had grave reservations about the policies being pursued by Sir Henry McMahon in Cairo. In August 1915, Clerk received a secret memorandum entitled 'The Sherif of Mecca', composed by G.S.Symes, Wingate's private secretary. The memorandum showed the need for 'great care' in British relations with the Sharif. Clerk observed:

> 1. He wishes to be sure of Germany's defeat and Turkey's downfall before coming out into the open: i.e., a quasi-benevolent neutrality is about the best we can hope for during the war. 2. The Sherif's two Arab enemies are our two Arab friends—Idrisi and Bin Saud.[62]

Clerk's scepticism about the Sharif clearly distinguished his position from that of Sir Mark Sykes who was closely linked to Lord Kitchener through his confidant Lieutenant-Colonel Oswald FitzGerald.[63] Sykes pointedly referred to the Sharif as 'our *protégé*' during the de Bunsen committee meetings. Clerk gravitated more towards the position of the India Office, which was only prepared to embrace a confederate Arabia or some kind of Arab administrative autonomy under Turkish rule. Sykes hoped that the Caliphate would be settled by Islamic opinion, but if it was unable to do so, he urged its transfer under the Sultan to Damascus away from the influence of the Committee of Union and Progress. Clerk was very concerned about the impact of this apparent collapse of the Caliphate's temporal power on the Islamic world. He received some support for this position from Ernest Weakley, another Foreign Office official, who attended the eighth meeting of the committee on 29 April, and who also had grave doubts about the feasibility of the Caliphate's transference to Damascus.

The de Bunsen committee published its report on 30 June 1915. It had considered four alternative schemes for dealing with the Ottoman Empire in Asia: partition among the allies; the maintenance of the Turkish empire subject to European zones of interests and

spheres of influence; the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire in Asia as an independent entity; and maintenance of an Ottoman federal empire with considerable devolution, decentralization and autonomy for its constituent parts. British desiderata included the recognition and consolidation of British power in the Persian Gulf; the prevention of discrimination against foreign trade; fulfilment of pledges given to rulers in the Arabian Peninsula 'and generally, maintenance of the assurances given to the Sherif of Mecca and the Arabs'; security for oil production; development of corn supply in Mesopotamia and the cultivation of Indian emigration; the maintenance of the British strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. Its preferred solution for dealing with the Ottoman Empire in Asia was to maintain an independent but federal and decentralized empire. It favoured the establishment of a federal Ottoman Empire with considerable devolution for its constituent areas: Anatolia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine and Irak-Jazirah.

The de Bunsen committee report was something of a triumph for Sir Mark Sykes. The committee agreed to the incorporation of 'Palestine' into the British sphere of influence and recommended that Damascus should be the seat of the Ottoman Caliphate. It was also decided that Arabia and the Muslim Holy Places should remain under 'independent Moslem rule'. The lack of clear definition of such terms as 'Mesopotamia', 'Syria', 'Palestine' and 'Arabia' undoubtedly contained the seeds of future difficulty.[64] But the major problem of the report was that it was likely to be rendered superfluous by the pace of events. Lord Kitchener was intent on fashioning a new imperial strategy towards the Ottoman Empire. He and Ronald Storrs, the Oriental Secretary at the residency in Cairo, had designs on Syria, which might assume the status of a British protectorate under a British-sponsored Caliph. The Arabian Peninsula could be relegated to a sort of 'Afghanistan' status. Sykes too shared these illusions.

Nicolson and Clerk had always urged caution and displayed concern about the extent of the commitments emanating from Cairo. The distribution of a leaflet circulated by McMahon along the coast of the Hejaz addressed 'To the People of Arabia…' was a case in point.[65] In July 1915, Abdullah suddenly despatched a memorandum to Cairo, demanding that Britain acknowledge the territorial independence of Arab countries and approve the proclamation of an Arab Caliphate within thirty days. Both McMahon and the India Office responded with caution to the Sharif's terms. Nevertheless, the India Office urged Sir Edward Grey to impress upon McMahon the necessity of inviting Abdullah to Cairo to 'negotiate' a preliminary agreement. Clerk's draft telegram preferred 'discuss' rather than 'negotiate', whilst Nicolson employed even more neutral language to water down British assurances.[66] The permanent officials questioned the reliability of Sharif Husayn. On 29 September 1915, Clerk observed that 'the more one studies this question, the more clearly do its difficulties appear'. Two things struck him: '1. that the Moslems themselves will make no move until the Turk has been turned out of Constantinople, and 2. that the less we commit ourselves to any one candidate, even the Sherif of Mecca, the better'.[67]

However, this cautionary position was untenable given the pace of events in the Middle East. In Egypt, a new impetus was given to the relationship between the residency officials and Sharif Husayn by the arrival in Cairo in the autumn of 1915 of Muhammad Sharif al-Faruqi, an Arab Ottoman officer, who claimed to be a member of the secret Arab military society al-'Ahd. Al-Faruqi offered the enticing prospect of an Arab uprising within the Ottoman officer corps. His credibility was unquestioned as he was

fully conversant with the correspondence between the British and Sharif Husayn. Al-Faruqi offered an ultimatum: any Arab rising was contingent upon the guarantee of an independent Arab Middle East; otherwise, the Arab secret societies would throw their weight behind the Ottoman Turks and Imperial Germany. Cairo quickly went on the attack. Clayton, the Head of Military Intelligence, Storrs and General Maxwell, the commander of British forces in Egypt, urged the British government to act, accompanying their exhortations with dire warnings for Britain's strategic position in Egypt and Mesopotamia, if the opportunity was not seized. On 18 October, McMahon sent a telegram to the Foreign Office, which summarized the Sharif's views and requested a British response.[68]

Clerk dealt with the telegram promptly in a long minute on 19 October together with two telegrams from Maxwell. In his telegram of 16 October, Maxwell emphasized that in his view, in order to secure Arab military support, the British would have to negotiate over Mesopotamia, and that in the west the Arabs would insist on the retention of Homs, Aleppo, Hama and Damascus. They were up against 'the big question of the future of Islam'. Unless a definite and agreeable proposal was made to Mecca, 'we may have a united Islam against us'.

In his minute on this correspondence, Clerk noted that the question before the British government had a dual aspect and that the military situation was urgent, and urged an immediate meeting in London of British and French military officers 'to discuss the position and work out plans'. From the political point of view, the question faced by the British government was whether it was prepared to accept in principle the idea of 'an exaggerated Arabia' as the Sharif proposed. Clerk observed:

> If I may express my own view, it is, as I have held since the war began, that the best solution is an independent Arabia, looking to Great Britain as its founder and protector, and provided with territory rich and wide enough to furnish adequate resources.

This was a surprising comment in view of the healthy scepticism for the prospects of pan-Arabism he had always displayed. He seemed to make a distinction between the principle of Arab independence and the aspirations of Sharif Husayn. But there were obstacles to this solution. Both French claims and ambitions in the Middle East and the British advance in Mesopotamia militated strongly against the creation of such a state. If French and Arab territorial claims in what Clerk now called 'northwest Arabia' were not reconciled, they were heading 'straight for serious trouble'. Clerk did not rule out the possibility of a solution between the British and the Arabs in Mesopotamia, but noted that Great Britain would have 'to resign acquisitions of territory in Mesopotamia, if we are to get the French to give up their Syrian dreams'. Lastly Clerk observed:

> Who is, or are, to rule this Arab empire? Bin Saud can run Nejd, Sherif Hosein can govern the Hedjaz, the Idrisi or Imam Yahya may be master of the Yemen, but no-one is indicated as Emir of Damascus or Caliph of Baghdad.

Despite these reservations, Clerk urged that McMahon be told that the British government agreed in principle to 'the establishment of an independent Arabia' and that they were 'ready to discuss the boundaries of such a State and the measures to be taken to call into being, with qualified Arabian representatives without delay'.

Clerk had written in haste and evidently wished for more time to consider the implications of the correspondence. Nonetheless, negotiations with the Arabs should start without delay. Nicolson was more circumspect, and he minuted:

> I doubt if it will be easy in view of the conflicting rivalries and jealousies of the Arab chiefs to set up 'an independent Arab State.' But we might proceed on the lines suggested by Mr. Clerk. Sir H.McMahon urges a quick decision—and I should therefore urge an interim reply.[69]

By late October 1915, both Clerk and Nicolson had abandoned their earlier reservations about the soundness of this policy. Clerk was well aware of the risks of British commitments to Arab nationalism. In his minute of 19 October, he had noted that the advantages of securing Arab military support were as dangerous as allowing them to side with the Central Powers. Nicolson and Clerk may well have been influenced by a number of factors, which induced them to lessen their opposition to the policies of Cairo: the deteriorating military position of the Allies at the Dardanelles and Gallipoli may well have increased the military importance of Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire; an independent Arabia might be viable if it was accompanied by mutual territorial concessions on the part of Great Britain and France. Both men may have perceived the difficulty of withstanding informed, professional advice given by the men on the spot. Clerk had observed as much in a minute written on 25 August.[70]

McMahon now seized the initiative. In his telegram to Grey of 18 October, after 'further conversations' with Al-Faruqi, he seemed to have gone even further than Maxwell in implying that the Arabs would insist on the retention of 'purely Arab districts of Aleppo, Damascus, Hama and Homs'. In a letter of 24 October to the Sharif, he outlined more precise territorial boundaries in imprecise and evasive terms. This lack of precision in the terminology and language used by McMahon has been seen as a major cause of the Jewish—Arab conflict over Palestine, which became of such cardinal importance in international relations in the twentieth century. In his letter of 24 October 1915 to Sharif Husayn, it is not clear whether McMahon was excluding or including Palestine in a future Arab state.

The India Office responded angrily to McMahon's letter, which also served to render British claims to Basra more nebulous. It was astute in its perceptions. Had the question of Palestine been addressed? Was the Sharif capable of raising revolt in Syria and Mesopotamia? The Sharif's reply of 5 November was hardly designed to allay their concerns. Nicolson continued to believe that the Sharif was sitting on the fence. Clerk clung vainly to his hope that that there would be Anglo-French concessions to the Arabs in Syria and Mesopotamia. The new Secretary of State for India, Sir Austen Chamberlain, foresaw 'a great mess with these negotiations of MacMahon's'.[71] The initiative, however, still rested with McMahon and the Cairo officials. This was the root cause of the British difficulty. The Foreign Office had afforded Cairo full discretionary power over the negotiations. Much of the responsibility for this lay at the door of Grey who vacillated

between the price to be paid to bring the Arabs into the conflict and his observation that the offers made by Cairo were simply 'a castle in the air'.[72] In retrospect, both Nicolson and Clerk should have pressed their reservations about the negotiations with greater vehemence. Writing in 1916, Clerk commented on the difficulties, which seemed to have rendered this more difficult:

> We cannot work out a consistent Arab policy on three-weeks' old reports from subordinate officials, telegraphic requests for large sums of money, munitions and stores from the High Commissioner and gobbets of Hedjaz news buried in the voluminous pages of Arab Bureau reports, themselves already growing out of date, which is all we get at present.[73]

In November 1915, Anglo-French negotiations opened in London. Clerk clearly recognized the difficulty that lay ahead: it would be impossible for France to accept 'our practical protectorate in Mesopotamia, while abandoning their dreams in Syria, even in return for compensation in Africa,' he minuted.[74] This was confirmed at the first meeting with Georges Picot at the Foreign Office on 23 November. Clerk noted Picot's assertion that 'no French Govt would stand for a day which made any surrender of French claims in Syria'. The Arabs were longing for the arrival of French troops, Picot affirmed, as he outlined the geographical perimeters of the French 'protectorate' over Syria. Paul Cambon, the French ambassador in London, was even more '*intransigeant*' than Picot. Moreover, Clerk observed that:

> the urgency of the Arab question gives the French a lever for forcing us to recognize their preposterous claims, of which they are taking very advantage, and I am convinced that we shall have to come to an agreement with France before we can say anything, I won't say definite, but even plausible to the Sherif of Mecca.

The impasse seemed so great and potentially so damaging that Clerk could only advocate that the negotiations should be conducted at a governmental level. The War Cabinet should consult Sir Mark Sykes who was 'not only highly qualified to speak from the point of view of our own interests, but who understands the French position in Syria today—and in a sense sympathises with it—better probably than anyone'.[75]

The Sykes—Picot treaty of April—May 1916 was a secret agreement that partitioned areas of the Middle East between Great Britain and France, whilst establishing an independent Arab state or Arab states that would themselves constitute spheres of commercial influence for the Great Powers. Palestine, including the former Sanjak of Jerusalem, was to be placed under international supervision. Few diplomatic documents have attracted such ignominy. It was a foundation stone of an imperial settlement in the Middle East between 1914 and 1922, which served to bring long-term instability to the region. It was a major catalyst of the later Arab—Israeli conflict, and was excoriated by Islamic fundamentalists as the harbinger of 'more [than] 80 years, of humiliation and disgrace'.[76] The Sykes—Picot agreement was the inevitable corollary of the McMahon-Husayn correspondence. Clerk was not party to the Sykes-Picot negotiations, but with other Foreign Office officials he had closely monitored developments between McMahon

and the Sharif. It is difficult to assess whether the suggestion of mutual Anglo-French concessions in Mesopotamia and Syria in Clerk's minute of 19 October 1915 would have 'changed the course of modern history', as one historian has suggested.[77] Subsequently, Clerk was far from generous in his assessment of the negotiating abilities displayed by Sir Mark Sykes with the Arabs and the French.[78] Nevertheless, up to the end of 1915, it is difficult to avoid the verdict that, in the end, permanent officials, such as Nicolson and Clerk, acquiesced wearily in the tide of negotiations initiated by Cairo, which they found impossible either to control or to keep abreast of from their vantage point in London.

As well as the Middle East, the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war in November 1914 also had profound implications for British policy in the Balkans. Clerk was quick to observe the strategic threat to Serbia that this posed. He was already acquainted with Supilo and Seton-Watson's support for a federal Yugoslavia. In December 1914, he hoped to use Seton-Watson, a fervent advocate of the policy of securing Serbia's rear by agreements with Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece, to build some kind of Balkan confederation to offset the military threat to Serbia. He minuted on 8 December 1914:

> Mr. Seton-Watson came to see me this evening. He is quite ready to go to Serbia, and would be accompanied by Mr. G.Trevelyan. He fully realises the situation and, though he disclaims any great weight or influence among the Serbs, I think the views he could express as an unofficial observer and a well known Serbo-Croat sympathizer might not be without effect.[79]

Supilo and Seton-Watson's vision of a federal Yugoslavia appealed to Clerk, not only on idealistic grounds, but also because a Serbia compensated with Yugoslav territory would be more likely to make concessions to Bulgaria, perhaps in Macedonia, for example.[80] Sir Edward Grey gave his assent to the Seton-Watson mission, but his tour of the Balkan capitals at the end of 1914 and the early months of 1915 bore little fruit. Diplomacy was clearly hamstrung by deep-seated historical and political rivalries, which divided the Balkan states, as well as the legacy of the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913. Allied attempts to procure the military participation of Venizelos and the Greek government in the attack on the Dardanelles foundered on the opposition of Russia, who by 4 March 1915 had laid out her own territorial desiderata in the Turkish Empire including Constantinople, the Bosphorus, the Dardanelles, the European shore of the Marmora up as far as the Enos—Midia line, the Asiatic shore as far as Izmir and the offshore islands.[81] But complications were also caused by secret Allied negotiations with Italy, which had been underway throughout the winter of 1915, and which seemed to offer an easier alternative for the Allies than the creation of a Balkan League.

When the First World War broke out in August 1914, the Italian government did not honour its commitments to the German and Austro-Hungarian governments under the terms of the Triple Alliance of 1882. As the Western Front degenerated into stalemate after the Battle of the Marne and the German retreat to the river Aisne, the Italian government found itself in the enviable situation of being courted by the combatants of both sides. In February 1915, the Italian government, thwarted by the failure of the German ambassador, Prince Bülow, to extract sufficient concessions from Austria-Hungary as the price of its adherence to the Triple Alliance, turned back to negotiations

with the Entente Powers through the auspices of the Italian ambassador in London, the Marchese Imperiali.[82] On 16 February, the War Council had authorized Churchill's plan 'to bombard and take the Gallipoli Peninsula, with Constantinople as its objective'.[83] In such circumstances, the strategic value of Italian intervention assumed an even greater significance. Italian intervention presented George Clerk with a considerable dilemma in the spring of 1915, forcing him to measure his own support for the cause of 'small states' and 'oppressed peoples' against the national interest and national policy. Commenting on her desiderata in the Foreign Office on 6 March, Clerk noted: Italy's appetite is not moderate, and it is difficult to believe that she expects the Allies to accept these exorbitant demands as they stand.' Clerk regarded her claim to Dalmatia down to the Narenta River, as 'quite inadmissible' and 'if the Allies were to support it, they would drive Dalmatia and the Slav countries behind it into the arms of Austria'. Clerk predicted that the Dalmatian clause 'will be the crux'.[84]

But as the Gallipoli expedition got underway in March 1915, the exigencies of the military situation began to weigh heavily on the diplomatic negotiations. Grey was under pressure not to lose' Italy like he had 'lost' Turkey in November 1914. In France, the Foreign Minister, Delcassé, was a formidable proponent of an Italian alliance. On 12 March, Clerk noted: 'Though M.Delcassé is right to insist on the importance of securing Italy, I hope he will not support the claim to Dalmatia.'[85] Supilo was sufficiently concerned about the tenor of the secret negotiations that he travelled to Petrograd to see if he could prise the Italian demands from Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister and pan-Slav protector. At the same time, Grey attempted to forge a compromise with the Italians. He agreed to the Italian claim to Dalmatia but petitioned Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Secretary, to make concessions. On 29 March, Sonnino renounced Split, and Clerk rallied behind the Grey compromise. Supilo returned to London and mounted a major protest to Sir Edward Grey. Clerk minuted on 31 March: 'We cannot strain the principle of nationalities to the point of risking success in the war.'[86] And on 9 April, Clerk added:

> It must be made clear to the Serbs and Jugo-Slavs that it is the Allies together—including Russia—who have been obliged to diminish some of their hopes. We wish the war to be ended so far as possible on the basis of nationalities, certainly, but we did not set out on a Nationality Crusade.[87]

Supilo had looked to Russia as their main protector in the Allied negotiations with Italy. He had looked especially to Sazonov and the Russian ambassador in London, Count Benckendorff. At some point in the middle of April 1915, the Russian Foreign Ministry lessened its opposition to the signing of a convention between the Allies and Italy. Up until this point, as the Russian record makes clear, it had had grave reservations about such a convention.[88]

Supilo, smelling desertion and betrayal, appealed to Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed. It was in the hope of somehow forestalling the negotiations, or at least mitigating the more extreme of the Italian demands, that Seton-Watson urged Masaryk to add his intellectual weight to the debate. He arrived in London on 18 April.[89] Seton-Watson leaned heavily on Clerk in order to maintain pressure on Grey. Clerk had reservations about the degree of Anglo-French concessions to Italy. On 23 April, *The Times* printed a letter from Seton-Watson forcefully condemning the negotiations with Italy as a violation

of national self-determination, a betrayal of the Slavs, which would discredit the Entente and throw the Slavs back on Austria—Hungary.[90] Clerk himself had 'quite approved' of the contents of this letter in a telephone conversation the previous day.[91] Sir Arthur Evans, another supporter of 'oppressed nationalities', also launched a strong attack on 27 April.[92]

An undated note by Seton-Watson addressed to Clerk summarized the depth of Seton-Watson's indignation at this time.

> News has come fr. Nis & fr. Paris that there is a serious danger of Russia giving way in the Dalmatian question. I still refuse to believe that Petrograd can be so shortsighted as not to realize that such a step is for Russia a betrayal of Slav cause & for ourselves an abandonment of Principle of Nationality at a vital point & on 1st occasion of serious pressure. Incidentally it will immensely weaken our moral position in America, where Germans will not be slow to exploit it & where it will alienate whole of Slav immigrants. The effect of such a betrayal upon Poles can be imagined.
>
> But leaving aside all theory and idealism it seems to me sheer madness fr. point of view of *Realpolitik. Our* most vital ints demand that Italy shd *not* acquire Dalm, wh. in her hands might give her the key to Mediterranean.

'Such an arrangement,' Seton-Watson observed, 'has seeds of endless trouble in the future; unless we are careful, what was the *causa causans* of the great war will become the *causa causans* of a breach between allies.' On the back of the note Seton-Watson wrote: 'he himself inclined to agree sees such an action to be crawling with diffies. Govts realize the situation of the Jugoslavs & will continue to bear it in mind urges me not to throw up sponge in just indignation.'[93]

On 26 April, the secret Treaty of London was signed. Italy declared war on Austria—Hungary on 23 May. In Paris on 1 May, Wickham Steed was informed by Delcassé: 'Think what it means. Within a month there will be a million Italian bayonets in the field…. Reinforcements as large as that may be worth some sacrifice, even of principle.'[94] Steed wrote to his editor at *The Times:* 'I begin to understand George Clerk's remark to Seton-Watson on Monday [the 26th] that unless Italy comes in at once and turns the scales decisively against Austria and Germany, Grey, Delcassé and Sazonov will deserve "to be hanged".'[95] Sir Edward Grey defended his compromise in a letter to Seton-Watson of 3 May.[96] In an interview with the Scottish historian on the following day, Grey insisted that Fiume, Spalato and Ragusa would 'never be abandoned', but acknowledged 'there must always be ragged fringes everywhere'. Seton-Watson noted: 'Clerk afterwards spoke very frankly. Showed his genuine sympathy with South Slavs, but remarked "I am not running this war!" Expressed regret at Supilo's absence—believes it will some day be seen to be a mistake.'

When it came down to it, Delcassé's million bayonets did very little to relieve the pressure on Serbia, and Balkan particularism undermined diplomatic initiatives. In the summer of 1915, in order to help the Serbs, the Allies made great efforts to secure the support of Bulgaria, but Bulgaria could only be appeased by the prospect of territorial

concessions in Macedonia at the expense of Serbia, which had months earlier seen its aspirations in the Adriatic thwarted by Italian desiderata. In order to overcome Serbian objections on the Macedonian question, on 16 August 1915, the Allies offered to guarantee to Serbia at the end of the war Bosnia-Herzegovina, Srem, Bácska, some of Southern Dalmatia and Slavonia but with Croatia's fate to be reserved until the termination of the conflict.[97] On 16 August, Seton-Watson went to see George Clerk. Neither Pašić, the Serbian Prime Minister, nor Supilo were pleased with the Allied initiative. Clerk concurred that it was really important to include Croatia in any guarantee 'at least to the extent that it lies only with the Croatians themselves to form part of a national Jugo-Slav State'.[98]

Supilo met Grey on 30 August. He argued that the Croats should either be assigned to Serbia or allowed to choose whether to join. Provided Serbia agreed, Grey affirmed that after the war 'Bosnia, Hercegovina, southern Dalmatia, Slavonia and Croatia would be free: they will be able to decide their own fate'.[99] This formula, however, did not placate the Serbian prime minister. Pašić and Supilo held different visions of the future Yugoslav state. Serbia was the 'Piedmont' of the South Slavs. Pašić envisaged a centralized state under Serbian control very much along the lines that Cavour had established in Italy in 1861. Supilo envisaged a federal approach in which the future Yugoslavia was a federation, a voluntary union of equal states. This growing difference led to friction and factionalism within the Yugoslav committee.[100]

However, as the Yugoslavs wrangled, the Bulgarians acted. On 6 September 1915, the whole Balkan house of cards came tumbling down when Bulgaria allied with the Central Powers. During the following month, Austria—Hungary from the north and Bulgaria from the east launched major offensives against Serbia. Clerk tried desperately to do something for Serbia and the South Slavs, faced with impending military disaster in the Balkans. Hankey's diary recorded:

> September 15th (1915). George Clerk called and asked me to take up the possibility of an expedition to Serbia with the object of bringing in Roumania and Greece. Otherwise he fears that Bulgaria…will join the Central Powers, and we shall be shelled off the Gallipoli Peninsula. After seeing Callwell I undertook to state a case on the subject. September 16th. Wrote paper for Clerk and sent draft to him and Callwell by midday.

The memorandum was submitted to the Asquith Cabinet on 18 September, and was circulated to the Dardanelles Committee on 21 September. In this memorandum, Hankey outlined the Allied choices as either (1) a renewed effort at the Dardanelles, or (2) from the political point of view, an alliance between Serbia, Romania and Greece to deter Bulgaria, or (3) from the military point of view, an Allied initiative from Salonica made up of forces then involved in the Dardanelles campaign. Hankey concluded:

> The objections and difficulty in the way of this policy are very evident, but, if we simply acquiesce in the Bulgarian refusal, there would seem to be a real danger that the Balkan States may be politically destroyed piece-meal, and, unless we have before then gained the possession of the Gallipoli Peninsula, we may be driven out of the Dardanelles.

No decision to send Allied troops was made until 5 October.[101] Grey vacillated. The Greeks were equivocal. The scale of Hankey's strategic proposals caused division among the Allies. In November 1915, an interdepartmental committee composed of Clerk from the Foreign Office and representatives of the Admiralty and War Office created a British Adriatic mission to alleviate the plight of refugees engulfed in the Serbian anabasis. By January 1916, Serbia had been completely overrun by the Central Powers, and, in the same month, the Allies carried out the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Clerk strongly supported the cause of Yugoslav unity on the basis of the Supilo and Seton-Watson programme. At the end of 1916, Sir Rennell Rodd, the British ambassador in Rome, attacked Lord Cromer for assuming the chairmanship of the Serbian Society, thereby identifying himself with the cause of Steed and Seton-Watson, and cast doubt on the loyalty of the Yugoslavs in a letter to Eric Drummond, Grey's private secretary. Clerk noted on the correspondence:

> Rodd thinks of Dalmatia in terms of Venetian Counts and Genoese Barons. But he is perfectly right when he says that certainly some of the Jugo-Slav emissaries would be ready now to compound with Austria. *Only*, he doesn't say why. It is because the nationalist aspirations of Italy, the fears of Holy Russia of an independent non-orthodox Slav State, facing West instead of East, and the narrow suspicion of Serbia are beginning to have a fatal effect on the Jugo-Slavs. They get no backing from us, and they prefer to form one solid block in the Austrian Empire, on terms that they can command to-day, rather than to be split up and denationalized by Italy, Austria and Serbia.[102]

The Bulgarian intervention and the collapse of Serbia early in 1916 were grave blows to the power and prestige of the Foreign Office, and the abandonment of the Dardanelles was a significant setback for the Allies. Balkan confederation was a house built on sand. The Italian negotiations had caused Clerk deep discomfort, and his response to them was ambivalent and inconsistent. There was growing criticism of the Foreign Office. The war exacted a considerable toll on the permanent officials: Grey was suffering from blindness; Tyrrell lost two sons to the war and suffered a nervous breakdown in 1915; Crowe had been at odds with each of them; Nicolson resigned in April 1916. Paradoxically, Clerk 'gained in prestige during these months'.[103] He had cultivated Sir Maurice Hankey making use of the 'round table' or principal international conferences, which became so vital to the Allied war effort. Clerk hoped that through Hankey the gap between diplomacy and military operations might be closed. Clerk had no brothers and no children. The vicissitudes of war did not exact the same toll on him as it did on his colleagues.

The Anglo-French Calais Conference on 6 July 1915, the first formal conference between the British and French prime ministers, Asquith and Viviani, was 'an important point in the development of the Supreme Command of the Allies'. Hankey recalled the chaos of the conference and the rather 'Stone Age' proceedings, 'an age when it was considered necessary to talk in French or not at all', the confusion over the time of the opening meeting, and Clerk 'in a great state of panic because he had been translating the Prime Minister's speech into French but as of yet had only received the English version

of half'.[104] These conferences were not without their attendant dangers. At the Anglo-French ministerial conference in Paris in November 1915, because of the danger of mines, the British delegation, including Clerk and Hankey, proceeded to Boulogne by fast destroyer. They disembarked by walking across the hospital ship *Anglia*, which was tied up alongside. Hankey recalled that 'a few hours later she was blown up by a mine on the very track we had taken'.[105]

Nevertheless, these meetings and the second Anglo-French Calais Conference in December 1915 were of crucial importance because they led to the establishment of the forerunner of the Supreme Council of the Allies, 'a Standing Committee of an advisory character', which would co-ordinate Allied strategy. However, the Allies were unable to establish a permanent secretariat due primarily, according to Hankey, to the concerted opposition of Aristide Briand and the Quai d'Orsay. That no such objection emanated from the Foreign Office was primarily due to the partnership that he had forged with Clerk. Hankey later recalled:

> With the Foreign Office I had no such difficulty. I was working every day in close touch with them. I always shared with George Clerk the secretarial work of these conferences and was on the best of terms with him. I regarded myself in these matters as practically an agent of the Foreign Office, and they seemed glad to have my knowledge of the war as a whole.[106]

By 1916, Clerk had become the vital conduit through which extra-parliamentary and émigré pressure groups hoped to reach the ear of the Foreign Secretary and the War Cabinet, and Clerk continued to perform vital services for the émigrés, as he had in the past. In April 1915, it was Clerk who provided Masaryk with a permit to enter England when the delicacy of the Italian negotiations necessitated his presence. It was to Clerk that Seton-Watson turned in November 1915, when Masaryk 's Serbian passport prompted him to be placed under house arrest.[107] It was Clerk who quickly interceded on Supilo's behalf when Special Branch officers arrested him in March 1917. On this occasion he noted:

> I can quite understand Mr Soupilo, whose knowledge of French is limited and of English rudimentary, not impressing Mr Basil Thomson. But Mr Soupilo is none the less a serious leader of the Jugo-Slavs…not only is he heart and soul with the Allies, but he has more common sense and more idea of what is practical than any other members of the Jugoslav Committee…he is a man in his own way of serious political importance.[108]

By the early months of 1916, Seton-Watson and his group of supporters were bitterly disillusioned with the ability of the Asquith government to successfully prosecute the war. They were especially critical of the Balkan diplomacy of Grey. Seton-Watson savagely pilloried him for the Balkan fiasco in 'The Failure of Sir Edward Grey'.[109] Masaryk urged Seton-Watson to consider a new propaganda tool to attack the failings of the government. More powerful forms of propaganda were necessary if the

dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was to be realized. It was not simply a question of the co-ordination of Allied diplomacy and military strategy in the Balkans, though this was serious enough, it was also that the dismemberers had to increase their credibility with Allied public opinion and Allied policy-makers. British insularity about affairs in Central Europe was simply too acute. Lord Robert Cecil, Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, for example, admitted to knowing nothing about Czechoslovakia until the end of 1916, when, in the process of drafting a statement of war aims, he became aware that the French government had already proclaimed its independence a premier Allied objective.[110] Masaryk was adamant: a new publication that sought to educate and inform British political circles and British public opinion was a *sine qua non* of an Allied commitment to dismember Austria—Hungary. In October 1916, the first edition of *The New Europe* was issued. Its motto, *'Pour la Victoire Intégrale'*, was a declaration of war on the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[111] Clerk later described it as 'an essential guide and corrective in my work'.[112]

Victory in 1916 was as remote as ever. The year was unrelentingly grim and had a corrosive effect upon the morale of the Allied leaders. The Somme campaign of that summer was, in Hankey's words, 'a bloody and disastrous failure', and his diary faithfully recalls the mood of despair that hung over the Allies, for example, at the Boulogne Conference in October 1916, and the increasing bitterness over military strategy that divided Asquith and Lloyd George most notably at the Anglo-Italian-French Conference at Paris in November 1916. During the railway journey to the Paris conference, he recalled the mood of its British participants: 'A shadow came over the party as we passed the great war cemetery at Etaples, already terribly full, and Asquith's thoughts, we all felt, had turned to his brilliant son Raymond who had lately fallen on the Somme.'

Clerk was on intimate terms with Hankey at these conferences, preparing and editing the drafts of prime ministerial speeches, and liaising with Mantoux, his French counterpart. At least this ensured that the Foreign Office was kept abreast of important developments. Hankey recalled the lengthy process of writing, editing and translation into French and English. He and Clerk were unable to retire until the early hours. Matters were not facilitated on one occasion by the arrival of Asquith at midnight 'in a very talkative and communicative mood, and telling us a lot of interesting information he had picked up from Briand'.[113]

With the fall of the Asquith government and the formation of the new coalition led by David Lloyd George in December 1916, Clerk retained his connection with Hankey. The collapse of Asquith's government led to a plethora of Cabinet and conference preparation. On the evening of 28 December, when Lloyd George requested that an 'absolutely deadbeat' Hankey prepare conclusions for the following day, Hankey noted:

> So George Clerk, who was helping me with the secretarial arrangements, and I went off to dine, drank a bottle of champagne, and drafted the most admirable conclusions, which were agreed to by all concerned in a state of semi-intoxication.

The following day they set off for Paris and Rome, and the most important Allied conferences of the war.[114]

With the accession of a new government, the Foreign Office reaffirmed its own commitment to *'la Victoire Intégrale'*. In June 1916, Hardinge had replaced Nicolson as permanent under-secretary. In August 1916, Asquith's War Committee had initiated an extensive if belated debate on war aims. In the same month, the Foreign Office, in a 'Suggested Basis for a Territorial Settlement in Europe' written by Tyrrell and Paget, had committed itself unequivocally to the principle of the dismemberment of Austria—Hungary.[115] In September, an interdepartmental Sub-Committee on Territorial Changes was set up chaired by Sir Louis Mallet. In January 1917, Clerk co-authored a document, which was a significant statement of British war aims. It was written in response to a memorandum submitted by the Imperial General Staff on 8 September. This memorandum fully reflected the somewhat enigmatic views of the Chief of the General Staff, Sir William Robertson, who was strongly committed to the destruction of German military power, but wanted no truck with any proposal to create small Slav states in central Europe. 'If the maintenance of the balance of power is to be a fundamental principle of British diplomacy, it follows that a strong Teutonic State must be maintained in Central Europe,' said the memorandum. The General Staff opposed the division of German colonies among the Entente Powers. This would create a colonial Alsace-Lorraine and thus contain the seeds of a new conflict. Moreover, it was doubtful whether Germany would have ever been weakened sufficiently to be forced to hand over its colonies. Consequently, Great Britain might even wish to consider the surrender of colonies to Germany in return for German political, naval or commercial concessions. The General Staff warned: 'A policy of hate and of revenge is not that of true statesmanship, and any peace that may be concluded should be based upon such principles as tend to render it strong and reliable.' This was interpreted by the Foreign Office as the programme of a compromise peace.

The Clerk—Tyrrell—Mallet memorandum emphatically rejected the arguments put forward by the General Staff.

> I look upon the people and nation handed on to me as a responsibility conferred upon me by God; and that it is, as is written in the Bible, my duty to *increase this heritage*, for which one day I shall be called upon to give account; those who try to interfere with my task I shall crush.

Kaiser Wilhelm's words prefaced the Foreign Office response. This was the policy of *Welt-Herrschaft*, which the Kaiser had pursued relentlessly since 1888. It had little in common with the aims and objectives pursued by Bismarck. Moreover, the contention that Germany could act as a buffer state between Great Britain and Russia was nothing more than an 'illusion'. The best guarantee for peace and security was to cultivate close relations with Russia.

> Our safety from the recurrence of our present calamities, we believe, will be best secured if we inflict such a defeat as will compel the Germans of their own free-will to return to the policy which they were satisfied with until the present Emperor came to the throne.

The best blow, therefore, that could be aimed against 'the military domination of Prussia' was the retention of German colonies, which would be a precondition of the realization of a further British war aim: the destruction of German naval power.

> It is a question whether the time has not now come for the adoption of a different attitude towards Germany, based upon the German assumption that there is not room in the world for two world dominions…. The fact is that we cannot allow any nation to share our supremacy at sea: our geographical position alone obliges us to claim this monopoly.

Germany, the memorandum concluded, should confine her energies to exploiting the position, which she had achieved for herself in 1870, and Great Britain should be allowed to continue her existence as an overseas empire, with no continental ambitions. Finally, concerning a compromise peace or a 'peace on terms', the only peace that could be contemplated was 'a draw in our favour' that would allow Great Britain:

> to keep the German colonies, and also to insist that the European settlement should be a genuine, and not a shop-window dressing. In other words, the only peace we can accept is one which would enable us to insist that the restoration and restitution of Belgium is one that leaves Belgium completely independent and unfettered.[116]

The Clerk—Tyrrell—Mallet memorandum was the strongest reaffirmation that German nationalism was a direct military threat to the security of the British Empire and that participation in the First World War, with all the sacrifice that it entailed, was of paramount national interest to the British. It placed George Clerk firmly alongside the more unequivocal proponents of Germanophobia in the Foreign Office.[117] In November 1916, Lord Lansdowne, strongly influenced by the failure of the 1916 offensive, had made an appeal for peace negotiations. The smack of defeatism was in the air. The Clerk—Tyrrell—Mallet memorandum emphasized unequivocally that the principal British war aim was the destruction of Germany as a world power and that any compromise peace or 'draw', which was not in Britain's favour, was nothing short of a defeat. In 1917, Clerk and the supporters of *The New Europe* were at one in their belief that salvation was only possible through *'la Victoire Intégrale'*.

The publication of *The New Europe* brought greater cohesion and sense of purpose to the dismemberers' cause. However, the message of the new periodical did not sit well in some quarters and its radicalism earned Seton-Watson evident notoriety. Between October 1916 and May 1917 he was in constant danger of conscription. His friends smelt conspiracy. In the summer of 1916, Seton-Watson received notice of his imminent conscription, the fruit of an intrigue, which he attributed to the Machiavellian machinations of the Italian ambassador.[118] Perhaps there was more than meets the eye in Clerk's laconic explanation to Jovan Jovanovic, the Serbian Minister in London, of Seton-Watson's release from this onerous duty: 'I understand that Dr. Seton-Watson will not be called up for military service and will continue to be able to look after the Serbian Relief Fund. I trust that my information is accurate.'[119] This 'threat' to Seton-Watson was finally alleviated in May 1917, when he joined John Buchan's Department of

Information. Eight of his ten colleagues in the Intelligence Bureau of that department contributed to *The New Europe*. An uneasy relationship existed between it and the Foreign Office, but Seton-Watson's employment there had 'no ill effects upon his relationship with his chief contact, George Clerk'.[120]

Despite Clerk's cultivation of Hankey and the Foreign Office's commitment to *'la Victoire Intégrale'*, the advent of the Lloyd George coalition saw an erosion of the influence of the Foreign Office in the making of foreign policy, which became particularly marked in 1917 and 1918.[121] The Prime Minister wanted to centralize decision-making in a War Cabinet of predominantly five men with the new foreign secretary, A.J.Balfour, 'a member in all but name'. He had a low opinion of professional diplomats, preferring to fall back on a secret coterie of advisers known as the 'Garden Suburb' to conduct foreign policy. 'I want no diplomats; diplomats were invented to simply waste time,' he famously observed.[122] In his view, they infrequently got it wrong, and, as Lloyd George's war memoirs showed, the early example of the failure of the Milner mission to accurately convey the reality of conditions in Imperial Russia was clear evidence of their ineptitude. Clerk represented the Foreign Office on this mission, and his report on Russian conditions served to confirm the Prime Minister's prejudices and low opinion of professional diplomats.

The decision to send a mission to Russia, early in 1917 led by Lord Milner, had been motivated by what Lloyd George termed his 'repeated efforts to induce the British government to establish more direct and authoritative contact with Russia in order to ascertain the real position in that country, and to discover what was wrong in its equipment and organisation'. As the Prime Minister later noted, the Petrograd conference was:

> the first time during the War that the Allies had conferred together on the Eastern Front. It was the first time after these years of war that East, as well as West, had been authoritatively represented at a Conference on any front.[123]

Robert Bruce Lockhart, who was to play a controversial role in the revolutionary *journées* in Russia, later observed: 'Rarely in the history of great wars can so many important ministers and generals have left their respective countries on so useless an errand.'[124] The principal members of the British delegation that gathered at Euston station on 20 January 1917 consisted of Milner, Lord Revelstoke, Walter Layton and Sir Henry Wilson. Clerk represented the Foreign Office. They were presented to Tsar Nicholas II, along with the principal members of the French and Italian missions, on 31 January at the royal retreat of Tsarsköe Selo near Petrograd, and dined with the Tsar and Tsarina on 3 February. The Tsar did not impress at the first audience. 'The sacred spark is not in him,' concluded the French ambassador, Maurice Paléologue.[125] The mission remained in Russia until 25 February.[126] In his own memoirs, Lloyd George savaged the Milner mission, especially Milner and Sir Henry Wilson, for ignoring warnings that were 'blaring at them in every direction'. The mission arrived in the wake of the assassination of Rasputin. But the murder had changed little. There was open talk about the possibility of the overthrow of Nicholas II. As Clerk reported:

> Every member of the Mission heard from all sides, Russian and foreign, of the inevitability of something serious happening; the only question was whether the Emperor, the Empress or M.Protopopoff [the Minister of the Interior] would be removed, or perhaps all three. Meanwhile, it was generally agreed that there must be no revolution during the war, and short of revolution or more murders, no one could say how the power for evil of the Empress was to be broken. The open way in which people of all classes, including those nearest the throne…spoke against the Empress and her two blind tools—the Emperor and M.Protopopoff—was, to one who knew anything at all of Russia, extraordinary.

In Moscow on 11 February, Chelnokoff, the Mayor of Moscow, and Prince Lvov, the President of the All Russia Zemstvos Union, impressed the danger of revolution on both Clerk and Milner in no uncertain terms. Yet both Milner and Clerk did not believe that a revolutionary situation was imminent. In his report of 1 March written on the *Kildonan Castle*, Clerk commented:

> I do not believe that there will be a revolution before the war is over unless maladministration and happy-go-luckiness succeed in producing a *jacquerie*, which is most unlikely. I must, however, admit that I am probably in a minority in this opinion, certainly in Russia.

This was a curious observation to make. Evidently, Clerk was unable to grasp the radicalism of the forces about to be unleashed. His report concluded:

> The most serious thinkers in Russia, and those who would head an organised revolution, are opposed to it, and many of the people who now indulge in the wildest talk against the Emperor and his entourage are really, like the assassins of Rasputin, trying to save the monarchy in spite of itself.

The Milner mission had only a second-hand grasp of political and social conditions inside Russia. Clerk commented on how the mission had been kept ‘in a sort of ring fence and prevented from hearing any defence or serious explanation of the Emperor’s policy’, the result of factional strife between ‘the reactionaries’ and the ‘liberal and anti-governmental faction’. Great efforts were made to induce the mission to postpone its departure until the Duma reconvened on 27 February. Clerk was convinced this was an error, and would have led the mission to become embroiled in factional strife.[127] In the light of subsequent events, Clerk had clearly misread the crisis, which was about to engulf Russia. The March Revolution was a matter of days away. He may have been misled by the temporary lull, which seemed to preside over Petrograd for much of February, and the evident improvement in the internal situation, remarked on by the British ambassador, which appeared to accompany the mission’s arrival.[128]

Milner’s report to the War Cabinet was a realistic and sober assessment of the failure of the Russian government’s munitions policy and its transportational difficulties. Despite such mitigating circumstances, it is difficult to disagree with the indictment of

the mission contained in the Lloyd George memoirs. The Prime Minister was incredulous, citing explicit sections of Clerk's report to Milner to illustrate the incompetence of the mission as a whole:

> It is incomprehensible that they should have been so deaf and blind. It is one more proof of the way in which the most intelligent human judgment has always been misled by the tapestries of an established order without paying sufficient regard to the condition of the walls they hide and on which they hang. Everything they saw, most of what they heard, pointed to revolution, and immediate revolution.[129]

The Milner mission did nothing to increase the Prime Minister's confidence in the political judgement either of Milner or the Foreign Office, and simply confirmed his view that he ought to take a more personal role in the conduct of diplomatic policy, or at least conduct it with advisers in whom he could feel some confidence.

As Lloyd George shunted the Foreign Office to one side, Clerk continued to receive suppliant Slav exiles. 'A Mr. Benes came to see me today,' he minuted laconically on 26 October 1917. The latest Czech arrival was reeling under the impact of the Italian defeat at Caporetto. He pleaded with Clerk for an allusion, either in parliament or in a public speech, to 'the legitimate desire of the Czechs for their independence and at least the expression of a hope that its attainment would be one of the happy results of the war'.[130] However, Lloyd George seemed committed for much of 1917 to the negotiation of a separate peace with the Habsburg Empire. Lenin's seizure of power in Russia in November 1917, and the prospect of a one-front war, did nothing to dissuade the War Cabinet from seeking some kind of rapprochement with the Habsburgs. Within the Foreign Office, both Balfour and Robert Cecil opposed the search for a separate peace, and remained sympathetic to 'oppressed nationalities'. But the former lacked the vigour to press his views, and the latter had a profound dislike of Lloyd George, threatening resignation to little avail.[131] Dismemberment seemed to be a policy that would serve only to lengthen rather than shorten the war.

Early the following year, there was a concerted attempt within the Foreign Office to halt the decline of its influence. The catalyst was Lord Hardinge who had resumed his position as permanent under-secretary in 1916. Hardinge detested Lloyd George and the 'Garden Suburb'. He wanted to reassert the role of traditional diplomats. In 1917, he had advocated the creation of a Political Intelligence Department, staffed by experts who would process political intelligence in a systematic fashion. To obtain these experts, Hardinge raided the Intelligence Bureau of the Department of Information: R.W.Seton-Watson and Lewis Namier staffed its East and Central Europe section. James Headlam-Morley, E.R.Bevan and G.Saunders were responsible for Germany; Rex and Allen Leeper manned the Russian and Balkan sections; and Arnold Toynbee held the Middle East.[132] During 1917 and 1918, it was often difficult to distinguish articles published in *The New Europe* from reports drawn up within the Intelligence Bureau and submitted to the private secretaries of the King, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary.[133] Early in 1918, the Political Intelligence Department was established within the Foreign Office under Tyrrell, staffed by members of the Intelligence Bureau. Seton-Watson did not find Tyrrell to his liking. He went instead to the Department of Enemy Propaganda under

Lord Northcliffe at Crewe House where he worked with Wickham Steed in the Austro-Hungarian section.[134] As a result of Hardinge's *démarche,* the forces of dismemberment had become firmly ensconced in the inner portals of the Foreign Office itself.

Throughout 1918, the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office was preoccupied with preparations for peacemaking. In October, Hardinge proposed a format for the peace conference. This was the centre-piece of his strategy to move the Foreign Office back into the centre of diplomatic activity. The Political Intelligence Department played a crucial role in the peace settlement of 1919 at Paris, because territorial committees were established to relieve the Allied leaders Lloyd George, Wilson, Clemenceau and Orlando of the burden of digesting the great wealth of complex information, which inundated them in the opening weeks of the conference. Five committees dealt with Romania, Greece and Albania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Belgium and Denmark. They worked through a co-ordinating committee whose British representative was Sir Eyre Crowe. This administrative structure ensured that *The New Europe* group would play a significant role in shaping the complexion of the new successor states in Central and Eastern Europe. Seton-Watson's expertise in this region was of crucial importance. In November 1918, he had submitted a preparatory report on Austria—Hungary which argued that the only conceivable policy that the Allies could pursue in Central Europe was to recognize the 'duly accredited National Assemblies' of German-Austrians, Magyars, Czechoslovaks, Yugoslavs, Poles, Romanians and Ukrainians. In a separate memorandum on 'The Future Frontiers of Hungary' he supported the idea of national unity for Czechoslovaks, Romanians and Yugoslavs, whilst putting the strongest emphasis on the protection of minority rights as part of any peace settlement in Central Europe.[135] There can be no doubt that Clerk strongly supported Hardinge's attempt to revive the fortunes of the Foreign Office, and remained strongly sympathetic to the cause of dismemberment. He maintained his close rapport with Seton-Watson. But he played little part at Paris, remaining in London for the early part of 1919, as acting principal private secretary to Lord Curzon.

It has been alleged that the advocates of *The New Europe* played a decisive role in the evolution of British policy towards the Austro-Hungarian Empire, both during 1918 and at the peace conference itself, and that wartime policy and propaganda were 'instrumental if not decisive in bringing about the collapse of the Monarchy'.[136] It has further been alleged that, from the signing of the armistice, the apologists of *The New Europe* dragooned the British government into a policy of particular hostility to Hungary, stooping even to conspiracy to keep the government in the dark about their intentions.[137] The Treaty of Trianon was the apotheosis of this propagandist activity.[138] It was no coincidence that in 1920 Allen Leeper, 'Belisarius' in *The New Europe,* emerged as 'the staunchest defender' of the Trianon treaty against its critics. In March 1919, moved perhaps by the entreaties of the Archduke Joseph of Hungary to his cousin King George V, Lloyd George began to adopt a more sympathetic outlook to the plight of the Hungarians. Reservations about British policy were echoed in 1919 by a small group of British officials including Ernest Troubridge, the commander of the Allied flotilla on the Danube, Sir William Goode, the Director of Relief Missions, Sir Thomas Hohler, the British representative in Budapest, and also ironically enough by George Clerk himself.[139]

There can be no doubt that the Political Intelligence Department played a vital role in establishing new successor states in Central Europe in 1919.[140] But it is surely an exaggeration to credit them with the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which in 1918 was being buffeted by centrifugal forces of extraordinary intensity. Its collapse in October was a *fait accompli*. The *ancien régime* could not be restored; its corpse was incapable of resuscitation. *The New Europe* group's preponderance in the Foreign Office coincided with, rather than precipitated, the organic collapse of the Habsburg Empire. Moreover, there is a grave danger in this analysis of seeing a greater unity of purpose, a stronger coherence of plan among the proponents of dismemberment than actually existed in 1919. The dismemberers were not a political party bound indissolubly to a manifesto and it is an exaggeration to see them surreptitiously conspiring at Paris to bring about the downfall of Hungary. Seton-Watson's own views on Hungary, for example, were far more pragmatic than some have allowed.[141] Allen Leeper was a proponent of Anglo-Romanian amity, but there was no doubting the deep unease and hostility with which he contemplated the domestic and foreign policy of the Bratianu government in Bucharest in the autumn of 1919. It is also misleading to believe that Clerk's understandable misgivings about Allied policy towards Hungary in December 1919 placed him in any emerging pro-Hungarian camp of British officials. He was first and foremost a dismemberer. His appointment as first British minister to Czechoslovakia in 1919 owed much to his acquaintance and friendship with Thomas Masaryk, and was possibly influenced by Seton-Watson himself.[142] Clerk's pro-Hungarian sympathies at this time reflected the pragmatism that had always been his trademark in such matters, and had been forged exclusively by his missions to Romania and Hungary in the autumn of 1919. Moreover, the Political Intelligence Department had no connection with non-territorial problems at Paris. They played no role, for example, in the formulation of the reparation and indemnity clauses of the Treaty of Trianon.[143]

On the eve of his departure for Turkey in November 1926, the Czechoslovak newspaper *Prager Presse* reminded its readers that, during the Great War, Sir George Clerk had 'energetically supported the leading personalities in the war of liberation of our nation, personalities to whom he has continued to show a true friendship ever since'.[144] Clerk was a strong supporter of 'oppressed nationalities' in the Foreign Office, particularly well disposed to South Slavs and Czechoslovaks. Clerk and Seton-Watson were strongly attached in a romantic way to the cause of small nations; both men had strong Scottish connections; both were graduates of New College, Oxford. Clerk was often forced by circumstance to be pragmatic, and care-fully balanced his own idealism against the imperatives of national policy. Nevertheless, he was sympathetic to Supilo's vision of Yugoslavia, a union of the South Slavs, which was the product of a free association of different ethnic groups, not the conquest of all by one. But he also supported Yugoslav unity for strategic reasons, because it would facilitate the creation of a Balkan League in 1915, which in turn would advance the cause of the Allies in the eastern theatre. The Italian negotiations of 1915 caused him discomfort, obliging him to weigh support for the South Slavs against the strategic value of Italian military intervention. As the Foreign Office saw its influence decline markedly in 1916, as the strain of the war took its toll on its senior officials, Clerk energetically exploited his relationship with Sir Maurice Hankey to avoid its potential isolation with regard to policy formulation.

Clerk gave solid encouragement and support to Masaryk's vision of a Czechoslovak state in Central Europe at a time when few politicians in Great Britain had any grasp of the political and economic complexities of that region and public opinion was at its most uninformed. By demonstrating the inexorable link between Austria—Hungary, Imperial Germany and the forces of pan-German nationalism, Masaryk made the dismemberment of Austria—Hungary a *sine qua non* of German defeat and the existence of Czechoslovakia a reality in 1919.

It was fitting, therefore, that Clerk should be appointed as first British minister to the new Czechoslovak state in September 1919. However, it is not entirely clear why Clerk accepted a diplomatic post abroad at this point. As head of the War Department during the Great War, Clerk had had 'greatness thrust upon him' and had got to know a stream of visitors from abroad, who would normally have been dealt with by under-secretaries. Knighted in 1917, Clerk had become in 1919 private secretary to Lord Curzon, a position of considerable responsibility. With three under-secretaries absent in Paris, Clerk was in practice under-secretary in London.[145] *The New Europe* greeted the announcement of Clerk's appointment to Prague with approbation, qualified only by the regret that he had 'not been reserved for an important post at home'. The journal excoriated most of the diplomatic appointments announced at this time. It was particularly critical of the appointment of Sir Edward Grey, 'one of the high priests of secret and reactionary diplomacy', to the embassy in Washington. Only Clerk, Sir George Buchanan and Sir Esmé Howard were exempt from the general condemnation. Clerk did not reach Prague until February 1920. His own sympathy and support for the ideals of *The New Europe* were about to be put to the test as he embarked on a series of difficult missions to Romania and Hungary. He was to be accompanied on the initial leg to Bucharest by Allen Leeper. He tried unsuccessfully to enlist the expertise of Seton-Watson himself on the mission to Budapest. There could be no doubting Clerk's *bona fides* with the dismemberers in 1919. At this time he was hailed as 'one of the most enlightened of the higher Foreign Officials and as especially sympathetic to the cause of the smaller Slavonic nations'. Since it was difficult to exaggerate the importance of Prague as a diplomatic post during the next five years, observed *The New Europe*, it was all to the good 'that a man of broad views and sympathetic outlook should have been selected'.[146]

2
Nation-building in the New Europe
Hungary 1919

> On the contrary, if we are not to condemn millions of human beings to misery and starvation, if we are not to be responsible for a catastrophe almost as great, and in its ultimate consequences possibly even greater, than the war itself, so far from exacting reparation, we have to find funds to keep Austria and Hungary alive.
>
> (Sir George Clerk, Report on Hungarian Affairs, 29 November 1919)
>
> Sir Geo Clerk in his short experience as kingmaker appears to have shown uncommon courage, prudence & tact. Further his Report is a very valuable picture of S.E. Europe, showing us in passing what brutes the majority of these little States, that we have created, are.
>
> (Lord Curzon, Foreign Office minute, 7 December 1919)

The New Europe periodical continued to be published until the autumn of 1920. The journal has been called 'Wilsonian, long before Wilson himself'.[1] The quotation might equally apply to Sir George Clerk. The principles of *The New Europe* exercised a profound influence on the Foreign Office delegation, which made its way to Paris in January 1919. The Vienna settlement of 1815 had witnessed the triumph of *Realpolitik;* these men wished to chart a different course. They were resolved, said Harold Nicolson, who was a member of the delegation, 'not merely to liquidate the war, but to found a new order in Europe'. It was 'the thought of the new Serbia, the new Greece, the new Bohemia, the new Poland which made our hearts sing hymns at heaven's gate'.[2]

In August 1919, Sir George Clerk was seconded to Paris as one of two secretaries attending A.J.Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, at the Council of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Great Powers, which had succeeded the Council of Four, and had been entrusted with what Balfour called 'the immense operation of liquidating the Austrian Empire'.[3]

It was on the afternoon of 5 August that Clerk was recorded as having first attended the meeting of the Heads of Delegations. On 4 September, he was given the unenviable task of conveying to the Romanian government the views of the Supreme Council on its policy in Hungary. Clerk was hardly enamoured of the prospect of this mission. Paul Cambon described him as 'empoisonné', when he encountered Clerk on the eve of departure. 'Je vais arriver là pour être hué,' Clerk told the French diplomat. When asked to comment on Entente policy towards Romania, Clerk described it as 'une politique de

politiciens'.[4] The selection of a delegate had an air of musical chairs about it. E.J.Dillon noted: 'The French Government having prudently refused to furnish an envoy, the British chose Sir George Clark *[sic]*.'[5]

The Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers, which sat at Paris, faced a political crisis of great magnitude and extreme complexity in Hungary throughout 1919. On 13 November 1918, the Allies had signed the Belgrade armistice agreement with Hungary. The Romanian government advanced into Hungary and occupied territory in excess of that allowed by the Agreement.[6] On 26 February, the Supreme Council established a neutral zone along the Arad—Nagyszalonta—Nagyvarad—Szatmár—Németi line limiting the Romanian advance, but this seemed to the Hungarians to legitimatize the earlier Romanian violation.[7] Consequently, the government of Michael Károlyi, established in Hungary as a result of the October Revolution, resigned rather than accept this *fait accompli*.[8] Into this vacuum, in March 1919, stepped the revolutionary communist regime of Bela Kun. The major objective of Allied diplomacy, in the spring of 1919, was to establish a government in Hungary with whom a peace treaty could be signed. Clearly, a revolutionary communist government did not fit the bill. Georges Clemenceau, the French Prime Minister, likened the signing of a peace treaty to 'the La Fontaine fable in which a gathering of rats decided to hang a bell round a cat's neck…. but no one knew how to do it'.[9]

In July, Bela Kun undertook a calamitous offensive against the Romanians, which led to disaster. On 1 August Kun gave way to a socialist government led by Julius Peidl that was itself, six days later, replaced by a new government headed by the Habsburg, Archduke Joseph. Meanwhile, the Romanians were poised to enter Budapest and on 6 August were busy pillaging the suburbs of the capital.[10] The Allies deprecated the Archduke's *'coup d'état'*, which sent shudders through the succession states of Central Europe and which seemed to present Lenin, the Bolshevik leader who had seized power in Russia in November 1917, with ample opportunity to identify the Allies with the worst forces of reaction.[11] At the same time, the Allies viewed the Romanian incursion as 'the first open defiance of the authority of the Conference'.[12]

The peace conference despatched an inter-Allied mission to Budapest. It consisted of Major General Harry H.Bandholtz, Brigadier General Reginald St. George Gorton, General Jean Graziani and General Ernesto Mombelli. They quickly confirmed that the Romanian advance into Hungary was part of a grand scheme of economic rape both of territory and resources. The Romanian contempt for the peace conference prompted Clemenceau to consider sending an ultimatum.[13] The only glimmer of satisfaction was the decision of the Archduke Joseph to resign as provisional governor of Hungary on 22 August. Nevertheless, it was clear that with Stephen Friedrich as Prime Minister, Hungary still lay in the arms of reaction.[14] It was at this point, on 4 September, that Balfour resolved to send Sir George Clerk. His mission was to establish the precise aims and objectives of the Romanian occupation of Hungary; to secure their evacuation; and to establish within Hungary a government that had the confidence of the Hungarian people and with which the Allies could sign a treaty of peace. This was a tall order.

Romania had entered the Great War in August 1916, when its Liberal Prime Minister Bratianu had propelled his country into the war on the side of the Entente. The treaty signed on 7 August revealed the extent of the Romanian appetite for territory, especially at the expense of Hungary. She was to receive the Bukovina, the Bánát of Temesvár, all

of Transylvania but also a line of fertile territory between Szeged and Debreczen, which was occupied not by ethnic Romanians, but by large swathes of Magyars. However, the Romanian offensive into Transylvania quickly foundered under the combined weight of a German and Bulgarian counteroffensive; Bucharest was captured in December, and a Romanian government-in-exile was established in Moldavia. The Romanians fought valiantly on, but their situation was made even more untenable in 1917 as the Russian armies crumbled away and Lenin came to power in the November Revolution. R.W.Seton-Watson captured the moment:

> It must suffice for our present purposes to affirm that not even the sufferings of Serbia or of Belgium will compare with those of Roumania, one half of whose population were exiles in their own land, while the other half were bled white by a conqueror whose ruthlessness had the excuse that his own people were starving.[15]

In December 1917, an armistice was signed and, in May 1918, Romania was forced to sign the draconian Treaty of Bucharest. On 9 November 1918, Romania had renewed the war against Germany and promptly mounted an invasion of Hungary. Bratianu adopted a *revanchiste* attitude to the New Hungary and proclaimed himself vigorously attached to 'the treaty [of 1916], the whole treaty and nothing but the treaty'.[16] He pleaded his cause before the Council of Ten in January 1919, creating in Nicolson's words 'a dreadful impression'.[17] The new Romanian incursion was a further obstacle to the peacemaking process. Bratianu's claims in the Bánát were disputed by Serbia, and the Allies also believed that the Treaty of Bucharest had nullified the articles of the Treaty of 1916. Moreover, Serbia could hardly be bound by the treaty; she had in fact not known about it. Nor were the claims of a secret treaty likely to sit well with President Wilson. Bratianu inveighed against the 'conferential Tsarism' of the Great Powers. In June, he objected strongly to the draft Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the grounds that its minorities clause was an invasion of Romanian sovereignty and he refused to attend the presentation of the draft to Austrian delegates.[18]

On 13 June, the Committee for the Study of Territorial Questions published its proposals to establish the Hungarian frontiers with Czechoslovakia and Romania. Bratianu was not impressed. By the late summer of 1919, he had effectively deposed Bela Kun, and occupied Budapest. Clerk began his mission to Bucharest inauspiciously. Bratianu refused to adhere to the treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye signed with Austria on 10 September.

The New Europe adopted a hostile attitude to the policies of the Romanian government in 1919. R.W.Seton-Watson believed that the Romanian territorial claims to the Bánát region of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, the southwest corner of which was almost entirely Serb, posed 'an exact parallel to those of Italy to the purely Serbo-Croat province of Dalmatia'.[19] The secret treaty of 1916 between Romania and the Entente Powers was simply an example of 'the worst traditions of the old diplomacy, and seriously blocks the way for the architects of a new Europe'.[20] Moreover, he saw a clear correlation between the territorial aspirations of Romania and those of Bratianu himself.[21] *The New Europe* did not belittle the sacrifices made by the Romanian people in the Great War, nor did it trivialize the military significance of Romania's contribution to the

Entente, but it had strong reservations about the principles underlying Bratianu's diplomacy, both during and after the war, and the nature of the Liberal leader's rule in Romania.

Clerk held three meetings with Bratianu on 12, 16 and 20 September. The Romanian leader was a master of deception, resigning conveniently on the morning of his first interview with Clerk, continuing to direct policy but deferring being able to give a specific reply to the Allied note on the grounds of his resignation. Clerk was unable to get anything of substance out of him until 16 September. The note was 'unjust to Roumanian Government and founded on evidence that required corroboration'. Acknowledging the possibility of 'isolated acts of abuse' during the Romanian advance, Bratianu offered an indignant justification for the occupation of Budapest. Nevertheless, he was conciliatory on the four questions contained in the Allied note.[22] In his final interview on 20 September, Clerk was able to perceive the full extent of Bratianu's duplicity: clarification was necessary on the date and condition of Romanian withdrawal, which had to be accompanied by the institution of a government of order supported by the Allies and Romania; the peace conference's stipulation that any government so chosen should be 'the exclusive concern of the Hungarian people' was merely 'a theoretical formula'. He then outlined his territorial desiderata including 'a new frontier' that would allow Romania control of a swathe of territory including the mouths of the river Maros, which had already been disallowed by the peace conference. If Romania were forced to disregard her 'vital interests', she would have no option but to withdraw, leaving Hungary to 'chaos and disorder' and, presumably, a resurgence of Bolshevism.[23]

Of even greater concern was a growing bifurcation between the Allies themselves over policy towards Romania. French and Italian ministers in Bucharest strongly opposed any Romanian evacuation of Hungary on the grounds of civil order.[24] The British suspected French duplicity. Frank Rattigan, the British Chargé d'Affaires in Bucharest, had reliable evidence that the French Minister, M. de St. Aulaire, in particular, had been reassuring the Romanians of France's good intentions towards her, and of the hostility towards Romania of both Great Britain and the United States.[25]

Sir George Clerk believed that the conflict between the Supreme Council and the Romanian government could be resolved with reciprocal goodwill. In an interview with the Romanian politician Maniu on 15 September, Clerk vigorously attacked Bratianu's failure to adhere to the peace treaties.[26] Nevertheless, in a despatch written on 16 September, Clerk felt that the Romanians were 'honestly puzzled' by the apparent severity of the Allied note, especially in view of the great service they believed they had performed in ridding Hungary and the Allies of Bela Kun. The Romanian government suffered, Clerk believed, from 'a possibly exaggerated idea of extent to which Hungary must be first reduced to military impotence, and an abiding fear of her turning to Germany or Bolshevism'. Clerk was not taken in by Bratianu's commitment to immediately withdraw from Budapest, in the hope of being invited to return, and he hoped that Bratianu could be convinced to evacuate in stages, leaving Hungarian police and gendarmerie behind. Clerk's short stay in Bucharest had done nothing to dilute the distaste with which he had initially viewed his mission there. He implored the Supreme Council on 16 September:

> Please let me know if I am required to remain here. I am of course ready to do so or help in any way but I must get home and to Prague some time and if Bratianu's remarks can be taken in Paris as a basis of settlement, the details can be worked out there.[27]

Clerk hoped to proceed on to Budapest on 22 September.[28] But his patience was near to exhaustion as a result of his meeting on 20 September. It was now clear that no Romanian withdrawal had been authorized and that the Romanians were going to use the spectre of Bolshevism and Habsburg restoration, and Allied repugnance for these forces, as a shield for continuing Romanian occupation in pursuit of a programme based on the principle of territorial aggrandizement. Bratianu's resignation had plunged the country into a deep political crisis. On 23 September, the Manolescu government had resigned after one day. On 24 and 25 September, the Romanian opposition leaders Averescu, lonescu and Maniu failed to form a government due primarily to the opposition of King Ferdinand. Finally, a Vaitoianu—Mişu administration was formed on 28 September, but this was simply a Bratianu administration by a different name.[29]

On 24 September, Allen Leeper, Clerk's secretary on the mission, was sent back to Paris with Bratianu's latest proposals. Five days later he submitted a memorandum to Sir Eyre Crowe, which was meant to convey to the Allies, in no uncertain terms, the thrust of Romanian policy. Leeper was a close friend of Seton-Watson, a contributor to *The New Europe,* a member of the Political Intelligence Department in 1918, who had served at Paris on the Committee for the Study of Territorial Questions.[30] He held no brief for Bratianu, whom he had had ample opportunity of observing at the peace conference. The Leeper Memorandum was strongly representative of the general line held to by *The New Europe* itself. It was a caustic indictment of Bratianu's policies, Romanian intentions in Hungary, and the corruption that characterized the government in Bucharest. In the light of later accusations of pro-Romanian bias levelled against the mission and Sir George Clerk in particular, its preface merits closer analysis. 'The points to which I call attention are, in the main, those which Sir George Clerk discussed with me in Bucarest,' Leeper noted, 'and he was anxious that even before his arrival here [Paris], you [Sir Eyre Crowe} should be fully informed as to the general impression acquired in Bucarest during our stay.' In Paris, Crowe professed himself to be in broad agreement with Leeper's views.[31] In his report to the Supreme Council on 7 October, Clerk paid tribute to Leeper's expertise:

> His experience of the Roumanian question in all forms in which it came before the Peace Conference, his great knowledge of Roumanian men and parties, and his objective and impartial insight into their real aims and intentions, were of the highest value.

Clerk arrived in Budapest on the morning of 1 October. His immediate purpose was to compare the evidence 'as to Roumanian requisitioning collected by the inter-allied mission of generals at Buda Pesth with the assurances given to me on this head by the Roumanian Government,'[32] or as the American representative, General H.H.Bandholtz, put it in his diary: 'to determine whether it was Bratiano or the four Allied Generals who were lying'.[33]

Clerk immediately went to see Constantine Diamandy, the Romanian High Commissioner, who was bitterly critical of the inter-Allied military mission.[34] Clerk went to work investigating the extent of Romanian requisitioning. The inter-Allied military mission was not impressed. General Bandholtz quickly concluded that Clerk was 'decidedly pro-Roumanian' and that he had been seduced in Bucharest by 'the siren voice' of Marie, its 'enchantress Queen'. Bandholtz's diary records that in an interview with his aide, Colonel Loree, on 2 October, Clerk denied that the Romanians had carried out requisitioning from the Hungarian populace. General Gorton, who went to see him that morning, had become 'very much disgusted' with Clerk. Gorton told Bandholtz that:

> Sir George Clerk would be here probably only until tomorrow; that he had been wined and dined constantly by the Roumanians; that he himself had asked him to dinner tonight, and showed me a note he had received from Sir George regretting he could not accept because of a previous engagement with some Roumanian.

Bandholtz commented ominously: 'We decided then that we would either get Sir George in deeper or get him out.' Sir George was invited to dinner where, 'a bit shamefaced', he listened to Colonel Loree setting him straight about the degree of Romanian requisitioning. At the British Mission on the evening of 4 October, the generals 'hammered away' at Sir George and 'apparently changed his opinions in regard to his friends, the Roumanians'.[35]

Clerk's report to the Heads of Delegations of 7 October on Romanian requisitioning was a carefully crafted and judiciously weighted document. Clerk certainly acknowledged that requisitioning had taken place. He wrote:

> There is no shadow of doubt that the common property of the Allies has been diminished by Roumanian action, and that owing largely to that action, the Allies have the additional burden of helping Hungary to regain her economic existence.

But Clerk doubted whether it was as extensive as had been alleged, and seemed to accept Romanian assurances that requisitioning was now confined to 'railway material, war material and foodstuffs necessary for the army of occupation'. His report was not an unequivocal indictment of Romanian policy. 'After all,' Clerk observed, 'the Hungarian peasant is as good as others in hiding his possession from the looter and the Roumanian has many more accomplished rivals in the art of looting.' However, he noted:

> The Roumanian, who is after all a Balkan and therefore an Oriental, and who has been pillaged and looted by the enemy and by his Russian ally, sees here, in the occupation of Hungary, an opportunity which he will consider himself a lunatic to forego. From the private soldier who 'requisitions' the umbrella of a passenger leaving the station, to the officer who 'requisitions' a motor car or a carpet to be sold for cash to a Jew and re-sold by the latter at a higher price to its original owner, they intend to leave this country with their pockets full.

Clerk urged the Supreme Council to make a clear response to Bratianu's territorial claims. In order to ensure Hungary 'the means to live', he advocated the extension of an American plan to assess Romanian 'depredations' that would include Romanian participation:

> What the Roumanians feel, and feel very deeply, is that from the outset, they have been pre-judged by their Allies as criminals, and put into the dock. They ask for collaboration and cooperation, and instead, are haled before the tribunal for sentence. This does not make them any more ready to sink their interests in the common stock, and if they were treated more as Allies, who have fought and suffered, and less as criminals, things would probably go far more easily.

On the internal political situation in Hungary, Clerk's report considered the urgency 'of imposing some solution from the outside'. Friedrich, the head of the Hungarian government, might be induced to widen the basis of his ministry in order to form a broader-based coalition of other parties. Failing that, the suggestion of Garami, the Social Democratic leader, of a coalition without Friedrich could be considered. The technically still existent Hungarian parliament might be summoned for the purpose of adding other members to a coalition ministry and of appointing dates for elections or a plebiscite on the form of government Hungary was to have.[36]

The Leeper Memorandum submitted to Sir Eyre Crowe, the Minister Plenipotentiary at Paris, was a general condemnation of Romanian policy under the Bratianu regime and Clerk strongly approved of it. Clerk's report to the Supreme Council of the Allies was a more pragmatic document that concentrated particularly on the issue of requisitioning, composed with an eye not only for accuracy but also for the course of Anglo-Romanian relations and future British policy in Central and Eastern Europe. Clerk's pragmatic verdict on requisitioning was strongly supported by Frank Rattigan, who had visited Budapest on 2 and 3 October, and who, according to Bandholtz's diary, was present at dinner at the military mission on 2 October. Rattigan informed Lord Curzon in London three days later that he was Very far from absolving the Roumanians of all blame'. There had undoubtedly been many abuses. But there was 'a distinct tendency on the part of the Anglo-American authorities in Budapest to believe the worst of the Roumanians and to accept as gospel many stories for which there does not appear sufficient evidence'.

In this despatch to Curzon, Rattigan alluded to the atmosphere of 'mistrust and suspicion', which governed the relationship between the Allied officers and the Romanians.[37] In a further confidential despatch to Curzon on 8 October, he pulled no punches about the inter-Allied military mission:

> The Allied generals with all their many qualities, are necessarily inexperienced in diplomacy or statecraft. I venture to state…that they entered upon their duties in a wrong atmosphere, and that their focus became more and more distorted with the progress of events. They are necessarily dependent to a very large extent for their views on elements frankly inimical to the Roumanians. Most of their agents are of course Hungarians. The more the latter perceived that reports hostile to the

> Roumanians were acceptable, the more violent were the reports they made.

There was evidently a deep division between the Clerk—Rattigan diplomacy and the military mission. Rattigan was unequivocal: the four Allied generals should be replaced by one high civil functionary representing the conference.[38]

The prospects for the future of Anglo-Romanian relations were clearly at stake. In a private letter to Crowe on 8 October, Clerk commented on the significant position of influence that Rattigan had carved for himself in Bucharest:

> All Roumanians, including the King and the leading politicians, have the highest opinion of his sincerity and disinterestedness and of his general ability. Not only do they consult him on all occasions and ask his advice, but they place all their difficulties before him with the utmost frankness. I should say that no representative in Bucharest has a position anything approaching to that of Rattigan, and I am sure you will agree that it is most satisfactory to see our country so well represented.

The nub of this was that Great Britain, possibly to the exclusion of France, was well situated to play a dominant role in Romania in the postwar era. This was to be achieved not only by economic diplomacy but also by cultural contact. Allen Leeper urged Crowe to consider mediums such as education, the church and journalism as vehicles to promote and further British influence. Crowe informed Curzon of these perspectives and possibilities in an important despatch at this time. He was particularly eager to convey Clerk's own perspective that there existed in Romania, 'a real feeling for more intimate relations in future with the British Empire' to the exclusion of France. 'While grateful for French sympathy and help in the past, Roumanians now realise that France's difficult economic situation will not allow of her affording to Roumania all the financial and economic support which the French are very lavish in promising,' Crowe observed.

> Further, in many matters Roumanians are gaining the impression that British help would be more valuable to them than French; for instance, in the matter of aircraft and air instruction, the experience of the Roumanian authorities is that the few Roumanian officers who had enjoyed British instruction were better grounded and better qualified as administrators than those who had been through French schools. The Roumanians are also aware that our machines are better than the French and they are therefore very anxious to be allowed to buy some of the machines which are now being broken up.

Crowe was strongly receptive to the ideas, which Clerk, Leeper and Rattigan advocated, to promote a closer relationship between Romania and the British government. He told Curzon: 'It would seem particularly important alike from a political and a commercial point of view to encourage this state of mind.'[39]

As the British Foreign Office pondered its future relationship with Romania, the Supreme Council at Paris considered the implications of Clerk's report of 7 October.

They were no nearer to solving the impasse in which they found themselves over the problem of signing a peace treaty with Hungary. There was a clear disparity between the views of the interAllied military mission on the degree of Romanian requisitioning in Hungary and Sir George Clerk, whilst on the political situation in Hungary, the generals continued to maintain that Friedrich was 'the best person' to represent the Hungarian government. However, the successor states would not accept him. In Paris, Philippe Berthelot, a permanent official at the Quai d'Orsay, called for the removal of the 'mask of Archduke Joseph' as he called the Hungarian leader. Clerk himself emphasized, in a meeting of the Heads of Delegations on 10 October, that 'it was necessary to have some solvent loosen the crystals', and that if Friedrich refused to broaden the base of his government, 'he should be informed that he must go'.[40]

In the circumstances, it cannot have been any surprise to Clerk to be informed in London on 13 October that he was being asked to return to Hungary on behalf of the Supreme Council. Clerk wrote to R.W.Seton-Watson the same day:

> If I could get the Supreme Council's assent, would you care to help me in this somewhat difficult and delicate job? There is no one who approaches your knowledge of Hungarian statesmen and politics, and the value of your assistance would be incalculable.
>
> I expect to be in Buda. Pesth about a fortnight, but it would mean, for you, starting as soon as I telegraphed from Paris.
>
> Please forgive me for the abrupt incursion into your own occupations. I only venture to do so because *a.*, at worst you can but refuse, while if I don't ask I certainly shan't get you, and *b.*, it might interest you, yourself.[41]

On 14 August, in a leading article in *The New Europe*, Seton-Watson had urged the Hungarian Republic to establish a coalition cabinet of socialists, peasants, independents and radicals who could be entrusted with the task 'of preparing elections for a Constituent Assembly on the basis of Universal Suffrage and the ballot'.[42] This closely mirrored the formula, which Clerk had put forward in his report of 7 October. Clerk and Seton-Watson met on the evening of 14 October. Seton-Watson would be a great asset if Clerk were forced to return to Hungary. But he was unable to procure the neces-sary assent for Seton-Watson to join him. Seton-Watson told Headlam-Morley on 21 October:

> You will not be surprised to hear that nothing more has come of the Budapest affair. In some ways it is a pity, in others I am relieved: in any case I can hardly believe that the Five (is that the magic number?) would care to ask me formally and gladly as I would do anything to help Clerk, I would be very unwise to go without a request, even if I were not tied by the leg here.[43]

Nothing more can be gleaned from the Seton-Watson papers. In a letter written by Clerk 'on the boat' on 15 October,[44] he made no mention of the matter of Seton-Watson's participation, confining himself to enquiry about prominent Hungarians and voicing his disagreement with the explanations of Romanian policy in *The New Europe* due to appear

the following day.[45] But Clerk must have been reassured to learn that Percy Loraine, a member of the British delegation in Paris and a diplomat equally committed to the principles of *The New Europe*, had been assigned to the mission.[46]

On 17 October, Curzon authorized Clerk to accept the invitation of the Supreme Council to proceed to Budapest as their envoy. Curzon considered it important that Clerk 'receive full powers, so that instructions of the Council may be issued directly through him to the whole military and naval force which Allied and Associated Powers possess in Hungary'.[47] Clerk was particularly anxious that there should be no jurisdictional conflict between his own position as special envoy of the Supreme Council and the inter-Allied military mission. Crowe recommended to Curzon that the War Office and the Admiralty should inform the British representatives 'that in all political matters it is he who is invested with authority of representing Supreme Council'. Crowe's attempt to establish a similar relationship with regard to the other Allied generals foundered on American objections.[48]

Clerk was wise to tread carefully. As Bandholtz's diary makes clear, the American representative on the inter-Allied military mission had, early in November, managed to get possession of confidential despatches that Rattigan had written from Bucharest to Curzon in London, including Rattigan's confidential memorandum of 8 October. Bandholtz's 'critique' colourfully observed, amidst other insults, that Rattigan knew as much about 'the Budapest situation as does an Ygorrot dogeater about manicuring', and that Rattigan was not a British chargé d'affaires but a 'Rattigianu'. His verdict on the Romanian occupation was equally uncompromising. 'Our little Latin Allies,' he rasped, 'have the refined loot appetite of a Mississippi River catfish, the chivalrous instincts of a young cuckoo, and the same hankering for truth that a seasick passenger has for pork and beans.'[49]

The evident friction between the generals and Clerk did not bode well for the latter's mission. Clerk was committed not only to the establishment of a government acceptable to the Supreme Council in Paris, and with whom a treaty of peace could be negotiated, but also to a government fully representative of the Hungarian people chosen by universal suffrage and secret ballot. This was fully consonant with the ideals espoused by Seton-Watson and *The New Europe*. Perhaps the greatest challenge that Clerk faced was how to overcome the resurgent forces of autocracy and reaction associated with Habsburg restoration prevalent in Hungary amongst the Magyar aristocracy, the Roman Catholic Church and the officer corps of the Hungarian army. The inter-Allied military mission seemed particularly blind to these forces and their implications for the future of Central Europe. Moreover, its intransigence was strengthened by the singular presence in Budapest of Admiral Ernest Troubridge, who commanded the Allied naval forces on the river Danube. Troubridge had close links with the Hungarian nobility, who were the most fervent in their support for the restoration of the Archduke Joseph. Hungarian reaction had been reinforced by the short-lived but drastic experience of Bela Kun's Hungarian Soviet Republic and the so-called 'Red Terror'. The collapse of revolutionary communism had led to its antithesis: counter-revolutionary violence, political terrorism and anti-Semitic outrages. Defeated in war, occupied by a hostile power and threatened by international communism, legitimists, under the guise of anti-communism, wished to launch a crusade against liberalism, socialism and democracy, in fact, all those constitutional forces that the Roman Catholic Church and the Magyar aristocracy had

sought to thwart in Central Europe since 1815. In such circumstances, it was especially unfortunate that Clerk had been unable to persuade the Foreign Office or the Supreme Council to accept the participation of Seton-Watson on this mission.

Clerk arrived in Budapest on 23 October, and saw Friedrich and Count Somssich, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the following day. Clerk immediately went on the attack, insisting that the government be reconstituted, and warning Friedrich that unless a new Hungarian administration fully represented all shades of Hungarian opinion, provisional recognition would not be conferred. Friedrich was conciliatory but insisted that his government represented '90% of Hungarian opinion', and that it was inconceivable that his administration could comprehend socialists and Jews, especially since Bela Kun's Bolshevik regime had made them anathema to the Hungarian public. Friedrich conceded that it might be possible to enlarge the present government, but if he were to relinquish the presidency 'the whole country would be thrown into complete confusion'. Clerk had hitherto believed that if only he could reconstruct Friedrich's government, he could negotiate a Romanian withdrawal. He now became convinced that Romanian withdrawal had to precede reconstruction of the administration.[50] Such a withdrawal might raise a Jewish and democratic cry of 'White Terror', especially as, on the Hungarian side, Friedrich controlled what disciplined forces existed. Nevertheless, Clerk told Crowe, he would insist on full guarantees from Friedrich and from the powerful Hungarian leader, Nicholas Horthy, and would remain in Budapest if necessary to give 'such moral protection as I can to the parties of [?] left'. Political and economic recovery was impossible in Hungary without Allied recognition, and this would be withheld until a provisional government acceptable to the Allies was in existence.[51]

On 28 October, Clerk decided to carry his case directly to the Hungarian people and he granted the Hungarian journal, *Pester Lloyd*, an interview, which he hoped would break the ring of censorship imposed by both the Romanians and the Friedrich administration. At this critical juncture in Hungarian history, it was necessary to let them see clearly 'what they must do if they are to be lifted from the slough in which they are now being engulfed'. Clerk emphasized the non-partisan nature of his mission and issued a strong appeal for a kind of national government representative of 'le pays tout entier, sans distinction de classe, de confession ou d'intérêts'. In particular, as the content of the interview makes clear, Clerk stressed his own impartiality and commitment to the establishment of Hungarian democracy.[52]

In the light of the *Pester Lloyd* statement, it is surely difficult to give much credence to charges levelled at Clerk's mission five years later by the Hungarian radical, Oscar Jászi, that after initial sympathy for the ideals of 'the Socialist and progressive movements', Clerk had quickly gone over to the side of reaction, and had 'completely assimilated the mentality of the Hungarian *ancien régime*.[53] By 28 October, a mere five days after his arrival, Clerk had given Friedrich notice to quit; shown himself conscious of the dangers of 'White Terror'; declared that only the fullest guarantees were acceptable from those who controlled the few disciplined forces that did exist; committed himself to afford 'moral protection' to the possible victims of 'White Terror'; and given a firm and unequivocal commitment to the establishment of democratic government on the basis of universal suffrage and the secret ballot.

None of these objectives could be achieved unless the Romanians finally committed themselves to evacuation. This was a *sine qua non* of the success of Clerk's Hungarian

policy. Consequently, he made great efforts to secure the co-operation of Diamandi, the Romanian High Commissioner. He also went to work on the related problem: what kind of forces would provide law and order during the period consequent to Romanian withdrawal and preceding the election of a democratic government? On 1 November, Clerk described the situation as 'extraordinarily complicated and difficult' in a telegram to the Supreme Council:

> Three or two months ago provisional coalition government could have been made comparatively easily. Since then anti-Semitic crusade has grown to a great height, and though genuine, has been to some extent fostered for political purposes. Result is that it is impossible to ignore popular sentiment which unless handled with care, will break out in violence and unrest throughout the country.

He stressed that the Christian National Party should be fully represented in a future representation of the country, taking care lest it imagined itself 'swamped by Jews and Socialists'. Clerk also expressed his growing confidence in the abilities of Admiral Horthy.[54] Clerk's increasing optimism, that Admiral Horthy could provide the security and stability that the Friedrich administration so flagrantly lacked, has become one of the most contentious aspects of his Hungarian mission. Hindsight indicates that this was a less than salutary choice, but in the extraordinarily difficult circumstances in Hungary in 1919, there could be little doubt that no political solution could work in Hungary that did not take some account of the sensitivities of the Admiral and the political forces he came to represent.

Miklós Horthy has become one of the most controversial personalities in modern Hungarian history. In 1920 he became the elected Regent of Hungary and held this office throughout the interwar period until deposed by the Germans in 1944. His early career offered little promise of such an ascendancy. Brought up in the middle ranks of the Hungarian nobility in a mixed Calvinist-Catholic household, Horthy had been commissioned into the Austro-Hungarian navy in 1886, becoming the only officer of Magyar origin to rise to flag officer. He became an admirer of Great Britain, whose empire's farthest reaches he had visited during his naval career. He learnt English in 1904 from the remarkable Irish novelist, James Joyce, and fancied himself an English gentleman. He was a skilled linguist with a command of seven languages, a propensity for chivalry and a reputation for personal charm. In 1909 he was appointed aide-de-camp to Emperor Francis Joseph. At least until the outbreak of the First World War, he seemed to share the relatively enlightened attitude of his sovereign towards the Jewish minority in the empire. During the war he became a legendary figure, 'The hero of Otranto', following a failed attempt in 1917 to break the Allied blockade in the Adriatic. In February 1918 he had been made commander-in-chief of the Austro-Hungarian navy.

It has been suggested that with the collapse of the Habsburg Empire in 1918, Horthy underwent a 'political metamorphosis'.[55] Embittered and bemused, Horthy returned to his estate in Hungary at the end of the war with little thought of a future political role. Political change in Hungary soon disabused him of this. To Horthy both the Károlyi and Bela Kun governments were synonymous with social revolution, and he began to view them as part of a gigantic Jewish conspiracy to establish a destructive proletarian order in

Europe. Szeged became a centre of counter-revolutionary resistance in Hungary. Counter-revolutionaries who gathered there were fuelled by an almost pathological hatred of communism. Horthy arrived in May 1919 and was quickly made commander-in-chief of the National Army. At Szeged, conservative monarchists, of whom Horthy was nominally one, hoped to restore the Habsburg monarchy. But Horthy also found himself exposed to the radical nationalism of young officers and captains from the Hungarian middle class and the lesser ranks of the gentry, such as Gyula Gömbös and Pál Prónay, who wished to pursue 'purification' and 'White Terror', and break decisively with the past and establish a military dictatorship. In August 1919 young officers such as Prónay and Gyula Ostenburg carried out gruesome atrocities in Hungary. Horthy was not comfortable with the excesses of his young captains who insinuated their anti-Semitism subtly into Horthy's psyche. He denied the existence of 'White Terror', but gave covert support to special-order detachments under their command. Gömbös was particularly assiduous in cultivating Horthy's anti-Semitism and nurturing his deep sense of ambition. At the same time, Horthy's own rhetoric seemed to give *carte blanche* to the practice of 'purification' and indiscriminate violence. In August 1919, Horthy moved this army from Szeged into Transdanubia and established his headquarters at Siofók.[56]

Clerk's embrace of Horthy provoked a veritable storm of dissension amongst the Heads of Delegations back in Paris. The French were impatient, both with the inter-Allied mission and Clerk. Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, raised the possibility of replacing the Romanian army with an occupation force under inter-Allied command consisting of Serbian, Romanian and Czechoslovak troops.[57] Horthy was nothing more than 'an energetic ultra-reactionary personality, susceptible of intriguing for his own military dictatorship'.[58] Berthelot hailed Sir George as 'a perfect gentleman' who 'seemed to feel confidence in Admiral Horthy in whom he had found a pleasing personality'. Both the Italian and the American delegations were hostile, however, to the French proposal of an inter-Allied occupation force. Crowe defended Clerk robustly if short-sightedly, predicting that even if fair elections were held, 'the resulting Government would not be democratic'. It was well known that 'the majority of the Hungarian population favoured the establishment of a conservative form of government'. The Allies had no right to prevent the Hungarian people from forming a government 'corresponding to its own tendencies, provided there were no question of restoring the Habsburgs'.[59]

On 5 November, the Supreme Council indicated its acceptance of Clerk's strategy but asked for clear assurances of intent from Horthy.[60] On the same day, Clerk unequivocally rejected the proposal to replace the Romanians with some kind of Balkan expeditionary force. The presence of Yugoslav and Czechoslovak troops in Hungary, even under Allied officers was, in Clerk's view, a recipe for a disastrous outbreak of new hostilities, which would force the Hungarians to 'sink all their differences and resist with such arms as they have to last man'.[61] And in a separate despatch to Crowe on 6 November, Clerk attributed such a proposal to the 'undying desire of French to extend their influence and to their unfailing belief in warm welcome that awaits them wherever they go'. With more than a hint of disgust, Clerk intimated to Crowe that the proposed occupation of Hungary by other Balkan nationalities would be nothing more than a 'French occupation'. Clerk protested:

> I have done my best to maintain my international character but Hungarians are only too anxious to emphasise the fact that I am British and this, on top of Troubridge on Danube, has possibly aroused French susceptibilities. I only wish that it had been anybody but myself who was selected for this job but as I am here I do most earnestly hope that you will fight Czech, Yugo-Slav occupation idea to utmost.[62]

To underline the case against further intervention, Clerk vividly described the policy of 'Roumanisation' that had been pursued in Transylvania; arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and expropriation of the Magyar minority were features of the Romanian 'colonisation' there. The Romanian authorities had befouled the reputation and prestige of the Allies.[63] Clerk hoped that he had vetoed the prospect of an inter-Allied expeditionary force to replace the Romanian occupation of Budapest. He now embarked on negotiations with Horthy in the hope that the Hungarians themselves could establish the conditions suitable for the exercise of Hungarian democracy.

It is unclear when Clerk first encountered Horthy. According to Horthy's memoirs, Clerk had raised the prospect of travelling to Siofók himself.[64] It is clear, however, that the first meeting took place at Clerk's residence at the Zichy Palace in Budapest in the week following Clerk's arrival on 23 October. Horthy seems to have insinuated himself into Clerk's favour with stories of Italian intrigue in Hungary and Horthy's own imperviousness to their blandishments.[65] On 3 November, the Romanians finally gave notice that they would begin the evacuation of Budapest on 9 November, and complete their withdrawal on 11 November.[66] Clerk wrote to Horthy on 4 November:

> It may be thought necessary or desirable to bring the forces under your command or certain chosen element among them, into Budapest. Such a decision would undoubtedly excite a certain amount of apprehension in some quarters of the town, more especially among the Jewish and Socialist Democratic sections of the population… I anticipate therefore, that the Leaders of these sections will make urgent representation to me either to avert the entry of your troops or to give complete guarantees that no reaction or revenge will be tolerated.

Clerk asked Horthy for his 'formal assurance' that his troops would be kept under 'strict discipline', and his guarantee that 'there will be no provocative action on their part' and that 'the strictest discipline will be observed'. On 5 November, Horthy replied: 'I am quite ready to give my formal assurance and to guarantee that my troops will be kept under strict discipline and that no reaction or revenge will be tolerated.' Horthy insisted that the Hungarian army would be used 'to ensure legal order with complete impartiality', but also remarked that he would 'suppress any kind of disorder after the occupation of the city'. On 7 November, a meeting was held at the Zichy Palace between Horthy and those dubbed by Clerk 'the Leaders of the extreme Left'. Clerk saw this as a major step towards the building of a consensus between the different political parties and the lowering of tension.[67] It was a crucial meeting. Amidst accusations of 'White Terror', an agreement was finally hammered out. In his memoirs, Horthy observed that he had

simply given an assurance that 'I was not planning a military dictatorship and that I would not countenance any anti-Semitic persecution'.[68]

The Romanian evacuation did not finally begin until 13 November.[69] Clerk found himself beset with the continuing problem of Friedrich. He had been given the firmest assurances by Friedrich that, as soon as the Romanian evacuation was complete, his resignation would follow as a prelude to the constitution of a new government with which the Allies could treat. Friedrich, however, was attempting to sow dissension between Clerk and the inter-Allied military mission and undermine his authority by inferring that he was overly intimate with the Social Democrats. The mission, as the Bandholtz diary clearly shows, was on the cosiest terms with the most reactionary elements among the Magyar aristocracy including the Archduke Joseph and his son.[70] Clerk was committed to consulting the socialists, and this laid him open to this type of inference.[71]

On 16 November, Horthy's National Army finally re-entered Budapest. Clerk was alert to the potential dangers, and he spent the whole of the afternoon in the Jewish quarter. He had spent the previous two days reassuring Jewish and socialist leaders that their safety would not be in jeopardy with the arrival of the National Army, and that it would be a major political error on their part if they decided to leave. Clerk acknowledged 'one or two arrests of prominent people', but on his intercession and even before, they were quickly released. His faith in Horthy, therefore, seemed initially vindicated.

However, Romanian evacuation and Horthy's arrival triggered the political crisis that had been brewing since Clerk's arrival on 23 October. Friedrich now saw no good reason whatsoever to resign his office. It was his opinion that the whole country virtually supported him and 'although the Allies certainly wanted peace, Hungary could quite well get along without it'.[72] Clerk alleged later in his final report that this volte-face came as no surprise to him, but there was a touch of panic in his reaction to the aftermath of Horthy's arrival and the renewed brazenness of Friedrich. Clerk was accused of wiring 'scare-head' telegrams to the Supreme Council. Bandholtz, who does not seem to have understood the nature of the political problem in Hungary, records that the inter-Allied military mission was going to send a report casting the general situation in a far more favourable light. Clerk 'does not seem to be able to handle these people at all,' he commented, 'and keeps on paying over-much attention to the complaints of Garami and the other Socialist leaders.'

> As a result of all this, Friedrich is proceeding serenely on his way and paying very little attention to anybody else. Some of the Hungarians have made the statement that as long as the Entente cannot force the Italians out of Fiume and could not even oblige a little nation like Roumania to obey its orders, there is no reason why Hungary should be unduly concerned about such a feeble combination.[73]

Not only had Friedrich not resigned, but also he was evidently pursuing a policy that he hoped would result in political deadlock in Hungary. He had, without consulting Clerk, scheduled a meeting between his government and the opposition parties at the Zichy Palace, which Clerk believed was doomed to deadlock. If this meeting were held and Friedrich's devious opportunism vindicated, his argument that an administration

supported by 80 or 90 per cent of the population should continue would obviously be strengthened. Such a meeting could not but serve as a further humiliation for the British envoy. Clerk was also discomfited by the desire of the inter-Allied military mission and Admiral Troubridge to attend a gala performance at the Opera House in Budapest on the evening of 16 November in commemoration of Horthy's entry into the capital. This, in Clerk's view, simply served to confer legitimacy on a regime undeserving of it. Whilst the inter-Allied military mission acceded to the envoy's request, Troubridge and his entire staff ignored it. Clerk lashed out in a telegram to Crowe: Friedrich was 'a young meg[a]lomaniac…a White Bela Kun'. His sole purpose was to establish 'a White Bolshevik regime'.

> He and his Ministry, who are all on a level with and as fit to govern this country as the principal constituents of a Parliamentary candidate in a local county town would be fit to govern the British Empire, are in holy terror of losing their precious offices and think they can flout the Entente.

As regards the inter-Allied military mission, 'all very comfortably lodged in various palaces of Hungarian magnates', they had 'about as much sense of political realities as a stuffed dog'. Clerk demanded that the Allies had to be prepared:

> to recall the Mission of Generals, to sit upon Troubridge and to show Hungary that while we can still manage to struggle along without making peace with Hungary in spite of what Friedrich and Rubinek may say, Hungary is utterly done unless she makes peace with us.

Clerk outlined a strategy that he hoped would checkmate Friedrich's policy of deadlock. He would hold his own meeting prior to Friedrich's and outline the situation as he saw it. In the event of failure, he envisaged his own withdrawal to Vienna or Bucharest. The decision to do so lay 'on the knees of the Gods'. Crowe transmitted Clerk's comments to the Foreign Office. Lord Hardinge noted: 'There is no doubt that Troubridge has throughout acted most injudiciously…and I am afraid that the trouble will become still worse when George Clerk has come away.'[74]

Clerk's strategy of pre-empting Friedrich's interparty meeting at the Zichy Palace with one of his own was extremely effective. A meeting of about forty of the leading Hungarians was held at about 3 p.m. on the afternoon of 18 November. The Christian National Block intimated that it was unequivocally committed to the retention of Friedrich as Minister-President of Hungary or it would retreat into opposition. Clerk made an earnest appeal for the will of the people to be realized through 'a free impartial and democratic election'. He reminded his audience that: 'however great may be the majority of one Party in the state, the Allies insist that the minority shall be represented in this temporary administration'. If his efforts were spurned, the British emissary assured his listeners, he would leave Budapest 'by the end of the week' thus ushering in a cessation of Allied relations with Hungary. This would mean that

> Hungary will lose all sympathy among the Allies; *the neighbouring states who fought and suffered* as allies of the Great Powers in the war will be helped to consolidate their newly acquired territory, but Hungary will be left to face the future without fuel, without money, without transport, without raw material.[75]

Clerk anticipated 'a colossal head-washing' about this speech,[76] presumably because if his bluff were called, it would mean his withdrawal from Budapest and an irreparable breach between the Allies and Hungary, which could only be repaired by military means, and his speech committed the Allies to policies they were yet to approve. D.C.Campbell, Clerk's secretary, saw the speech coming exactly at the right moment with a marked effect on the audience.[77] The ensuing discussion went on well into the evening, thus thwarting Friedrich's own policy of delay. But the crucial influences in building a political consensus at the Zichy Palace conference were the controversial figures, Count Apponyi and Admiral Horthy. In his final report to the Supreme Council, Clerk acknowledged the influence in bringing about a settlement of these two men 'whose names would rather suggest reaction'. But the most puzzling aspect of Clerk's account of the conference was the evident support for Count Apponyi from the parties of the Left.

Apponyi had long been associated with some of the least savoury characteristics that the *Ausgleich* of 1867 had invested in the Magyar supremacy over Hungary. He was the author, in particular, of the Language Law of 1907, which symbolized Magyar cultural supremacy over its ethnic minorities. In 1919, he had withdrawn from politics to his estate in Pressburg, from where he was requested to come to Budapest by Sir George Clerk. On the evening of the Zichy Palace conference, he was nominated to be Minister-President by the 'Extreme Left Social Democratic Wing', and also had the support of all parties other than the Christian National Block. Horthy's signal contribution was to assure the latter that there was simply no question of the Hungarian National Army opposing even the smallest Allied invading force. The Zichy Palace conference reconvened the following day. The Christian National Party and its allies were willing to jettison Friedrich, but only if another member of that party were chosen as Minister-President. A consensus formed around Huszár, the Minister of Education in the Friedrich government, provided that he could form an all-party administration acceptable to the Allies. Apponyi acquiesced in this. In the subsequent horse-trading, Huszár found his task imperilled by the Christian National Party's outrage towards the nomination of Barczy, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, as Minister of Justice in the new government. It was Clerk's quick thinking that broke the deadlock. He composed a letter in which he congratulated the choice of Barczy as clear evidence of the Hungarian acceptance of the principle of a ministry of all the talents. But he warned the Liberal Democrats that the appointment would be scrutinized by the rest of the world for its integrity and impartiality, especially in the prosecution of former adherents of Bela Kun implicated in the 'Red Terror' that had gripped Hungary earlier. This letter enabled Huszár to bring the Christian National Party to heel, and the imposition by Clerk of a strict time limit defused some of the more excessive demands of the socialists. In these circumstances, Clerk finally gave his unequivocal support for Huszár's credentials.[78]

On 25 November, Clerk granted provisional recognition to a provisional government led by Huszár that was pledged to guarantee to every Hungarian 'national free and civil

rights, including those of a free press, free right of meeting, freedom to express political opinions, and a free, secret, impartial democratic election based on universal suffrage'. This government consisted of representatives of the Christian National Party, the Smallholders or Small Farmers Party, the National-Democratic or Liberal Party and the Social Democratic parties.[79] Clerk arrived in Paris on 30 November and presented his report to the Heads of the Delegations the following day.[80]

On the eve of the commencement of his mission to the new successor state of Czechoslovakia, Sir George Clerk was uniquely qualified to offer his own verdict on the changes that were taking place in Central and Eastern Europe since the inception of the armistice in November 1918. His report was remarkable for the implicit criticism it offered of Allied policy in this region and the caveats that needed to be borne in mind, especially in dealing with the defeated powers. Clerk's experience of Hungary and Hungarian susceptibilities had convinced him that there was a serious danger of a growth of revanchism in Central Europe and the sentiment 'that the result of the war has after all only been to substitute one unrighteous system for another and to sow the seeds of inevitable future conflicts'. In his report, Clerk deprecated Romanian treatment of university professors in the town of Kolosvar and incidences of arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of Hungarian academics and army officers on unsubstantiated charges relating to Bolshevik activity. The report was also a condemnation of the Serbo-Croatian-Slovene occupation of former Hungarian territories and the atrocities committed by their regular troops, but more extensively against the actions of the levies of ethnic Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Clerk also reported the excesses of the Czechs and their petty victimization of the property of the Archduke Joseph, involving even the sale of his wife's wedding dress and the auctioning off of her private letters. Clerk further deprecated the despoliation of former Hungarian ecclesiastical property in areas occupied by the Czechs. The Allies were urged to consider the despatch of inter-Allied commissions 'to see what is really happening in these lands which may eventually fall definitely to the lot of Roumania, Serbia, or Czechoslovakia, but are now suffering the fate of a village in debatable ground in Macedonia'. Fearing that the actions of the Balkan nations would inevitably cause discredit to the Allied cause, Clerk advocated the establishment of a central high commission with 'real powers of inspection and full authority to check abuses and outrage'.

Within Hungary itself, the British envoy offered a despairing indictment of the policies of the successor states. The Hungarian industrial situation was critical and Budapest was facing grave shortages of fuel. 'Hungary is dying for lack of coal and wood,' Clerk dramatically pointed out, and this was all due to 'the selfish and callous policy' pursued by those newly created states who had failed to comply with agreements to return locomotive and wagon stock, as in the case of the Romanians, or who, as in the case of the Czechs, had reneged on definite agreements to supply wood. The Allies, Clerk urged, could not allow themselves to remain indifferent:

> The final result will inevitably be that the Great Powers, not only for humanity, but in order to prevent a recurrence of chaos in Europe, will be obliged to provide remedies out of their own resources at an infinitely greater cost and when bitter experience has so driven home to those who have suffered the futility of trust and confidence in the Allies that no

> amount of eleventh hour charity will restore that political balance which alone can be a guarantee for the peace of Europe.

As an example of such an initiative, Clerk advocated the establishment of an international body to regulate the waterways of the Hungarian plain. Clerk feared the fragmentation of the efficient and scientific authority traditionally associated with Hungary. The waterways were a geographical unit; fragmentation would lead to irreparable economic harm.

Lastly, in a final Keynesian flourish, Clerk unequivocally called for the abandonment of any scheme of reparations from either Hungary or Austria.

> On the contrary, if we are not to condemn millions of human beings to misery and starvation, if we are not to be responsible for a catastrophe almost as great, and in its ultimate consequences possibly even greater, than the war itself, so far from exacting reparation, we have to find funds to keep Austria and Hungary alive. I should be the last to deny that this can be exaggerated. There is a feeling of helplessness in both countries which leads them to expect everything and to feel incapable of doing anything for themselves. But their financial situation and their losses through the war are such that unless they get some measure of immediate help they will inevitably collapse into utter ruin and despair. It is one more instance of the creditors of a bankrupt having to decide whether they should cut their losses or take over control themselves and put in more money in order to recover, in time, what they have originally risked.

If Allied relief were implemented, Clerk maintained, pan-Germanism would be diminished, thus lessening the prospect of *Anschluss* in both Austria and Hungary, and bringing the peace and prosperity of Europe nearer to realization.[81]

There can be no doubt that Clerk's mission to Bucharest and Budapest in the autumn of 1919 was something of a paradigm of British policy and power towards Central and Eastern Europe in the interwar period. The British government was poised to play a strong and vital role in the political and economic life of that region. The collapse of four empires and the demise of German power had created a vacuum that Great Britain, due to its institutions, its traditions and its history, was well equipped to occupy. Clerk's experience in Budapest and the intimate relationship he had forged with leading Hungarian politicians of all persuasions had convinced him, as he told Curzon on 23 November, of the ardent desire of Magyar politicians that 'an English prince should come here and reign as their King'. Clerk seemed to foresee post-Trianon Hungary as a constitutional monarchy under an English Prince.

> England, they say, is the one country towards which they look with veneration and trust, whose institutions and ideas they regard as fundamentally in harmony with their own, and on whose aid and sympathy they base all their hopes of moral and material resuscitation. With the aid of an English King, at whose hands they would gratefully accept and adopt English ideas, institutions, and habits of thought, it

> would be possible they maintain, for Hungary to emerge from her disaster and despair and become a corner-stone of England's policy in Europe, a pillar of stability in Eastern Europe, and a faithful rampart against Germany, should she ever become strong enough to resume her policy of encroachment towards the East.[82]

In Paris, the peace conference expressed 'entire satisfaction' at 'the remarkable success' Clerk's mission had achieved. In Sir Eyre Crowe's view, Clerk had dealt with a situation 'bristling with difficulties, in a manner which deserves the highest praise'. Curzon minuted on 7 December:

> Sir Geo Clerk in his short experience as kingmaker appears to have shown uncommon courage, prudence & tact. Further his Report is a very valuable picture of S.E. Europe, showing us in passing what brutes the majority of these little States, that we have created, are.[83]

Clerk's report on conditions in Hungary in November 1919 was a remarkably farsighted document. It called for the abandonment of reparations in Austria and Hungary as an antidote to a new outbreak of xenophobic nationalism; it proclaimed the virtues of an honourable peace to friend and foe alike; the author's prescient grasp of geographical conditions laid stress on the inextricable link between economics and geography that had always underpinned the region. His advocacy of a central high commission to monitor ethnocentric conflict and irredentist claims reflected statesmanship of the very highest order. On the basis of such policies, a 'new order' could be founded in Europe. Written a mere five months after the signature of the treaty of Versailles, one wonders whether Clerk's report was meant to be a reflective comment on the latter as much as a prescription for the future treaty of Trianon.

The Allied peace terms were communicated to the Hungarian delegation led by Count Apponyi on 15 January 1920. Apponyi could only ponder whether acceptance or refusal of the peace terms was a choice between suicide or natural death.[84] Sir George Clerk had established a broad-based coalition government in Hungary pledged to the secret ballot, universal suffrage and democratic elections, and had exhorted the Allies to establish a peace based on reconstruction and reconciliation, rather than confrontation and revenge. The punitive and draconian terms of Trianon, however, made the pursuit of democracy in Central Europe even more illusory than it was in Weimar Germany. Harold Nicolson remarked upon the disillusionment that now gripped diplomats who in 1919 had hoped for more from the peace process.[85] Post-Trianon Hungary was in no condition to embrace constitutional monarchy under an English prince or any other guise. The Regency of Horthy, proclaimed early in 1920, was simply a façade for new and more powerful forms of authoritarian nationalism, which would soon become the norm rather than the exception in Central Europe.

Clerk's mission to Hungary in November 1919 was closely monitored by Seton-Watson. He regarded the Hungarian mission as a test case for the principles of *The New Europe*. In an article written on 30 October, and published in the 20 November issue of *The New Europe*, Oskar Jászi, the former Minister of Nationalities in the Károlyi government, had accused the Friedrich government of waging a war of 'White Terror'

against all 'democratic, liberal and radical tendencies in Hungary', using the extermination of Bolshevism as a pretext, and of becoming the rallying point of European counter-revolution and Habsburg restoration in Austria and Hungary. This would lead inexorably to the restoration of the Hohenzollerns in Germany, revanche and a renewal of the Great War. Seton-Watson cautioned: 'Sir George Clerk can, we imagine, be relied upon not to fall into the many traps spread for the unwary by well-mannered Magyar reactionaries.'[86]

However, he was not reassured by the ascendancy of Horthy or by the reconstituted government led by Huszár. Whilst acknowledging that Clerk had successfully forced the resignation of Friedrich, 'a mere adventurer who represented nothing in the country', and had secured the release of socialist leaders in the first hours of the Hungarian army's entry into the city, Seton-Watson was deeply disturbed by Apponyi's selection as the Hungarian delegate for the signing of the peace treaty. 'We find it hard to believe,' he wrote in November 1919, 'that a decision so distasteful to our allies among the New States will be sanctioned by Sir George Clerk or the Supreme Council.'[87]

Clerk's mission to Hungary in 1919 was subjected to further criticism with the growing realization that Horthy's ascendancy coincided with 'White Terror', which was alleged to have engulfed the country at this time. In the early months of 1920, the British government published a White Paper on the actions of Horthy entitled 'Alleged Existence of "White Terror" in Hungary'. This document relied heavily on the investigations carried out by the newly appointed British High Commissioner in Budapest, Sir Thomas Hohler, and the testimony of Admiral Troubridge.[88]

In May 1920, a joint delegation of the Trades Union Council and the British Labour Party led by Josiah Wedgwood MP had, with the consent of the Hungarian Prime Minister, Alexander Semadam, visited Hungary, carrying out its own enquiry and publishing its report in June. The Hungarian government was subject to a series of allegations: authorizing the political persecution of those who had not supported the rule of Horthy; the suppression of trade unionism and the right to strike; anti-Semitism; massacres; executions; imprisonment with or without due process of law; torture and ill treatment of prisoners, and detention without trial. The delegation was particularly concerned with the allegation that Horthy had prior knowledge of criminal acts committed by his officers, and had actively encouraged their activities. It also assessed whether the 'attitude of the British representatives in Budapest' had made the situation worse and 'strengthened the hands of the Terror Bands'. The central conclusion of this report was that there was a 'Terror' in Hungary, that the Hungarian government was unable to control it, and that 'many of its own acts are of so rigorous a character as to merit the name of "Terror"'. At the same time, however, the report perceived the 'Terror' to be anti-communist rather than anti-Semitic in origin, and that Horthy and the Hungarian government itself were not directly complicit in the outrages that had taken place. Nonetheless, the delegation was astounded that Horthy 'should profess admiration for officers like Hejjas and Prónay, against whom such terrible charges are made, and should brush aside any suggestion of proper inquiry'.

The report singled out Hohler, Gorton and Troubridge for varying degrees of criticism. The delegation regretted that 'the issuing of the White Paper containing the views and opinions of British representatives should have created an impression that the British Government is supporting a policy of oppression of political, industrial, and religious

freedom'. The delegation was particularly scathing of Hohler, for apparently misleading them about the exact status of Hungarian officers, such as Héjjas, Prónay and Bibó, who were accused of atrocities. The Hungarian government's own assertion that these men not only had not been demobilized, but also were in fact their best soldiers, led the delegation to the conclusion that the level of knowledge displayed by Hohler, two months after the issue of the government White Paper, 'seriously discredits the information and conclusions contained therein'. The Labour Party report made no attempt to associate the personality and policy of Sir George Clerk within its general condemnation of the actions of British officials.[89]

In 1923, Oscar Jászi offered his own assessment of the events of 1919. He unequivocally attributed the success of the counter-revolution and the inchoate fascism of the Bethlen—Horthy regime directly to the failure of British diplomacy and its representatives. In his *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary,* he wrote:

> It will be a humiliating and well-nigh inexplicable fact for the future historian that the diplomacy of Great Britain, of the most advanced Commonwealth of the world, played the principal part in rendering possible in Hungary the bloodstained and reactionary rule of Admiral Horthy.

Clerk's responsibility for these events, Jászi stated, was particularly grave. With the overthrow of Bela Kun, Peidl, and the ascendancy of Friedrich in August 1919, only a direct and sustained intervention on the part of the Entente could have averted 'White Counter-revolution' and preserve democracy. Clerk had been constantly reminded that any settlement of the Hungarian crisis that permitted Horthy's army to play a role would lead to 'White Terror' and permanently threaten the peace of Central Europe. Horthy's army should have been disarmed and Hungary occupied by an Entente force, until a more reliable army under a new Hungarian government could be assembled to ensure the proper conduct of elections. Had this advice been followed, parliamentary government would have been established, civil war prevented and the fruits of the October Revolution preserved. That this was not achieved was the fault of Sir George Clerk who had become a pawn of the Magyar aristocracy, and who had wanted to get out of 'this Balkan chaos' as quickly as he could, and was 'disgusted' with Hungarian conditions. Thus he got the assent of 'the leaders of the armed bands, the chiefs of the coffee house-cliques, and the Socialists' to a 'patched up compromise' of universal suffrage and the secret ballot for an election that was nothing more than a 'plebiscite' on the future form of the Hungarian government. This was a recipe for disaster. But the Entente wanted its peace treaty and access for foreign capitalists:

> Horthy and his associates agreed to both conditions with the generosity of true Magyar gentlemen, and the foreign missions accorded such obliging goodwill and hearty support to the White system of mass murders, internments, pogroms, castration, torture and rape, that if the Hohlers and the Troubridges had offered a tithe of this goodwill and support to the democratic and pacifist government of Károlyi, the disaster which befell our unfortunate country could have been avoided.

Jászi concluded: 'History will lay upon Sir George Clerk and upon the policy of the Entente a heavy responsibility for all the horrors which were revealed by the very circumspect delegation of the British Labour Party.'[90]

By 1923, the admonitions levelled against the political settlement in Hungary by *The New Europe* in November 1919 had been most vividly borne out by the actions and conduct of the Horthy—Bethlen regime. Seton-Watson was especially critical of the regime's attempts to discredit the Hungarian October Revolution of 1919, and to tarnish its leadership and policies with the taint of Bolshevism. He had a particularly high regard for Jászi, who in his view had not only been a sincere proponent of racial equality in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, but also a committed champion of federalism, free trade and plebiscitary democracy. Seton-Watson was invited to contribute to the preface of Jászi's book. However, he was not prepared to endorse the condemnation of Clerk's conduct and policy contained in the text. He wrote:

> While, however, it is easy to understand the bitterness with which Dr. Jászi writes of the Entente, it is necessary to enter a certain caveat against what he says of Sir George Clerk's mission to Budapest, as delegate of the Supreme Council, in the winter of 1919. To blame him for not bringing about a settlement of the acute party discords from which Hungary was then suffering, is really not quite reasonable; and it should be remembered that it was he who compelled the Government to uphold universal suffrage, as one of those achievements of the October Revolution which it would not be justifiable to reverse. He thereby provided for the first time a basis for popular representation in Hungary.[91]

On 6 December 1924, Clerk wrote to Seton-Watson in gratitude for those words of support. This letter also offered Clerk an opportunity to compose his own vigorous defence of his Hungarian mission. Writing in haste without the benefit of his private papers, Clerk regarded Jászi's allegations, which he could only have learnt 'at second or third hand', as 'a good instance of the difficulty of establishing historical truth'. To the charge that the major cause of Horthy's reactionary rule was the failure of British diplomacy, Clerk observed that he went to Hungary, not as the representative of Great Britain, but as the plenipotentiary representing the Supreme Council. Moreover, the prospective intervention of Entente or even British troops had been turned down in Paris.

> But even supposing the proposal to use either Allied or British troops had been accepted, their job would not, and could not, have been to hold the fort until a nice 'reliable army recruited from peasants and workmen' was ready to take its place. Their job would have been to ensure that the wishes of the Hungarian people were really expressed in complete freedom at the election for the National Assembly, and it would have been for that body to arrange for the subsequent administration of the country.
>
> What Jászi forgets is that I wasn't sent to administer Hungary, unfortunately—or rather fortunately for me, perhaps! I was sent on a perfectly direct mission, with its own peculiar problems. That mission was to get rid of the Friedrich Govt., which the Supreme Council did not like,

> and to substitute for it a Government with which the Supreme Council would condescend to deal, though I must not in any way interfere with the internal affairs of Hungary! In justice to the Hungarians, I must admit that their sense of humour and *[sic]* of their desperate situation went a long way toward helping me to achieve the only possible solution, which was a provisional and temporary Government of all parties, formed solely for the purpose of holding elections, by secret ballot, for a National Assembly, which should then proceed to establish a Government based on the result of that election. This I did in the face of considerable difficulties and therewith my responsibility was officially ended, but, knowing my Hungarians, I offered, both in Budapest and in Paris, to return for the elections in order to ensure, so far as my presence could do so, that they were fairly held. This offer was, I need hardly say, turned down.

Clerk vigorously defended his decision to secure the evacuation of the Romanians before allowing the entry of the Hungarian national army and negotiations to establish a provisional government. To allow the Romanians, 'this band of looting brigands', to continue its pillage would have only driven the Hungarians to despair, resulting in 'a renewal of hopeless fighting and a still more complete ruin of the unhappy country'.

> I think that much misery would have been saved if two things had happened: one, if Garami whom I considered to be by far the best man on the Left Wing, and his Party had not followed the fatal course of abstaining from taking part in the elections, and secondly, if I could have gone back to Budapest during the first six months of the new regime, though I must add that the despair engendered by the publication of the Peace Terms was such that, apart from the fact that I should probably have been assassinated by some patriot, I doubt if anything could have prevented the wave of nationalist irredentism which accounted for, though did not excuse, the toleration of the brutal deeds of Hejj as and company.
>
> So far as I am concerned, I feel no responsibility, though deep regret, for the fate of Hungary after I left it.

Finally, it was 'nonsense' to allege that he had conspired with the Hungarian aristocracy to thwart democracy in Hungary. Clerk had consulted those socialists who had at least had the courage to remain in Budapest. There was simply no alternative to coalition. To have attempted to form a Hungarian government 'out of Károlyi, Bela Kun and the Vienna refugees' and 'prop it up in the Palace upon Allied bayonets' seemed utterly unfeasible.[92]

In 1919, it is clear that the British government were contemplating a more forward role in the affairs of Central and Eastern Europe than they had historically played. Vienna, with its geographical position on the Danube astride the important lines of railway communication, was a viable locus for this policy. The Central Department of the Foreign Office argued vigorously for the establishment of a commission or financial syndicate to acquire interests in Austrian firms, thus securing for Great Britain Very large and important commercial interests in Central Europe', which would strengthen the

British position in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia.[93] British economic interests lobbied vigorously to acquire shareholding in Austrian companies, gain control of the Anglo-Austrian Bank and acquire a dominant role in shipping on the Danube through the River Syndicate Ltd. Before 1914, the dominant economic players in the Balkans had been Germany and Austria—Hungary, whilst Great Britain and France had invested heavily in Russia. The loss of this market after November 1917, and the vacuum created by the collapse of the Hohenzollern and Habsburg empires in 1918, made Central Europe one of the three most important world markets for capital exports from the Entente Powers. Sir George Clerk's missions to Bucharest and Budapest in the autumn of 1919 were of vital importance to the British Foreign Office in pursuit of this policy. They served to canvass both Bucharest and Budapest as auxiliary or alternative centres for the thrust of this policy. The Foreign Office was already cognizant of the possibilities of Budapest, and had already been thinking of sending an economic mission there in September 1919.[94] Through Clerk's missions the Foreign Office gained first-hand knowledge of the political climate in those countries, which would lend support to a policy of economic penetration. Clerk and Leeper stressed the common political, constitutional and cultural ties between Great Britain and the Romanian and Hungarian governments. Leeper advocated a policy of cultural imperialism to increase British influence in Romania. Clerk stressed the economic and financial weakness of France in Bucharest, and the apparent technical inferiority of its military equipment. The political and constitutional weakness of Hungary might also be exploited to the political and economic benefit of Great Britain.

The Foreign Office worked hard to come to terms with the 'new order' in Europe caused by the collapse of the four great empires and the dynamic implications of both Woodrow Wilson and Lenin's commitment to the revolutionary principle of national self-determination. The British government had always been equivocal about this principle, despite the influence of the dismemberers. The Versailles settlement of 1919 did nothing to diminish its ambivalence. But as a result of the Great War, the British Empire had increased its territorial size through the acquisition of mandates, especially in the Middle East. The principle of national self-determination could easily be levelled against it. But this was an age of confidence, not of doubt. For Curzon, national self-determination held no such terrors. He believed that in many circumstances 'most of the people would determine in our favour'. In his view, self-determination should be played 'for all it is worth wherever we are involved in difficulties with the French, the Arabs, or anybody else…knowing in the bottom of our hearts that we are more likely to benefit from it than anybody else'.[95]

In Central Europe, therefore, the Foreign Office and Sir George Clerk regarded the future with optimism. The threat of pan-Germanism had vanished, that of the Soviet Union was still remote, that of the United States in retreat behind the barriers of isolationism. In the struggle for Danubian commercial and economic supremacy, the British were poised to play a dominant role. Clerk, Leeper and Rattigan were careful not to allow their private contempt for Bratianu and the activities of the Romanian army in Hungary to lead to an open breach with the Romanian government, which would redound to the advantage of France. In such circumstances, it is an oversimplification to dismiss the Bucharest leg of the Clerk mission as a failure.[96]

In Hungary, Clerk showed gullibility in believing that the Hungarians could be persuaded to establish a constitutional monarchy on the British model under an English prince. He was also gullible in the degree of trust he placed in Horthy. To Clerk it was Friedrich who seemed to pose the greater threat to civil liberty. Seduced by Horthy's charm, Clerk was prepared to ignore threats of 'White Terror' if pledges and assurances of future conduct could be secured. But if Clerk was duped by the Zichy Palace agreement of 7 November, so were social democratic and liberal politicians such as Garami, who had also placed their trust in Horthy's assurances. Clerk had little choice but to accept at face value the agreement of 7 November. Without the support of the National Army, no coalition government would ever be formed. The conduct of Horthy's forces when they entered Budapest, and Horthy's opposition to the opportunist tactics of Friedrich, further vindicated Clerk's faith in the Admiral. Ultimately, Horthy was extremely difficult to read. He seemed apolitical, his natural allegiance to his Habsburg monarch temporarily divested of power; his natural allies conservative monarchists and aristocratic landowners, such as Counts Bethlen and Andrássy. He was an enigma, wrestling with the dilemma of reconciling his belief in legitimacy with the darker side of his own ambition, covertly dallying with Gömbös's plans for military dictatorship. The Regency to which Horthy was elected by parliament in March 1920, amidst an atmosphere of unparalleled intimidation and propaganda, provided the perfect solution to this inner struggle.[97] Clerk embraced Horthy in November 1919 because failure to do so would have doomed the prospect of forming a multi-party administration to conclude peace. Horthy's conduct vindicated Clerk's faith in the sincerity of his promises. A clear distinction should be made between the accommodation forged between Horthy and Clerk in November 1919, and the predilection for a closer alliance favoured subsequently by 'members of the British political or military elite' in Budapest.[98] It was, after all, Sir Thomas Hohler not Sir George Clerk who first ventured to suggest that peace in Hungary could best be achieved by the dictatorship of Admiral Horthy.[99]

In fact, Clerk laboured mightily in 1919 to establish conditions in Hungary that would lead to the promotion of a multi-party system of parliamentary democracy, although his labours have continued to attract criticism.[100] His efforts were strongly supported with only some slight misgiving by Seton-Watson and *The New Europe*. He urged the Allies in his report of 29 November 1919 to abandon reparations in Austria and Hungary, and to offset the misery that existed in those countries with a policy of immediate financial assistance. However, the Allies chose to ignore this advice and imposed the harsh provisions of the treaty of Trianon.[101] In the interwar period, irredentism, economic weakness, the sense of national humiliation imposed by Trianon and the authoritarian traditions of Habsburg Hungary gave rise to a new form of nationalist dictatorship. Thus, Hungary entered on that grim cycle in its history caused by the failure of what Jászi called 'International Democracy'. It would lead Hungary down the path to world war, Soviet domination and the Revolution of 1956, a cycle that would not be broken until the European revolutions of 1989. In 1919 Sir George Clerk offered Hungary a window of opportunity to break out of what would become, until 1989, a depressing recitation of dictatorship and repression. That Hungary did not seize it cannot be attributed solely to the failings of Clerk. Rarely can one man have encountered such daunting problems or operated against such a backcloth of political difficulty as the British envoy at this time. In retrospect, Clerk's mission was unique. It was one of the first examples of diplomacy

at the behest of a supranational body; an exercise in what would later be termed ‘shuttle diplomacy’; it was a prelude to the era of the ‘multinational force’ and the ‘peacekeeping operation’. With the emergence, at the end of the twentieth century, of a ‘New World Order’, nation-building has assumed a new imperative in Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq, despite the ambivalence displayed towards that policy by the world’s remaining superpower. Sir George Clerk’s attempt to establish a democratic structure in Hungary, in retrospect, hardly pales by comparison.

3
Nation-building in the New Europe

Czechoslovakia 1920–6

> Sir George is one of those who have longest taken part not only in our battle for freedom but also in the whole development of our Republic.
>
> (*Prager Presse*, 31 October 1926)

Sir George Clerk's experiences in Romania and Hungary in 1919 had convinced him that Great Britain had an influential role to play in Central Europe. But where should the fulcrum of British policy lie? Clerk was clear about where it should not lie! Despite the consistent support he had advanced for the national aspirations of an independent Poland, Clerk did not envisage Warsaw as the centre of that policy, and had no great faith in the statesmanship of the Poles. The Great War had exposed the failings of the Polish character. 'Most, if not all Poles, are liars,' said Clerk to Sir Horace Rumbold in August 1918. Rumbold was reminded of 'the caution necessary in dealing with every sort of Pole'.[1] Clerk did not rule out Hungary, but the relationship he had forged with Masaryk during the Great War brought Czechoslovakia into strong contention. He wrote to Seton-Watson from Prague on 2 February 1920:

> As you know, there is, and can be, no foundation for nervousness about Buda Pest *[sic]* as the centre of our policy. On the other hand, if Prague is to be that centre, it must qualify itself by becoming, as potentially it *can* become, the most advanced and stable of the new States. Only, for this, the Czechs *must* make life possible for their German and other fellow-citizens.[2]

In 1919, the British government was represented in Prague by its Charge d'Affaires, Cecil Gosling, who was no great admirer of the new Czech state. Gosling had served as consul-general in Gothenburg during the Great War, but much of his early career had been spent in Latin America 'and some of it in the more backward states'. Latin American republics hardly paled in comparison to the new successor states of Central Europe, Gosling informed Francis Lindley, the Minister in Vienna, who visited him in Christmas 1919: 'The worst of them was run on more enlightened and less corrupt lines than is Czecho-Slovakia.'[3] If Prague was to become the fulcrum of British power, it was clear that the state of crisis induced by Gosling's relations with the Czechs needed repair.

As early as February 1919, Gosling had called on the Entente to make clear their firm intention to support the new government in Czechoslovakia, politically and economically, 'thus strengthening its position as against the Germans and Magyars both within and

without its frontiers'.[4] This was a remarkable initiative on the part of the Charge d'Affaires, which no British government in the interwar period was prepared to honour.[5] But Gosling's call for support was coupled with a deep pessimism about the internal and racial condition of the republic. In fact, he doubted its capacity to survive. He attributed this to the high-handedness of the Czechs, their treatment of the German minority in Bohemia and their anti-clericalism, which had strengthened the forces of autonomy in both Moravia and Slovakia. By the summer, the situation in Slovakia had become particularly grave with the towns practically 'in open sympathy with the Magyars', and the Jews, 'a much less desirable element', to a great extent 'imbued with Bolshevism'. The Hungarian invasion of Slovakia in July further weakened the republic in Gosling's eyes. As for Masaryk, he was simply unable to provide the statesmanship to address these issues.

> Scholar and philosopher, he is, however, too remote from the actualities of life and I must confess that I have found him at times lacking in firmness and decision in dealing with the problems that confront him. Acts of religious, linguistic and racial intolerance committed by the leaders of the people are, I believe, distasteful to him, but he has not successfully used his influence to prevent their occurrence, and one feels that he lacks the broad and generous outlook on life, the spirit of justice and toleration, which one would expect in a man of his quality.[6]

The Foreign Office may have doubted the reliability of these reports. They had considered sending Seton-Watson to Prague in February. He finally arrived in May, and had interviews with both Gosling and Masaryk. Seton-Watson offered a far less sombre prognosis of the new state. He believed Masaryk's weakness to be 'an absurd myth'; tensions between Czechs and Slovaks more the product of personal conflict between Father Hlinka, the Slovak Populist Party leader, and Vavro Šrobár, a Catholic Slovak leader of the 'Hlas' tendency within the Slovak National Party and strong supporter of Masaryk's vision of Czechoslovakia, than any structural social and political problems. He had confidence in the President's capacity to win over the Germans, and he considered Bolshevism no great threat unless it was instigated from outside. This correspondence allayed Foreign Office fears, at least temporarily. Crowe minuted: 'Mr. Seton-Watson confirms the highly favourable opinion we had formed of the character and political principles of the leading Czechoslovak statesmen… His views concerning the proper treatment of the German-Bohemian problem…deserve careful consideration.'[7] Seton-Watson's visit left a bitter taste in the mouth of Cecil Gosling. Seton-Watson had observed in the Czech press that criticism of Czechoslovakia 'emanated chiefly from ignorance'. This was hardly likely 'to increase the prestige of the Entente in the eyes of the Czechs,' Gosling informed Curzon.[8]

In October, Gosling and the Military Attaché, Basil Coulson, carried out a fact-finding mission to Slovakia.[9] A final, furious exchange of correspondence with Masaryk ensued. Czech anti-clericalism and discrimination against Slovaks, the treatment of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, and the alleged Magyar sympathy of the Slovaks reduced his relations with Masaryk to a new nadir.[10] In his final report to Curzon on New Year's Eve 1919, Gosling presented a bleak picture of the new republic.[11]

It was doubtless with considerable relief that Masaryk anticipated Clerk's arrival. Gosling was an embittered man by the end of his stay in Prague; he had coveted the possibility of becoming the first British minister. His failure to obtain that position was a source of considerable disappointment to him, which had done nothing to assuage his views of the Czechs.[12] Masaryk was exasperated by Gosling's activities, and was convinced that the national existence of the new Czechoslovak state was threatened, not by internal disunity, but by the forces of Hungarian revisionism and irredentism, which had enlisted the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican and the great German aristocracy of Bohemia, whose paramount position in the Habsburg Empire derived from the Counter-Reformation, the Jesuits and the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620, into the conspiracy. The Magyars were adept propagandists. British officials had been constantly reminded that the Czechs were 'the Prussians of the Slavs', that the Slovaks had no intention of submitting themselves to 'Czechisation' and wished for reconciliation with the Magyars.[13] Gosling and his staff were witting or unwitting pawns in this struggle. In an emotional letter to Seton-Watson on 1 February 1920, Masaryk lamented the lack of clarity in British foreign policy in Central Europe and complained bitterly about the profusion of officials of apparently Catholic persuasion, such as Gosling, Coulson and Troubridge, and their apparent intrigues with aristocrats and clericals.[14] *The New Europe* fulminated against Gosling's activities, which had had such an adverse effect on Anglo-Czechoslovak relations, lauded Clerk's arrival, and wondered 'if even politicians of high standing should have imagined a connection between all this and the activities of other British representatives in Budapest, which the present reactionary Hungarian Government has not been slow to exploit'.[15]

Clerk felt little embarrassment at this assessment of British policy. He was 'overjoyed', on his arrival in Prague, to receive a letter from Seton-Watson to which he quickly replied:

> It came at the moment when the domestic difficulties of organizing life in the Thun Palace and the pre-election turmoil of Czecho-Slovak politics were filling me with a feeling of complete helplessness and hopelessness, and it was really encouraging to find someone who realized the difficulties. Masaryk is ill, and I have not been able to see him yet. Beneš has been fully occupied in fighting Kramarz in the National Assembly: and I have therefore not really got into touch with things & people yet. But I find a curious atmosphere of restraint, fear, and suspicion. The Czechs prepared to find me monarchist and reactionary: the others regretting their avowed and fervently Catholic friend. And everyone expecting miracles![16]

From the outset of his arrival in Czechoslovakia, Clerk regarded Prague as an essential component in the struggle for Central European supremacy with the credentials to become a centre of British influence. The relationship with Masaryk and Beneš forged during the Great War was credit to be drawn upon. In order to market its wares to the Foreign Office, he was determined to correct the impressions of the new successor state, which his predecessor Gosling had laboured to convey throughout 1919. In his first annual report, he portrayed Czechoslovakia as 'a centre of relative decency and good

order and an example to their neighbours' with a foreign policy that was 'sober and sensible'. History had contrived to make the Czechs 'a really democratic people', with 'the reputation, not wholly undeserved, of being the best of the Slav races, the steadiest, the most progressive'. His admiration was not unequivocal however. The Czech 'could be conceited and suspicious' and 'covers up his ignorance of wider horizons, which is colossal, by an assumption that his own methods are in any case superior'.[17]

Nevertheless, from 1920, Clerk clearly determined to correct the jaundiced impression of the Czech government, which Gosling had conveyed throughout 1919. He gave a more measured impression of the Czech treatment of its ethnic minorities, and sought to minimize the extent and potential of Slovak nationalism as a disruptive force within the Czechoslovak state. He made great efforts to combat those clerical, and even ultramontane, elements, inside Czechoslovakia and their patrons in Great Britain who sought to denigrate Czechoslovakia in the eyes of the British government. He tried to establish a closer Anglo-Czechoslovak rapport, especially through economic diplomacy and financial loans, and steer Czechoslovakia away from excessive reliance on France. At the same time, Clerk believed that this policy would advance British commercial, financial and economic interests in Central Europe, and would place these interests in a position to exploit the opportunities that would accrue with the opening up of the Russian market. Clerk pursued these policies steadfastly between 1920 and January 1924, until the signature of the Franco-Czech alliance.

He was aided and abetted in this policy by his commercial secretary and fellow Scot, Robert Bruce Lockhart. Both men were bons viveurs with a close emotional attachment to Scotland. Sir George had first encountered Bruce Lockhart as a junior consular official in the British embassy during the Milner mission to Russia in January 1917. He was later recruited by Lloyd George and Milner, as an unofficial agent of the British government, and asked to make contact with the Bolsheviks. Allegedly implicated in the attempt by Dora Kaplan to kill Lenin in August 1918, he was imprisoned, threatened with execution and deported. His appointment had alienated the permanent officials in the Foreign Office, especially Hardinge and Tyrrell, and his reports from Russia about the apparent permanence of the Bolshevik regime had not been popular in these quarters. Clerk, alone of the Foreign Office personnel, had given him strong political and moral support when he returned from Russia.[18] Bruce Lockhart had powerful connections, especially with Lord Beaverbrook and Milner, and with their blessing he had set off for Prague in December 1919.[19] He held Clerk in the highest esteem, recognizing the qualities he could bring to a post such as Prague. In 1934, he wrote:

> He had a first class brain and a judgment of men and affairs that was rarely at fault…. He was a loyal friend to the Czechs, who soon learnt to appreciate his merits and to rely upon his advice. A man of liberal views, he was able to guide Czech Chauvinism into quieter channels. His personal relations with President Masaryk and Dr. Beneš were more intimate than those of any other diplomatist in Prague, and although France was and still is the guardian Power of Czechoslovakia, it was to Sir George, and not to the French Minister that the Czech statesmen came when they were in doubt what course to pursue.[20]

Clerk's initial approach to the political problems that afflicted the Republic was to adopt a more optimistic view of Czech policy towards Slovakia than was the case with Gosling. As early as 10 February 1920, Clerk told Curzon that the Czechs had 'corrected some of the more flagrant mistakes which marked the beginning of their administration of that country,' and that 'Benés and every other member of the Government, with whom I have spoken, have announced themselves determined to allow no abuses or oppression in Slovakia'.[21] When, in March 1920, Dr Jehlička and a coterie of Slovak leaders published a memorandum protesting against the 'annexation' of Slovakia to Czechoslovakia, Clerk cautioned: 'Too much importance need not be attached to this declaration.'

The Czechs faced considerable difficulties in the administration of Slovakia and there had been 'many mistakes and acts of local oppression', committed by the Czechs though 'more through ignorance and suspicion than ill-will'. Moreover, every incident had been magnified by Magyar propaganda. Much of the difficulty could be attributed to the personal rivalry of Šrobár and Hlinka, who were personal friends, before the former's elevation to the high status of minister. The internment of Hlinka in 1919 had clearly been an error, although 'to call him the martyr of the nation's cause,' Clerk observed, was 'a somewhat wide application of martyrdom'. Had Hlinka been given a bishopric, 'a great deal of subsequent agitation would never have arisen.' Nor was the Czech government's demand for a declaration of fidelity from the clergy to the new republic tantamount, in the eyes of the British Minister, to a persecution of the Roman Catholic Church in Slovakia.

> I have talked with Slovak leaders of varying opinions, I have spoken to Czechs who have studied the question with sympathy and care, and my general impression is that, while intending to have what they consider their full share in guiding the destinies of the nation, the Slovaks have no real wish either to cut themselves loose and become an independent State, or still less to join up with the Magyars.[22]

In the summer of 1920, there was a further outburst of industrial unrest in Slovakia, thus creating the conditions for Magyar intervention. Consular reports from Bratislava emphasized the gravity of the situation.[23] Military intelligence reports painted a grim picture of political instability across the country.[24] Masaryk wisely avoided involvement in any Franco-Polish crusade against the Soviet Union; his unequivocal opposition to foreign intervention in Russia was meant to localize the revolutionary infection. Negotiations with Romania and Yugoslavia were initiated as a further deterrent against Magyar interventionism. Clerk, in a despatch of 2 August, did not perceive the crisis to be a serious threat to the internal stability of the Czechoslovak state, and he tended to discount secret intelligence reports, which, in his view, made one 'completely lose sight of the wood for the trees'.[25] By the time of the publication of the first annual report early in 1921, Clerk estimated that the cry for national independence in Slovakia had 'practically died away'. Slovakia craved an autonomous relationship with the Czechs, in the British Minister's view, 'to the extent, that Scotland, for instance, has it under the Union'.[26]

The successful integration of the German minority into the Czechoslovak state was clearly regarded by the admirers of that state, such as Seton-Watson and Clerk, as a *sine*

qua non of its permanence. Racial division was accentuated by religious strife and nationalist hatred. The Czech national character had been forged in the Hussite and Protestant Reformations. The Battle of the White Mountain in 1620 was a cataclysm for the Czechs: Protestant Bohemia was destroyed; the Czechs subjected to the tender mercies of the Counter-Reformation and the Jesuits; their lands expropriated and peasantry subordinated to the ruthless will of an alien imperial German aristocracy. In his first annual report, Clerk reminded the Foreign Office of the virtual extinction of Czech national feeling until the enlightened rule of Joseph II.

The second anniversary of Czechoslovak independence sparked serious social disturbances between Czechs and Germans, which carried over into much of November. There was also a clear Czech anti-German backlash on 16 November, which manifested itself in anti-German and anti-Semitic riots in Prague. Rioting in Pilsen, Brünn and Asch left three civilians dead and fifteen injured. Its severity, which in Clerk's view became less about the 'national question', but more about the 'continued existence of the authority of the State', paradoxically served to create a mood of national reconciliation. Clerk informed Curzon on 26 November:

> The fact is that all responsible people, except the extremists of both sections, have had a real shock, and both the press and Parliament have generally condemned the action of the mob, and have been devoting themselves to enforcing the necessity for Czech and German to live and work together. Mutual recriminations have been carefully avoided, and all parties have agreed that those who acted illegally must be punished, whatever their nationality might be.[27]

Surveying Czech—German relations at the end of his first year in Prague, Clerk remained hopeful despite the debacle of November. He concluded:

> Although there have been many inexcusable acts of petty persecution, the Czech was obliged to act harshly if he was to establish himself. It will take long for the races to settle down but there are signs that a mutual spirit of greater tolerance is growing especially among the younger generation, whose memories of what they have lost or suffered are less bitter.

Clerk perceived a greater rapport between the Czech and German business communities and industry than the politicians would allow. Economic growth, he hoped, would further rapprochement. Ultimately the German minority had no alternative but to come to terms with its condition. *Anschluss* with Austria was 'hopeless and useless'. Surely they would prefer to be 'a strong, rich and intelligent minority in Czechoslovakia than as a relatively insignificant member of the German Reich'.[28]

Clerk made great efforts to combat the influence of clerical and ultramontane elements inside Czechoslovakia and their patrons in Great Britain who sought to undermine Czechoslovakia in official circles. The aristocracy was at the forefront of this opposition. At the end of the Great War, the Schwarzenbergs and Clarys had been deprived of the great positions and estates in Bohemia to which their aristocratic rank entitled them.

Their allegiance had been unequivocally to the Emperor Karl. Prince Clary of Aldringen, for example, regarded Masaryk as nothing more than a traitor, and his memoirs reveal a most abject contempt for Eduard Beneš.[29] Bruce Lockhart vividly described their demeanour:

> Proud of a lineage which went back to Charlemagne, if not to the Garden of Eden, they hated the Germans, disliked the Hungarians and looked down on the Czechs as excellent servants unfit for any other occupation. They might have been willing to marry their daughters to a Hohenzollern Prince, but from a heraldic point of view they would have regarded the marriage as a mésalliance.

They regarded even the English aristocracy, with its propensity to marry into the *nouveaux riches*, with some distaste. One of their greatest admirers was the Duke of Portland, who shared their contempt for the Czechs. Nevertheless, even he was not immune to their exaggerated sense of snobbery. Whenever he came to Prague, he was referred to as the 'Duke of Cement' on the assumption that his title owed its origin to a connection with the Portland commodity of that name. Gosling had been the natural ally of this disaffected group of potential frondeurs, as was the military attaché in Prague, Basil Coulson, who also shared these sympathies 'and far more than Gosling, had exceeded the bounds of diplomatic discretion in his comments on the Czechs'.[30]

Thus a Habsburg fifth column existed within the British legation in Prague. With Sir George Clerk's arrival, Gosling had gone, but Coulson remained. These men had been outspoken in their dislike of the Czechoslovak government, but the real danger lay in the extent to which the clerical and aristocratic opposition to the Czechs was encouraged to believe, in 1920, that intrigue and dissimulation could accomplish a change in the foreign policy of the British government towards the new successor state. Clerk attempted to act as a mediator between this powerful section of the German community and the Czechoslovak government. He was no great admirer of the land legislation introduced in 1919, and Bruce Lockhart has suggested that he may have tried to mitigate it. Clerk's attempts to bring about a rapprochement between the aristocracy and the Czech cabinet through full-dress dinner engagements at the British legation bore little fruit. However, he continued to urge nobles of predominantly Czech origin to send their sons into the Czech diplomatic service.[31]

In the summer of 1920, the Clary family and their British ally, the Duke of Portland, mounted a concerted effort to prevent the appointment of the Bohemian noble Prince Max Lobkowitz as a secretary to the Mastny mission in London on the grounds that he had communist and Irish nationalist sympathies as well as lunacy in the family.[32] Clerk defended the appointment in an official despatch to Curzon and in a private letter to Eric Phipps, attributing the vehemence of the objections to his alleged betrayal of his class and background. There was no reason why the appointment should not go ahead. Lobkowitz had never said anything on Ireland 'half so bitter as the sort of things that the Military Attaché here, Colonel Coulson, says perpetually and openly about the Czech Govt'. The Clary and Kinsky families, Portland, J.G.Vance, vice-principal of a Roman Catholic college in Hertfordshire, a 'poisonous R.C. priest' and 'jackal of Cardinal Bourne's',

Coulson himself, were all capable of launching this canard. These sources were all 'bitterly prejudiced' against the Czechs.[33]

Some days later, Phipps informed Clerk that, in view of his advice, the Foreign Office would make no protest against the appointment. Phipps concluded cryptically: 'Our information was certainly somewhat vague and not supported by any particular evidence, and I think you are probably correct in your explanation of the campaign against Lobkowitz.'[34] In the circumstances, it must have been with not inconsiderable relief that Clerk greeted the news of the Army Council's decision to demobilize the military attaché, Coulson, at the end of the year.[35] Nevertheless, it was clear that the alliance of disgruntled aristocrats and their English contacts were still intent on mischief-making.

In November 1920, the Foreign Office received a document entitled 'A Brief Statement concerning the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia' composed by the Rev. J.G.Vance, who had been sent to Czechoslovakia in 1920 by Cardinal Bourne, in the words of Clerk, 'to encourage the Roman Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia where it was considered to have fallen on evil days'. His memorandum was a devastating critique of Czech domestic and foreign policy since the inception of the republic. Moreover, Great Britain 'apparently looks on without giving that guidance which by the nature of the case and her long experience she alone could probably give'.

The Vance memorandum offered Sir George Clerk an opportunity to dispose of tendentious arguments that surreptitiously found their way to the Foreign Office. Vance was, in Clerk's view, 'an extremely clever priest, of Irish extraction', who had become the creature of a fervently Catholic aristocracy, 'and the views he expresses are the reflection of the bitter feelings of those to whom defeat and the creation of the Republic have brought the loss of a supreme position, unchallenged for centuries'. 'There is much that is true in his picture,' he observed, 'but it is a half-truth, drawn with neither sympathy nor understanding of the Czech side.' Clerk acknowledged the unpopularity of the Czechs among neighbouring states, attributing this to the 'over-weening vanity' and 'violent nationalism' displayed by Czechoslovakia's first Prime Minister, Karel Kramář, the general prosperity of the republic when compared to other Central European states, and the 'close-fisted' commercial policy pursued by the Czechs. Nevertheless, Clerk believed the Czechs had 'good cause' for suspicion of their neighbours. They opposed Poland over Teschen because they feared the loss of coalmines vital to their existence. They were now eager to live on good terms with the Poles, but distrusted their 'grandiose dreams of territorial expansion'.

> Memories of years of German domination and oppression are still fresh, and there is the ever present dread of finding Prague once more financially in thrall to Berlin. In time, Czech and German-Bohemia will live together, but for reasons which I have given in previous despatches to Your Lordship, the time is not yet.

Clerk rejected charges that the Czechs had been unwilling to provide coal and food for Austria, but acknowledged that they were working 'rightly or wrongly, for Prague to take the place of Vienna'. As regards Hungary, the Czechs had 'good reason to be on their guard' since the Magyars would never forgive the loss of Slovakia and were incurably committed to irredentism. With respect to the Slovaks, Clerk reiterated his views that

there was no desire for the restoration of Hungary. As regards the Czech capacity for leadership, it could hardly be otherwise considering that 'until the war no Czech was allowed to rise beyond a respectable mediocrity, and any Czech who travelled was suspect'. Clerk concluded:

> Lastly, I have read with a somewhat exasperated amusement the concluding sentence of Dr. Vance's Memorandum. For one who claims to have made a fairly close study of this country it shows a curious ignorance of the situation. The Czechs would resent nothing more than an attempt to give them guidance uninvited…the Czechs mean to fight out their own salvation according to their own methods…they have full confidence in themselves and their destiny and seek no outside guidance.

The Foreign Office had no further interest in the matter. Clerk's final sentence had 'set our minds at rest'.[36]

In 1920 misperceptions about the Czech state in certain echelons, even of the Foreign Office, were commonplace. According to Bruce Lockhart's memoirs, letters from official departments were addressed to 'Prague, Czechslavia; Prague, Yugo-slovakia; Prague, Czechoslovenia; Prague, Vienna; and even The Prague, Poland'.[37] Clerk was anxious to increase the visibility of Czechoslovakia in London. When Eduard Beneš proceeded there in the summer of 1920, a secret intelligence report commented:

> Dr. Beneš was apparently very favourably impressed with his trip to England, and was very agreeably surprised to see how much the position of the Czechs had been improved there. General Pelle thinks that this impression is largely due to the influence of Sir George Clerk. This was told me in the very strictest confidence.[38]

By the end of the year, with no little justification, Clerk could make the legitimate claim in Czechoslovakia that 'the moral weight and influence of Great Britain stands as high, to say the least, as that of any Power'.[39] However, the success of this policy would be dependent on his ability to steer Czechoslovakia away from dependence on France, which exercised influence through the French military mission in Prague, and was intent on establishing its own hegemony in Central Europe.

In 1921, Sir George Clerk was in his forty-seventh year. In 1908, he had married Janet Muriel Whitwell, the daughter of Edward Robson Whitwell of Yarm on Tees, Yorkshire. The Clerks had no children, and it is difficult to estimate whether or not by 1921 their marriage had entered that decline which later afflicted it. Prague was an attractive post, and a constant source of curiosity for a continuous stream of visitors. In the spring of 1921, the military correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, Colonel a Court Repington, recorded his impressions of the legation magnificently housed in Thun Palace, rented for twelve years from Count Oswald Thun-Salm-Hohenstein. It was 'a delightful haven…a perfect and quite unique place'. Lady Clerk, 'a very pretty woman with a fine figure', was the 'perfect hostess', engaging in discussion about 'pictures, painters, books, and writers', topics particularly close to her heart. Repington stayed at the legation for almost a week just at the time of the first Karlist coup in March 1921, and he had the opportunity

of meeting many of the aristocratic and diplomatic élite of Prague. He noted in his diary: 'I am glad to think that Sir George is where he is. It seems to be the crucial point in Central Europe so far as I have seen yet, and I think Sir G. one of our best diplomats.[40]

If Prague was indeed 'the crucial point in Central Europe', as Repington believed, it had much to do with Anglo-French disharmony, which was a constant feature of the political landscape in Europe after 1919. The roots of this conflict lay in the Allied failure to satisfy French security concerns *vis-à-vis* Germany at the Versailles conference, which made the French government intransigent over reparations and indemnity, perceiving them as a *sine qua non* of the reconstruction of the French economy. Faced with financial crisis *'L'Allemagne paiera!'* became its urgent panacea.[41] The major British concern was the revitalization of the world economy, which drove the engines of British wealth: exports, banking, shipping, insurance. Consequently, the Lloyd George government favoured scaling down reparations and reconstructing the finances of the defeated nations. Imperial conflicts only served to exacerbate the conflict further. Convinced that British economic recovery was dependent upon European economic recovery, Lloyd George was unwilling to permit Germany to succumb to Bolshevism. At the same time, he wished to adopt a more conciliatory policy towards the Soviet Union securing the economic benefits that existed there through an abandonment of military interventionism. The French Prime Minister, Clemenceau, also had reservations about military intervention in Russia on the Napoleonic scale advocated, for example, by Marshal Foch.[42] He preferred 'a barbed wire entanglement round Russia'.[43] The French government, therefore, conceived of a chain of hegemony among the successor states of Central Europe, encircling Germany in the west and acting as a barrier against Russia in the east. In pursuit of this security policy, French capital sought in 1919 to penetrate and control the important financial and manufacturing sectors of the Polish, Bulgarian and Czechoslovak economies.[44] In the spring of 1920, the powerful French iron and steel conglomerate, Schneider et Cie, attempted to purchase the controlling share in the Mining and Metallurgic Company, one of the 'Big Three' combines of the Czech metal-lurgical industry.[45]

Czechoslovakia did not rest easily in the French embrace, and Clerk was convinced that it could be steered away from a more perfect union. He was aided in this task initially by the awkward and clumsy nature of French diplomacy, which in 1920 seemed to favour the establishment in Central Europe of a union or federation of Danubian powers based on a Franco-Hungarian axis. This policy was associated with the Secretary General of the Quai d'Orsay, Maurice Paléologue, and the Prime Minister, Alexandre Millerand.[46] Hungary would make commercial concessions in return for a possible revision of the territorial terms before and after the signing of the Treaty of Trianon in June 1920. There were also attempts to bring about a Hungarian-Polish rapprochement, which would strengthen Poland militarily against the Soviet Union. Pressure was applied to the Czechoslovak government, attempting to dragoon it into line with the threat of Hungarian intervention in Slovakia.[47] It was clear that Anglo-French diplomatic and economic rivalry was a cardinal feature of the struggle for Danubian hegemony.[48]

Czechoslovakia responded to these pressures, especially the threat from Hungary, by launching its own counteroffensive known as the 'Little Entente'.[49] This policy was primarily associated with the new Foreign Minster of Czechoslovakia, Eduard Beneš. The fundamental principle of Beneš's foreign policy was the maintenance of the peace

treaties of 1919–20.[50] The revisionist and irredentist designs of the Hungarian government, with the covert support of France, now prompted Beneš to sign a convention between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia on 14 August 1920. The main purpose of the treaty was that the two states should maintain the Treaty of Trianon and assist each other in the event of an unprovoked attack on them by Hungary. On 17 August, Beneš proceeded quickly to Bucharest to induce Romanian participation in the alliance.[51]

The origin of the Little Entente has attracted much controversy.[52] But what is clear is that Beneš's negotiations threw the Quai d'Orsay 'into a kind of stupor'.[53] Piltz, the astute Polish Minister in Prague, observed that these negotiations could only weaken French power *vis-à-vis* Great Britain.[54] The removal of Paléologue in September 1920 clearly indicated the accuracy of that observation. This lack of credit with the Little Entente forced the French government to move aggressively towards a Franco-Polish alliance in February 1921.

The principles of Czechoslovak foreign policy in fact dovetailed neatly with the main priorities of British policy at this time. Masaryk and Beneš were more inclined to follow Lloyd George than France over Russia, which became clearer when the Polish government embarked upon an adventurist foreign policy towards the Soviet Union in the spring of 1920. Masaryk had never supported Allied military intervention in Russia, believing it to be impossible to conquer Bolshevism by force of arms. In his first annual report, Clerk noted that Karel Kramář, the former Prime Minister, had been 'a thick-and-thin supporter of the White Russians' and it had been largely his attitude on this question, which had forced his resignation.[55] In July 1920, the D'Abernon—Jusserand mission arrived in Prague. Hankey, who was a member of the mission, was delighted to see his 'old friend' Clerk again. Clerk took him promptly to see Masaryk. Hankey was convinced that 'Bolshevism could not be beaten by bayonets' and that the '*cordon sanitaire*' was 'futile'. Only propaganda and trade could tame the Soviets. Masaryk agreed. He intimated that 'one locomotive is worth more than the capture of a Bolshevist battalion'. Hankey's diary recorded that Masaryk's views on Poland 'were in almost every detail' the same as his own.[56] The Czechoslovak government declared its neutrality in the Polish—Soviet conflict. When the Soviet offensive collapsed before the gates of Warsaw on 16 August, thus bringing to a premature end Lenin's aspirations for world revolution, and when, in October 1920, the last White Russian leader Baron Wrangel, who had been strongly supported by the French government, was forced to evacuate the Crimea, the issue of military intervention that had dogged Allied policy towards Russia since November 1917 was effectively terminated.

In 1921, Great Britain was clearly poised to gain a position of influence, both commercially and politically, in the then new successor state of Czechoslovakia. In his first annual report, Clerk remarked:

> Although at times the Czechs became a little restive under French tutelage, more particularly in regard to the French control of their army, they realise that the benefits which they derive in their present state of growth from their close association with France are far too great to call for an effort to free themselves from shackles which are after all very lightly worn. Still, it is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that, material interests

> apart, should it come to choosing between the advice of France or Great Britain, the inclination would be to follow the latter.[57]

In March 1921, Beneš met Count Teleki, the Hungarian Prime Minister, at Brück in Austria, in a 'first and very important step towards better relations with his Hungarian neighbours'.[58] These first fragile steps towards *détente* between Czechoslovakia and Hungary should not be underestimated. However, they were rudely shattered by two attempts of the ex-Emperor and former Hungarian King, Karl, to regain the Habsburg throne in March and October 1921. This led to the consolidation of the Little Entente, giving it a more marked anti-Magyar complexion.

The prospect of Habsburg restoration in Hungary posed by the first and second Karlist putsch was anathema both to the Allies and to Beneš, and was a severe challenge to the Treaty of Trianon of 1920. Yet there was considerable concern in London about the reaction in Prague. In the second and more significant of these episodes, Clerk went to great pains to defend Beneš against allegations voiced by the British government of war-mongering.

Beneš responded energetically to the prospect of Habsburg restoration both in March and October 1921. During the second crisis, occasioned by the Karlist putsch in the Burgenland, Masaryk mobilized the Czechoslovak army, whilst Beneš threatened the Hungarian government with military sanctions, unless the entire Habsburg dynasty were deprived of their rights to the throne and a written engagement given by the Hungarian government for the strict execution of the Treaty of Trianon, as well as indemnification for the cost of the mobilization. The Hungarian government had, in the meanwhile, taken its own measures to deal with the crisis. Faced by protests from the Allies and the Little Entente, they quickly intercepted the 'March on Budapest', defeating Karl's followers easily and arresting the ex-King on 24 October. Karl could not, however, be induced by the Hungarian authorities to give up his title to the Hungarian throne. Threatened by the prospect of a Czech—Yugoslav military incursion into Hungary, the Hungarian government implemented the extradition of Karl on 1 November. By 10 November, acceding to the political pressure of the Allies and the threat of invasion by the Little Entente, the Hungarian government formally passed an act abrogating the sovereign rights of Charles IV and invalidating the Habsburg right of succession.[59]

The Foreign Office in London showed considerable concern at Beneš's policy in this crisis. Lord Curzon viewed Beneš's actions as brinkmanship of the worst kind.[60] Considerable criticism has been levelled at Beneš, who certainly seemed to overreach himself at this time. He has been accused of exploiting both Karlist crises to advance his own domestic agenda, exaggerating their threat in order to promote national unity; he is alleged to have induced 'war psychosis' in Prague through his use of propaganda; he has been seen as the orchestrator of an attempt to pressure the Western allies into closer support for the Little Entente in order to secure 'regime change' in Hungary.[61] Such allegations are difficult to substantiate. Beneš was right to be concerned about Habsburg restoration, which was a dagger-thrust at the heart of the successor states, and he was wise to move forcefully in dealing with a regime as enigmatic as Horthy's. Of even greater concern to the Czechoslovaks may have been the tacit support for the putsch of the French Prime Minister, Aristide Briand.[62] Clerk did his best to allay the reservations

voiced by Curzon. On 31 October, he explained Czech motives in a lengthy despatch. It was a very clear defence of Czechoslovak policy.

In this despatch, Clerk offered a detailed analysis of the 'mental attitude' of Czechoslovaks during the crisis, drawing careful distinction between the first and second phases of the crisis separated by the surrender of Karl to Horthy's forces on 24 October. He stressed the 'exaggerated fear of each other's iniquitous designs' that dominated the Czech and Magyar psyche: the Hungarian belief that 'every Czech is a Bolshevik', and the Czech perception that every Hungarian was 'an irredentist reactionary'. He stressed the volatility of public opinion, the danger of established politicians being swept aside by 'less sober-minded and therefore more dangerous leaders'; the Czechoslovak contention from the timing of the putsch that the Horthy government was either covertly complicit or that popular support for Horthy in Budapest would evaporate with Karl's arrival; the belief in Prague that growing revisionist sentiment, manifesting itself in the Burgenland question and the Venice Agreement over Sopron, represented the first breaches in the Treaty of Trianon.

Clerk acknowledged that the surrender of Karl made it harder to justify the continuation of warlike preparations, which consequently ensued. But the Czechs strongly suspected Horthy of dissimulation. They were incredulous that:

> the same Government, which had professed itself unable to control the incursion and proceedings of the bands in the Burgenland, should have been able without difficulty to suppress a far more formidable and popular movement, namely, the restoration of the lawful King to the throne of St. Stephen… Put shortly, the Czechs consider that the Hungarians suppressed the ex-Emperor because it suited them to do so, but claim, rightly or wrongly, to have valid grounds for the belief that there is no real change of the Hungarian heart.

Clerk acquitted the Czechs of any expansionist designs during the crisis, though admittedly Beneš was handicapped by his obligations to the Yugoslavs, who may have had designs on the Baranya. Beneš had adopted a moderate tone in his conversations with the Allies in his attempt to find a formula to bring about a settlement of the crisis, and had been prepared to make concessions over his demands. Moreover, the crisis had been exacerbated by 'fantastic and unbalanced' reports sent by the Hungarian representative in Prague, de Tahy, and reports from Hohler in Budapest, conveying to Curzon as 'ascertained fact' allegations of Czech territorial designs on the coalmining area of Salgotarjan, which were palpably untrue. Clerk was particularly critical of de Tahy, and could only register his regret that 'in this serious time the official representative of Hungary here was not a man of calmer and more balanced judgement'. Czechoslovakia had had 'an unlooked-for opportunity, in this distinctly unmilitary country, to test its mobilisation machinery' and all political parties, including the German Social Democrats, had rallied behind the government in a show of national unity.

The Foreign Office greeted Clerk's despatch with some scepticism.[63] Nevertheless, Clerk continued to deny insinuations, which seemed to emanate from Hohler in Budapest, that the major objective of the crisis had been 'to trump up some pretext for dismembering Hungary'.[64] On 3 November, he reported extensively on the activities of

de Tahy, whom he held to be largely responsible for the misinformation and misconceptions about Beneš's intentions, which had been passed on to Budapest, and thence to Hohler and Curzon. The crisis had affected de Tahy so severely, said Clerk, that he had taken up residence in a wine merchant's cafe, showing himself 'temperamentally entirely unfitted to meet the grave responsibilities which fell to his lot'.[65]

The Karlist crisis opened up real differences of opinion among the British representatives in Prague and Budapest about the aims and objectives of Czechoslovak foreign policy, bordering on almost open recrimination between Clerk and Hohler. This also reflected a broader debate about the focus of British power in Central Europe after 1919, and where it should lie, and it led to further recriminations between the various diplomatic staffs.

On 4 November, Hohler submitted a memorandum to the Foreign Office composed by his commercial secretary, Humphreys, which sought to explain the economic reasons for the 'present Czechoslovak aggression'. This document was an indictment of Czechoslovak policy towards Hungary since the armistice. The Czech objective had been to use the Treaty of Trianon to 'enforce a Socialist government on Hungary', and that because of the loss of the Austro-Hungarian markets and the 'perilous position' of its finances, Czechoslovakia had for reasons of economic policy 'every inducement to capture Hungary in some way or other'. In Prague Clerk's commercial secretary, Bruce Lockhart, could barely contain his astonishment about the allegations, and offered a vigorous defence of Czechoslovak financial and economic policies. As for the allegation of regime change, he concluded:

> I have some personal knowledge of the men who are responsible for the policy of the Czecho-Slovak State, and it is difficult to take seriously the idea of President Masaryk, as a bellicose and hot-headed statesman, plotting in the recesses of his library the overthrow of the Horthy regime in order to instal in Budapest a Socialist Government which would be amenable to the dictates of the Prague Imperialists.[66]

The second Karlist coup *manqué* confirmed the verdict of 1918 and the Treaty of Trianon, and was an inglorious denouement for a Habsburg dynasty that had played a central role in European history since 1519. It was a bitter humiliation for Hungary and the Horthy dictatorship, which did nothing to diminish the resentment of Hungarians for the new order in Europe. It was a personal triumph for Beneš, who wished to send a clear message to the Zeligowskis and d'Annunzios that peace treaties would be enforced, whilst at the same time demonstrating clearly to the Allies his own resolve to do so. The British government did not care for his posturing. Sir George Clerk laboured hard to explain to the British government, in the most measured terms, the rationale behind Czechoslovak actions during the crisis. But Curzon was no admirer of the successor states, and Hohler's despatches can only confirm the view that both he and his staff had drunk long and deep at the well of Horthyism. Clerk wished to protect the reputation of Prague as an acceptable fulcrum of British influence in Central Europe. Democratic Prague was a safer and more salutary investment in the long term than authoritarian Budapest. The Hohler—Clerk disagreement was a reflection of this broader debate about the focus of British policy in the Danube region. But if Sir George Clerk drew any

satisfaction from this confrontation, it was quickly dispelled by the unfortunate corollary, which threatened in November 1921 to overwhelm him, which can only be called the Fouchet affair.

On 1 November, Hohler sent a telegram to Curzon reporting a conversation he had had with the secretary of the French legation in Budapest the previous evening. This official had implied that the French officer corps of the Czech army was spoiling for a fight with the Hungarians, because of their 'high salaries' and their desire 'to test the weapon they have forged'. The French High Commissioner, Maurice Fouchet, confirmed these remarks. Fouchet was sceptical of an enterprise that promised 'neither danger nor glory' and had urged Paris to withdraw the officers if the Czechs entered Hungarian soil.[67] Hohler believed that Clerk should be made aware of the French view, and the telegram was repeated to Prague. Clerk evidently showed it to Fernand Couget, the French Minister in Prague, who reported it to his superiors in Paris, even, Hohler alleged, exaggerating it, with the result that Fouchet had been reproached for his lack of patriotism, and was being recalled. In his telegram to Curzon on 10 November, Hohler insisted that Fouchet had never said a word 'which could be regarded as contrary to his country, his compatriots or his duty', and regarded it as 'most unfortunate' that Clerk had shown the telegram to Couget, thus leading to 'so regrettable an incident which will do great harm to as (?sincere) a Frenchman'. Hohler begged Curzon to intercede 'to do all that is possible to repair immediately this most painful incident'.[68] The Foreign Secretary was incredulous. He told Clerk on 12 November that he found it 'difficult to credit this report'. He awaited Clerk's observations on the episode so that he could reassure Hohler 'that no indiscretion of yours had had anything to do with this deplorable incident'. Curzon was deeply irritated. He annotated the despatch: 'Where are we in this tangle?[69]

Clerk had indeed informed Couget of Fouchet's remarks. In a telegram of 14 November, he explained that there was no alternative but to do so. He believed that the Czechs were reacting defensively rather than aggressively in the crisis, and he evidently hoped that Couget would 'reassure our allied colleagues in Budapest which he was more in a position to do more authoritatively than I could'. Hohler's telegram had not been marked confidential, and Clerk was working with Couget 'in closest cooperation for preservation of peace and maintenance of authority of Allied Powers'. It seemed of paramount importance 'to dispel so far as one could illusions which endangered peace'. Clerk could not remember whether he had shown Couget the telegram or merely conveyed the substance of it. He had intended the information 'as a confidential warning for local consumption and expected it to be so treated'. However, he accepted full responsibility for the incident and hoped that Couget, whom he believed had acted 'in good faith', would not be drawn further into the affair.[70]

Curzon was at a loss as to how to proceed in this matter. He envisaged some kind of *démarche* at the Quai d'Orsay through Lord Hardinge, the British ambassador in Paris. On 18 November, Crowe admonished Hohler in a private letter for his role in the Fouchet affair. Curzon remained convinced that Clerk should not have shown 'the incriminating communication' to Couget. Crowe conveyed his Lordship's displeasure in a letter dated the same day: Curzon would not reply to Clerk's telegram; Crowe thought it 'only right that you should know that he cannot really exonerate you'.

Clerk was able to draw some small solace from this letter.[71] Couget had evidently been playing a devious game, and the Foreign Office was under no illusions as to his

character.[72] In Paris, Hardinge reported allegations that Clerk had been reluctant to restrain the Czechs, due to a 'want of energy on the part of His Majesty's Minister at Prague', and accusations of this kind had been levelled at both the British and Italian governments.[73] Sir Eyre Crowe urged Clerk to be 'more circumspect' in dealing with Couget, and enclosed two telegrams from Hardinge revealing examples of his duplicity.[74]

This curious episode was deeply distressing to Clerk. Couget had evidently attempted to manipulate a sensitive situation to his own advantage. He deeply resented the position of primacy that Clerk had forged in Prague since his arrival early in 1920. Despite the influence exerted by the French military mission over the Czechoslovak army, it irritated Couget that he did not exert the paramount influence in the counsels of Prague, evidently accorded to Clerk. By conveying a false impression of Clerk's views and actions to his own government, Couget hoped that Clerk might become a victim of Anglo-French dissension, or, at the very least, that he might be undermined in the eyes of his own government for indolence. The main objective, therefore, of the Couget *démarche* was to destroy the pre-eminent position accorded to Sir George Clerk in the counsels of Prague, and to replace it with his own and the interests of France. In pursuit of this strategy, Couget appeared to have few qualms about the sacrifice of a colleague in Budapest.

Clerk replied to Crowe on 29 November. His tone was suitably penitent, justifiably so, for none could risk the wrath of Curzon.

> It is an ungrateful task to tell a colleague that he has incurred the displeasure of his Chief, but it has to be done at times, and I can only say that it could not be done more considerately, and at the same time more effectively, than in your letter of Nov 18. Please believe that I am really grateful.

Nevertheless, he offered a spirited defence of his conduct during the crisis. He would not dwell on 'the alarmist nature of the Budapest telegrams', but in an atmosphere of panic, there could have been no other recourse other than to dispel the myth that the French officer corps might launch an aggressive war against Hungary.

> How was I to act? In my opinion, the belief was erroneous and, at that particular moment, highly dangerous and must be dissipated as soon as possible. But my unsupported contradiction would carry no weight with a Frenchman, 'who knows his own "people better" *[sic]*. On the other hand, a carefully casual enquiry of my French colleague showed me that I was merely exposing myself, knowing my Couget, to the risk of a private report to Paris that I was a malignant Francophobe. I had therefore to convince Couget that he had at once to give his Budapest colleague an authoritative denial, which I could only do by giving him definite proof of that colleague's views, and the latter had to be convinced that he was talking dangerous nonsense. I'm afraid that I feel that I should have been guilty of a dereliction of duty, had I not done what I did.

Clerk paid tribute to Masaryk and Beneš for their management of the crisis. Beneš particularly deserved 'great credit'. As for Couget: 'although we are personally on the

best of terms, I have always realized his jealousy of the influence of H.M.G. in this country, and of my position here, but henceforward I trust him in nothing.'

In a postscript to the affair, Hardinge discovered that the decision to replace Fouchet seemed to have predated the crisis of October 1921.[75] Fouchet had always been a strong proponent of Franco-Hungarian rapprochement, Danubian confederation and Habsburg restoration. In sharp contrast to his earlier sympathy for Habsburg restoration, Briand was unequivocal in his opposition to Karl in October 1921. His attitude marked his conversion towards support for the Little Entente, a position advocated by Poincaré and Berthelot, the Secretary General of the Quai d'Orsay. Fouchet's removal may have been rooted in this change of policy. But the real villain in the crisis, at least to Clerk, was Couget. In his report on the heads of missions, submitted to the Foreign Office in March 1922, Clerk observed coldly: 'During the past year M.Couget has developed his childish, and rather disloyal, efforts to enhance the foremost position of France and his representative, without any great measure of success.'[76]

Clerk now moved quickly to strengthen the relationship between Great Britain and Czechoslovakia. This policy reached its zenith with the agreement of 10 October 1921, establishing the Anglo-Austrian and Anglo-Czechoslovak Banks, and the negotiations for the Czech state loan of April 1922.

The Czechoslovak government had always shown a keen interest in the prospect of securing a state loan in Great Britain. In London, the Board of Trade saw advantages for British trade, but the Treasury was more cautious, seeing financial danger in long-term credits, especially with countries with unfavourable exchange rates.[77] Between 1920 and 1921, in sharp contrast to the economies of other successor states, Czechoslovakia underwent an economic recovery powered by Alois Rašín's anti-inflationary currency reform. Economic and social stabilization were the hallmarks of Czechoslovakia in these years, making it a more attractive economic proposition in a Central Europe increasingly characterized by inflation and economic chaos.[78]

In October 1921, the British and Czechoslovak governments signed an agreement establishing an Anglo-Czechoslovak Bank in Prague. This was part of a broader policy of reconstructing the Anglo-Austrian Bank, which had been based in Vienna in 1914 and which owed the British government £750,000. This scheme was initiated by the Treasury and by the Governor of the Bank of England, Montagu Norman. Both Clerk and Bruce Lockhart saw the Bank agreement as a watershed. The benefits of the agreement for Great Britain and Czechoslovakia were innumerable. Beneš was according to Bruce Lockhart:

> perhaps the greatest factor for peace to-day in Central Europe. In supporting his economic policy and freeing him from too subservient a dependence on French support I believe that we would be taking the first steps towards securing better economic relations between the various succession states of Central Europe… Finally, by strengthening our own financial position in this country, we shall secure for ourselves the surest guarantee against any attempts by Germany to build up again a Mittel-Europa.

The agreement had great internal significance. Bruce Lockhart believed it could act as 'a conciliatory instrument' in easing racial tensions between Czechs and their German minority, which would in turn promote rapprochement between Czechoslovakia and Germany; it would promote trade between the successor states; it would increase 'direct trade' between Great Britain and Czechoslovakia, especially British exports of raw materials, which were currently being imported through German middlemen, 'because up to now the English houses have had no direct financial connexion with this country'. Sir George Clerk interpreted Beneš's policy as the desire to secure the 'economic independence' of Czechoslovakia by 'direct financial connection with London'. The survival of Czechoslovakia necessitated that she 'not be bound by financial obligations to other States, which might use these financial obligations as weapons against her'. Thus Clerk concluded:

> Dr. Beneš has boldly embarked on a policy of close economic relationship with England, which, in my opinion, should receive every support from His Majesty's Government. The signing of the Bank Agreement has been the first step; the raising of a loan for Czecho-Slovakia in London will be the second.[79]

On 21 October 1921, Sir George Clerk informed the Foreign Office that Beneš was eager to raise a state loan abroad before the end of the year.[80] In London, Michael Spencer Smith, a director of the Bank of England, who had played a prominent role in the negotiation of the Bank agreement, had approached Baring Brothers, who agreed to study the possibility of a loan. However, the outbreak of the second Karlist putsch dampened Spencer Smith's enthusiasm. Lord Revelstoke, Barings' managing director, cautiously explored the possibilities of a loan of about £5 million with Sir Robert Home, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and had discussions with Rothschilds.[81] Clerk was in the midst of attempting to extricate himself from the travails of the Fouchet affair. Nevertheless, he was eager to push on with the loan project. He was also concerned about the political future of Beneš, who had replaced Jan Černý as Prime Minister in September 1921. On 29 November, he informed Crowe that Beneš could fall from power over the Bank Agreement unless he could secure a loan in London. Clerk was not writing 'to bolster up' Beneš with all its attendant dangers.

> But my point is that I look on the loan, if it can be arranged as a real opportunity for *us*, both commercially and politically. If any one of the Succession States and other products of the war is going to last, it is this hard-headed unpleasant mannered country, and its stability is the greatest factor for peace in Central Europe. It therefore seems to me to be our direct interest to help it, if we can, and thereby to win openings for our trade which will extend far beyond the frontiers of Czechoslovakia.
>
> I fear however that the Czechs have a 'bad press' just now in London and are rather looked upon as greedy swashbucklers, thirsting for the flimsiest excuse to prey on stricken Hungary, even if it means plunging Europe into fresh war. Of course, this isn't true, but it will prejudice an already difficult business, and I fear that a golden opportunity may be lost,

> unless the City is told the real position and why a loan to the Czechs will benefit Great Britain. This I might be able to do if I came over to London, and I am ready to try, but before carrying things any further, I should be grateful for your personal opinion. The matter is urgent, as you will realize….
>
> French, Americans and Germans are tumbling over one another with offers of loans, but Beneš so far sticks to his word to accept nothing until he has exhausted the possibilities of the London market. President Masaryk and he mean to turn this country to us if they can.

The Foreign Office did not see the issue in quite the same terms as their emissary in Prague. The tripartite negotiations between the Treasury, the Bank of England and the Czechoslovak government over the Bank Agreement of 10 October had evidently passed over the draft debt agreement concerning the release of Czechoslovak property in the United Kingdom, and the settlement of debts due by Czechoslovak nationals to British subjects. Alexander Cadogan was particularly critical of the Czechoslovak attitude towards its prewar debts and towards British interests in general in the new successor state.[82]

Crowe was concerned about the political connotations contained in the private letter. The prospect of Beneš's demise worried him: 'If really his continued tenure of office depends on his success in this matter, you can imagine that I shall spare no pains to afford him all possible assistance,' he told Clerk on 9 December. Nevertheless, Crowe offered no encouragement to visit London. The Czechs had been unresponsive over the debt issue, not making so much as a reply to the rather strongly worded note submitted to them in May 1921. Given the attitude of the Treasury and the Board of Trade, Crowe feared that unless Clerk could secure 'tangible evidence of the willingness of the Czecho-Slovak government to meet our wishes, they will not find a very good welcome in British financial circles'. Ominously, the Federation of British Industry was 'threatening a campaign' in this matter.[83]

Clerk quickly got at Beneš, who blamed the 'obstinacy' of the Ministry of Finance for the prevarication over the debt settlement. Clerk was applying for Christmas leave to visit his mother, Alice, Lady Clerk in the South of France. 'I shall hold myself in readiness to come to London any time early in January that my presence is required,' he informed Crowe on 16 December.[84]

The ensuing loan negotiations in London in January 1922 were complex and arduous. Beneš had evidently implored Clerk to proceed to London in a private capacity, and to use his good auspices to forward the loan negotiations. This Clerk was clearly prepared to do, although it put him in an unenviable position, made even more delicate in the aftermath of the Fouchet affair.[85] Clerk arrived in London around 11 January 1922, and remained there until the middle of February. He was intimately involved in the loan negotiations between Barings, Dr Vilém Pospíšil, the financial negotiator for the Czech government, the Board of Trade, the Treasury and the Foreign Office. When Barings insisted that any loan could only be dependent upon the Czech parliament passing a Special Law authorizing the Czech government to borrow in foreign currencies and pledge revenues intended as security, Clerk interceded with Lord Revelstoke.[86] This condition was a major obstacle for the Czechs. Beneš would never place this law before

parliament, who would inevitably consider it as 'an attempt to treat Czechoslovakia like Turkey'.[87]

At the end of January, the Czechoslovak legation specifically requested the Foreign Office to permit Sir George Clerk to remain in London to continue the negotiations, which struck the Foreign Office as 'a rather curious request for a Foreign Legation to make'. Nevertheless, their assent was forthcoming. Crowe smoothed away the reservations of his dissenters:

> M.Beneš proposes, among other things, to settle the questions of a loan, of banking concessions etc all of which he has fully discussed with Sir G Clerk. The latter has for some time been in almost daily consultation with the Board of Trade, the D.O.T with messrs Baring and the Treasury concerning these matters which it is hoped to bring to a final conclusion shortly. Important British interests are involved (settlement of pre-war debts etc). It is natural in these circumstances that M.Beneš should wish to find Sir G.Clerk here when he comes over. This is moreover in accordance with general practice when the Minister for Foreign Affairs of a country visits another capital.
>
> I have therefore requested Sir G.Clerk to prolong his stay for a few days. (He has been here on leave for some time).[88]

Clerk pressured Barings to be flexible on the special law. He wrote to Revelstoke on 8 February:

> The Czechs are a very sensitive people, with little experience of the great world, and they have got it into their heads that the undeniably efficient way in which they have on the whole managed their financial and economic affairs since they became an independent state so differentiates them from all other states in Central Europe that it is impossible for them to accept what they would regard as a public manifestation of want of confidence in their capacity and integrity. While I personally think that this is an exaggerated point of view, I do understand the feelings of the Czechs who are intensely proud of the efforts they have made since the war.

Perhaps a formula could be found which would satisfy both sides, perhaps some form of declaration rather than a formal law. They should await Beneš' arrival in London. 'But meanwhile, I hope that your House will consider the possibilities of my suggestion, for I do feel that the issue of the loan in this country will be a great thing for British interests in Central Europe.'[89]

The arrival of Beneš in London on 15 February in preparation for the Genoa Conference evidently broke the impasse. Barings were impressed with Beneš and Pospísil. They agreed to increase the loan to £10 million, the first tranche of which was to be 50 per cent. They later agreed to increase the first tranche to £6,100,000 at 8 per cent.[90] In return, Beneš agreed that the Czech parliament would pass a general law to contract loans and pledge revenues. At the end of March 1922, the Czech parliament did

indeed pass such a law. Beneš relied heavily on President Masaryk's influence to secure this. Robert Bruce Lockhart commented on the President's 'personal inter-vention' with the 'Pětka', or the committee of the five political parties, which comprised the ruling coalition in Prague.

The loan agreement was signed on 5 April 1922, secured on the tobacco monopoly, and issued in London, New York and Amsterdam. The lists were closed a few hours after issue. The governing board of the Anglo-Czech Bank was constituted at a meeting on 12 April. The Bank of England thus became the only foreign bank allowed to own more than 50 per cent of the capital of the Czech bank.[91]

The negotiation of the Barings loan and the final constitution of the Anglo-Czech Bank was a great triumph for Czechoslovakia. It became the only country able to raise money abroad in 1922. There was great irony in the comparison between the economic stability of Czechoslovakia and the economic crisis endemic in Austria. The Czechoslovak government had established itself on the London money market at a time when bond issues were overwhelmingly prejudiced towards Western Europe.[92] The negotiations were a signal triumph for Beneš. 'He is the biggest man in Central Europe today,' commented the head of the Central Department of the Foreign Office, Miles Lampson, in April 1922.[93] Beneš was attempting to create a counterbalance to the domination of French financial interests in Czechoslovakia and establish an international bank in Prague, which could act as a safeguard against German economic penetration. His economic diplomacy perfectly paralleled the political policy he had pursued through the Little Entente.

British interests were considerably advanced by the agreements. The Bank of England was in a dominant position in the banking circles of Czechoslovakia. The great architects of the Bank Agreement were Spencer Smith and Bruce Lockhart. The architect of the state loan was Sir George Clerk. The British Minister was prominent in the negotiations both in Prague and in London, intervening personally on behalf of Beneš *vis-à-vis* the Board of Trade, the Foreign Office and the Barings Board of Directors. The agreements were a vindication of the policy consistently pursued by Clerk since his arrival in Czechoslovakia early in 1920. France had assumed a strong economic and military position in Czechoslovakia in 1919. But they had failed to establish Budapest as the centre of their Danubian interests in 1920, and had shifted their emphasis to Warsaw in 1921. British commercial interests had assumed an influential position in Vienna. Clerk was a strong advocate of Prague as an important link in a British chain of Danubian hegemony, in clear preference to Budapest, which lacked the credentials to become a significant locus. The Czechs were an inherently democratic people worthy of British support, a beacon of order, stability and economic progress in Central Europe.

The Foreign Office seemed generally passive in its attitude to the new state, but prewar debts vexed it considerably. There was distrust of Beneš and a tendency not to accept his assurances at face value. A few days after the loan agreement had been signed, Alexander Cadogan distanced the Foreign Office from the loan proceedings to avoid criticism from British creditors.[94] Clerk's advocacy of the state loan coincided with a renewed thrust by both the Bank of England and the Treasury to carry through economic reconstruction in Central Europe. In 1922, Prague was a major focal point of British economic and political influence in the Danube region, a position it would not enjoy again in the interwar period.

The great rivalry between France and Great Britain continued to dominate their relationship between 1921 and 1922. Anglo-Soviet trade, Upper Silesia, reparations, Turkey, the Washington Conference, formed a plethora of issues, which exacerbated tensions between them at this time. Beneš saw himself as a mediator in this great conflict over security and European reconstruction, which further manifested itself at the Cannes and Genoa conferences in January and April 1922. However, the Genoa Conference convinced Beneš that Anglo-French division was 'definite'. He was now unable 'to enrol himself under either the French or the English flag'. He preferred to embrace 'a purely Czechoslovak policy…in harmony with the policy of a strong and homogeneous Little Entente'.[95]

In the spring and summer of 1922, the French government made fresh attempts to dragoon Czechoslovakia into a closer relationship through the agency of Mittelhauser, the head of the French military mission in Prague. At a meeting at Masaryk's country retreat at Lány in August, Masaryk informed Clerk that these initiatives had been rejected. He emphasized the differences in Franco-Czech attitudes towards Germany. It was impossible for him to take Couget into his confidence in the way that he was doing with Clerk 'or indeed to speak seriously to him at all', for his vision, like that of Mittelhauser and Poincaré, was 'so distorted and obsessed by their determination to extract their German pound of flesh at all costs, that he looked on them as beyond the reach of reason'.[96] Clerk had great confidence in the moral authority of Masaryk and an almost divine belief in the special relationship that he had formed with him. He did not have the same faith in Beneš who struck him as 'an unconscious opportunist', and apt 'to lose himself in his own volubility and to give loose general assurances which he cannot afterwards implement'.[97]

In October 1922, there were dramatic political changes in both Great Britain and Czechoslovakia. In Prague, Beneš fell from power to be replaced by a new coalition led by Anton Švehla. It was fully representative of all five of the major political parties that comprised the Pětka, and it enshrined the 'all-national' principle that the government should consist of Czech and Slovak representatives only. Beneš retained his position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Great Britain, Lloyd George fell from power as a result of the Chanak crisis. In January 1923, the new Conservative Prime Minister, Bonar Law, found himself faced with a major Anglo-French crisis over Germany. On 9 January, the Reparations Commission declared a coal default against the German government, and on 11 January French and Belgian troops entered the Ruhr in support of technicians charged with collecting coal.

The onset of the Ruhr crisis caught Sir George Clerk away on leave. It had enormous significance for Anglo-French relations, and it was accompanied by increasing Little Entente nervousness with regard to Hungary. Clerk returned from leave on 5 March 1923.[98] On 12 March, he had a private luncheon with the President at which, according to Clerk, no one else was present, 'not even Dr. Alice Masaryk', the president's daughter. Masaryk impressed on the British Minister 'that the French were trying their best to get hold of him and his country and put Czechoslovakia in the position of Poland'. France wished to sign a 'special treaty' with Czechoslovakia and was insistent that Masaryk visit Paris. Masaryk emphasized the need to 'dissipate beforehand any feeling of suspicion or doubt…in London'.[99]

The Ruhr crisis of 1923 opened up fresh fissures in the relationship between Great Britain and France, which had been so evident since 1919. The French Prime Minister, Raymond Poincaré, was committed unequivocally towards the strict enforcement of the Treaty of Versailles, or the policy of *'main au collet,'* and a more unilateralist foreign policy. This implied a much more vigorous courtship by France of its eastern Allies, and the possible curtailment of their autonomy. This was the programme of an invigorated *'cordon sanitaire'* around Germany.[100] It signified that 'the central axis of Czechoslovak foreign policy for the next six months was the French effort to draw Czechoslovakia into a formal military alliance.'[101]

Both Masaryk and Beneš were strongly opposed to Poincaré's Ruhr policy, and neither wished to be bound to France in a closer embrace than the Versailles settlement sanctioned. Masaryk was implacably opposed to any policy that would reduce the Little Entente to vassalage, as he had made clear to Clerk both at Lány and in Prague. Beneš too was sceptical. He believed this policy could only strengthen the forces of monarchism and reaction, and weaken the consolidation of democracy in the Weimar Republic, thus increasing the tendency towards revisionism and irredentism throughout Central Europe. In its fiercest form, this policy could ultimately lead to the complete disintegration of Germany. As Piotr Wandycz has correctly observed: 'Czechoslovakia viewed the occupation of the Ruhr far more critically than Poland, and her attitude came closer to the negative British approach.'[102]

In May 1923, the French government returned to the charge, when they despatched Marshal Foch to Warsaw and Prague, with a view to bringing about a closer union of her allies. He was greeted enthusiastically in Warsaw, and conducted secret military talks with Pilsudski including the prospect of a joint offensive towards Berlin. He visited Prague from 14 to 17 May, where the military parade greeting the architect of Allied victory in the Great War in Prague was, as noted by Lewis Einstein, the percipient American Minister in Prague, 'remarkable for the absence of enthusiasm on the part of the crowd'.[103] Clerk too doubted whether the Foch mission had realized its objectives:

> The immediate result of the visit has certainly been a strong outward affirmation of the close union of France and Czechoslovakia and the French might be pardoned for thinking that they have this country in their pocket. But I doubt whether, when time for reflection comes, there will not be a reaction, and a tendency to feel that complete vassalage to France advances neither the dignity nor the interests of Czechoslovakia.[104]

On 24 May, Masaryk himself paid a call to the British legation, in order, Clerk observed, 'to tell me about Foch'. The Marshal had hinted at the desirability of a Franco-Czechoslovak military convention, or that at least 'the two countries should have some sort of an understanding "in writing"'. Masaryk had opposed this. The President had been pressured to visit Paris, which it was impossible for him to refuse, although he could not go before October, and in the mean time he had resolved to send Beneš in the second half of June. 'All the President came out in his dry remark,' Sir George Clerk recalled: 'The French sent me their Marshal: I return the compliment with my Minister.' The visit to Paris, Masaryk continued, was 'not particularly welcome' but he was not 'altogether sorry to have the opportunity to express himself. France's Ruhr policy was not the right

way to bring Germany to book. Moreover, Germany was of considerable economic importance to Czechoslovakia and its ruin would be disastrous. Nor did the Czechs see 'eye to eye' with France with regard to Poland or Russia. For Foch, Czechoslovakia was 'the most important link on the French chain'. But for Masaryk, it was the point 'most immediately exposed to any eventual German attack, and it was for this reason that Czechoslovakia could not bind itself to France and expose itself to criticism for joining in "an imperialistic policy of domination"'. Masaryk wished to be reassured that the British government fully understood his position, which coincided, he believed, with the British view on Germany. This would be 'a great moral assistance to him in holding his end up against the French'.

Clerk reacted quickly to the news of Beneš's projected visit to Paris. On 25 May, he approached Curzon for permission to authorize 'a hint' to Beneš that, at the end of his June visit to Paris, he should spend 'a day or two in England' with the opportunity for 'informal conversation' and a 'non-committal discussion' about the further possibility of a Masaryk visit.[105] Clerk discussed the form of the visit in a private and confidential despatch to Sir Eyre Crowe a few days later. He was nonetheless insistent that it should take place:

> Beneš, and to some extent Masaryk, have in many ways to bow the knee to France, and indeed in some respects they find themselves not seeing eye to eye with us. For instance, they prefer the French to our way of looking at Hungary, but in the big things, especially as regards Germany and, when the day comes that we have to take a definite line as regards Poland, they are, I think, more with us than with the French. You will see how this comes out from the extraordinary openness with which the President talks to me and the confidence he reposes in me. Putting aside the personal aspect, this is because he feels that on the main lines the views of the two countries are identical, and he wants us to realise this and himself to feel that he has our moral support.

Early in June, the Foreign Office approved the minister's *démarche,* and authorized Clerk to raise the possibility of a Beneš visit along the lines he had outlined in his despatch. Assent was also given to the prospect of a Masaryk visit.[106]

Foch's visit to Prague had come at an inopportune time for Masaryk, burdened as he was by the recent death of his wife. Nevertheless, he had made his opposition to any military alliance unequivocally clear. He did not like Poincaré's Ruhr policy. It was the work of 'little men'.[107] Clerk was convinced that a Franco-Czech alliance could be prevented, and he set himself to do it. He held the strong conviction that his own influence with the President could prove to be decisive. This was a risky foray into personal diplomacy, but necessary, if the position Clerk had carved both for himself, and for the British government, in Czechoslovakia was to survive the Ruhr crisis. However, the strategy was complicated by the growing threat to Anglo-Czechoslovak relations posed by the economic reconstruction of Hungary.

British policy towards Central Europe had crystallized in 1922. Despite the failure of the Genoa Conference, there was progress over Austrian reconstruction. In October 1922, an economic reconstruction scheme had been implemented for Austria based on a foreign

loan for that country guaranteed by the Great Powers including Czechoslovakia. Its success had a marked impact upon the Governor of the Bank of England, Montagu Norman, who played a significant role in the securing of the loans, and on Otto Niemeyer, who was Controller of Finance at the Treasury and the British representative on the Financial Committee of the League of Nations.[108]

Buoyed by the Austrian precedent, the Treasury and the Bank of England now advocated the principle of Hungarian reconstruction. Norman was a daunting figure, committed to restoring the City of London to its pre-eminence of 1914, believing with an almost messianic fervour that central bankers should be independent of government control. He stood for sound finance, and a return to the gold bullion standard at prewar parity. He was bullish on inter-Allied debts, an issue on which the Czechoslovak government was yet to satisfy its British creditors. He courted mystery, often travelling abroad as Mr Skinner, and reminded Bruce Lockhart of a Stuart 'with a tortured look in his eye'.[109] Norman believed that the economic salvation of Central Europe lay in the establishment of a Danubian economic federation, and was particularly critical of the economic conference at Portorosa in October 1921, at which the Little Entente had accepted tariff reduction, but ruled out economic federation.[110]

Czechoslovakia had co-operated fully in the economic reconstruction of Austria in 1922. Hungary was rather a different matter. The Little Entente powers had grave reservations about salvaging Hungary. Beneš wished to work with the Hungarians, but he did not trust them.[111] His dilemma was that if Hungary was economically reconstructed and financially sanitized on the Austrian model, could she be trusted? A loan might finance illegal military activity, and the economic rejuvenation of Hungary might only lead to a further increase in irredentist activity. Beneš and the Little Entente, therefore, insisted that any loan should be applied to reparation payments, and were supported strongly on the Reparation Commission in May 1923 by France and strongly opposed by Great Britain and Italy. Thus, at the very time when the French were most vigorous in their courtship of Beneš over Germany, they began to discover considerable common ground with him over Hungary.[112] On the eve of Beneš's visit to London in June 1923, Baring Brothers informed the Czech government that they were going to postpone the second tranche of the state loan of 1922 in view of the Czechoslovak attitude to Hungarian reconstruction.

It is difficult in retrospect to accept Barings' claim that they had not been subjected to political pressure from the Treasury.[113] The latter could be trusted, the Foreign Office observed, 'to make it clear that the City is not keen to advance money to countries pursuing the suicidal policy of making one of their neighbours go bankrupt', and Beneš would be told to bring not only the Czechs but also the Romanians and the Serbs 'into the right line'.[114]

Beneš quickly perceived the seriousness of the dangerous conjunction of coincidences, which now sought to restrict his freedom of movement. Beneš's foreign policy in the postwar era has recently been subjected to devastating criticism.[115] Nevertheless, it is clear that he was a convinced proponent of the theory that democracies do not make war. His memoirs strongly testify to this view. The permanence of the Czechoslovak state was dependent on 'the existence of a democratic, progressive, socially mature and steadily developing Europe'. In such a Europe, Beneš maintained: 'We will always maintain our freedom.'[116] His foreign policy, at least between 1919 and 1923, fully reflected these

objectives. The Little Entente itself did not strictly qualify as a democratic alliance. Nevertheless, its constituents were more democratic than Hungary, which under the Horthy—Bethlen regime had limited the right to vote and expunged universal suffrage and the secret ballot from the political landscape. The Hungarian government was not a single-party dictatorship of the fascist type; rather it was an authoritarian, nationalist, 'rogue' regime disguised with a thin veneer of aristocratic constitutionalism. Neither Niemeyer nor Norman concerned themselves with the political complexion of the Hungarian government, and they were insensitive to Beneš's objections to it. In such circumstances, the Barings' threat to postpone the second tranche of the loan was nothing more than a crude exercise in political and economic blackmail on behalf of a regime whose credentials were less than savoury. Beneš was rattled by the British position. He was due to arrive in Paris on 7 July, and then proceed to London. He informed Clerk that he was considering cancelling his visit.

In Prague, Sir George Clerk clearly recognized the depth of Beneš's predicament. He despatched two letters to Miles Lampson, the first dated 20 June, and the second 3 July. The first letter has not been traced in the Foreign Office archives. However, on 4 July, Lampson despatched enclosed extracts to Otto Niemeyer at the Treasury from an undated letter written to him by Clerk. In these extracts, presumably drawn from the letter of 20 June, Clerk laboured mightily to allay suspicions that Beneš's objection to the Hungarian regime rendered him obdurate over Hungarian reconstruction. Clerk stated:

> As regards his attitude towards the Hungarians, he is to my mind, as I have reported in my despatches, too much obsessed by the desire to see a genuinely Republican regime established in that country, but he is of course much too clear-headed a politician not to realise that Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia must somehow attain decent economic relations, and that the sooner that they can arrive at that condition of things the better for both States. I believe therefore that he is genuine when he professes his good intentions towards Hungary as regards reparations and that the difficulties really come from his Little Entente Allies, whom he has to handle, as you know, with the utmost tact. It is quite true that Beneš wants money from London, and wants it soon, and even apart from my having steadily rubbed it into him ever since the suggestion of helping Hungary came into prominence, he knows well enough that one of the things most likely to help him raise a loan will be if Czecho-Slovakia can play the same part towards Hungary as it did towards Austria. That is an additional reason why I cannot believe in his fixed determination to ruin Hungary.
>
> But there is a point in connection with this which is apt to be lost sight of. The Czechs have foregone Austrian reparations, they are now asked to forego Hungarian reparations and meanwhile the Reparation Commission is, they know, piling up an enormous bill against them, as reputedly rich and prosperous, for their share of the former Empire. If they have to pay the sum which they believe the Reparation Commission will demand they will be reduced to the condition of their neighbours and they ask that some consideration should be given to this point.[117]

The second letter was clearly prompted by the impact of the Barings' decision to postpone the second tranche of the state loan on 7 June. Beneš's attitude towards Hungarian reconstruction, in Clerk's view, had been 'too harshly judged by the Governor of the Bank of England'.

> As I said in my letter of June 20th, Beneš realises as well as anybody that Czechoslovakia would be the first to suffer by the economic ruin of Hungary. He professes to be, and I believe, is ready to help that country as he helped Austria, but he says, with some justice, 'Austria has proved herself a good neighbour, Hungary the reverse, and surely I am justified in seeking some guarantee for the future before giving cash or its equivalent that may otherwise be used to the detriment of my country'.

Clerk had to cajole Beneš into visiting London. He urged the Foreign Office that Beneš be allowed to explain his views on Hungarian reconstruction and his justification for them, before they reached for the sanction of the loan. In a postscript to this letter on 5 July, Clerk affirmed: 'After two heart to heart talks with Beneš yesterday and this morning, I hope I have persuaded him not to be an ass, and that he will go to London.'[118] The Treasury and the Bank of England remained intransigent. When Niemeyer saw extracts of Clerk's letter of 20 June, he could barely contain himself.[119]

Beneš now proceeded to Paris where he had discussions with Foch and the Quai d'Orsay about a draft Franco-Czech alliance. He seemed to play for time. He pointed out the need to prepare Czech public opinion, for whom foreign affairs were an entirely new experience. Nevertheless, according to Jules Laroche, he confided that he was le plus français des Tchèques'.[120] Despite his evident misgivings, Beneš arrived in England on Tuesday, 10 July, and remained in London until Saturday, 14 July. He called on Curzon at the Foreign Office on 13 July. He had evidently decided to follow the strategy outlined to him by Clerk early in July. According to the British sources, no specific mention was made of the Czech loan. It does not appear that Beneš was told 'point blank' that the loan was dependent upon favourable assurances at Sinaia, as has recently been alleged.[121] This was hardly necessary. Beneš was conciliatory, and gave Curzon 'every assurance that he himself fully realised the necessity for avoiding a Hungarian collapse'. He also promised that he would do everything in his power to convince his Little Entente allies of this at their forthcoming meeting at Sinaia. His assurances were greeted with 'great satisfaction'. The British government had expressed themselves to Beneš 'not because they suspected him of being the stumbling-block', but because they knew he possessed 'the greatest influence with his allies, and would be likely to use it to good purpose'. Beneš also expressed his readiness to meet Count Bethlen, the Hungarian Prime Minister. He assured Curzon that there was no apparent reason why, for example, the Kecskemet frontier dispute could not be disposed of 'in five minutes' frank conversation'.[122]

Despite the apparent amity of the discussions between Curzon and Beneš in London, the visit must have left Beneš with a profound distaste for British policy. Deep down, the whole episode of the visit, and the problem of Hungarian reconstruction, did nothing to dissuade Beneš that it was in the national interest of Czechoslovakia to forego or even strengthen its links with France.

On 28 July 1923, the Little Entente met in conference at Sinaia and made concessions towards Hungary. Beneš was a moderating influence and claimed considerable credit for the modification of their attitude.[123] Nevertheless, the international and domestic pressures had left their mark on him. He was 'thoroughly tired out living on his nerves and in need of a rest', when Clerk saw him on 7 August.[124] Nor were the British government entirely convinced by Czech efforts, and perceived there to be foot dragging over the whole issue of a meeting with Count Bethlen, the Hungarian Prime Minister.[125] Despite an 'alteration' in the attitude of the Little Entente at Sinaia, Curzon remained critical of their policies.[126] Clerk continued to offer lengthy apologies for Beneš's conduct, and reiterated his belief in the fundamental sincerity of Beneš's policy towards Hungary, and he continued to maintain that Beneš had some grounds for his claim that he had not been fairly treated over the loan.[127]

But even Clerk was caught off guard on 7 August, as Beneš prepared to leave for a short holiday in Slovakia. Having just reminded Beneš of the obligation he had assumed of arranging a meeting with Count Bethlen, as Clerk made to leave, Beneš 'let himself go'. In a confidential despatch to Curzon on 14 August, Clerk vividly recounted the incident:

> I was consequently a good deal surprised when His Excellency followed me to the door and said—'You see, just what I told you. The Hungarian papers are all saying that I only worked for Hungary at Sinaia because I was told in London that I should get no money unless I did so'. He went on to say that, money or no money, his Hungarian policy would have been the same, and he considered it as humiliating for him that he should be made to appear as only acting under the financial whip, but what he most particularly resented was the attitude of the Anglo-Czechoslovak Bank and of Messrs. Baring Brothers. He considered the action of the latter in sending him the message they had done…through Dr. Pospisil (who incidentally is a prominent member of the National Democrat Party) as intolerable. Messrs Baring Brothers had made a definite contract on certain terms with the Czechoslovak Government, and had no sort of right suddenly to introduce political conditions which in no way concerned them, and, for his part, he considered himself freed from all further dealings with that house. If the Minister of Finance cared to approach them, that was his affair, but he, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, would, and could, get his money elsewhere, if needs be, or, at the worst, go without. Anyway, he was done with Messrs. Baring Brothers.

Clerk was clearly taken aback. He asked Beneš to reflect before embarking upon any further discussion. His outburst was that 'of an over-wrought and over-worked man'. Nevertheless, Clerk defended the integrity of Beneš's policies at Sinaia and lamented the economic pressure applied to him, and observed that 'to threaten him with the Hungarian stick is the very way to make him less amenable towards that country'.

Clerk's despatch evoked vitriolic response from the Central Department of the Foreign Office. Miles Lampson minuted on 21 August:

> Dr Beneš may rant and rave: but that merely shows that the financial pressure is proving effective. I should allow him to rant as much as he likes: and if he can get his money elsewhere, tant mieux pour lui!… It is time these Little Entente gentry learned their place!

Tyrrell minuted the same day: 'I should certainly refuse to supply them with money for the promotion of their silly policies'.[128]

In a despatch of 5 September, Sir George Clerk diplomatically but firmly pointed out the political dangers implicit in this attitude. He reiterated again Beneš's deep reservations about Barings' tactics over the loan, which he had outlined in his despatch of 14 August, specifically 'the form of the message, *and* the channel, which gave him away hopelessly to his best political enemies', and the attachment of a condition to an arrangement that Beneš considered definitely concluded. At the same time, Clerk took care to avoid seeming out of step with the increasingly 'Little Englander' tone adopted by the Central Department.

> Personally, I expect that if he is left alone, his fit of the sulks will probably pass over, and anyway I don't take it very much to heart. The whole lot, Czechs, Magyars, Poles, Jugos, Roumanians should be put in a bag and shaken up and then handed over to a decent Briton to administer. But, as things are, what worries me is that because the Government of the Bank of England has been cajoled by Goode's astute propaganda,[129] and because Beneš, for all his quite genuine 'real-politik,' is human, vain and hurt, we are risking his definite enrolment in the French camp. Czecholand today may not seem worth more than a casual, though perfectly friendly, nod when we sit next to it at luncheon at the Club. But one day it is, or should be, our best bridge into Russia, and even now it is the lynch-pin of Central Europe, and also, though it daren't say so, wants our view and not the French one, to prevail as regards Germany. Therefore, little though I like the Czech as a man and a brother, I am sorry to see him unnecessarily rubbed up the wrong way, because it reacts to our disadvantage.[130]

Neither the Treasury nor the Bank of England was inclined to defer to these arguments. They were committed to a policy of Danubian economic federation in Central Europe. Hungarian reconstruction was central to its success. They were prepared to risk quasi-political intervention in Czechoslovak affairs to realize it. Political concerns about the nature of the Hungarian government cut no ice with men who viewed Central Europe through an economic prism.[131]

In view of the damage done to Anglo-Czechoslovak relations by Hungarian reconstruction, the Masaryk visit now became pivotal to the success of Clerk's strategy of breaking the French alliance. Masaryk was to visit Paris from 16 to 18 October. In July, he accepted a British invitation to visit London. This was much less daunting. 'The contrast to the ordeal that awaits him in Paris,' observed Sir George, 'will be grateful to him.'[132]

Masaryk's visit to Paris, Brussels and London was a triumphant affirmation of the common democratic, historical and cultural traditions and diplomatic links that bound Czechoslovakia to the Allies and to the Western political and philosophical tradition. The visit must have been particularly poignant and evocative for Masaryk, who had risen so dramatically and so quickly from political exile to 'philosopher king'.[133] In Paris, Masaryk and Beneš had discussions with President Millerand and the Prime Minister, Poincaré. The French leaders were clearly eager for a formal military alliance and evidently regarded war with Germany as a real possibility in 1924.[134] The prospect of a political alliance and a military convention were discussed.

On the afternoon of 22 October, Masaryk offered Curzon a detailed account of his conversations in Paris at the Foreign Office in London. He had rejected *'in toto'* the military convention, which had been suggested to him by the French government, and was not inclined to repeat the error of the Franco-Polish alliance made by Pilsudski in 1921. When Curzon inquired as to the exact relationship between Czechoslovakia and France in view of the absence of a military convention, Masaryk replied that the French were drawing up a political treaty, the contents of which, he thought, would be 'platitudinous, inasmuch as he did not know what it could say except that both parties were in favour of peace'.

Masaryk urged Great Britain not to disinterest herself from European affairs in order to exercise that 'moral authority' which he regarded as the only effective deterrent to the 'reign of force'. Curzon complimented Czechoslovakia's reputation for political stability. At a meeting of Dominion premiers he had depicted it as 'the one solid element of stability in Central Europe', and 'the principal ray of light that penetrated it'. Finally, Curzon inquired 'whether there was any respect in which, either now or in the future, we could testify our interest in his Government or our sympathy for himself. Masaryk intimated: 'They did not want our money, because they were able to look after themselves' nor did he seek any form of assistance, but he hoped to continue to address Curzon confidentially through Beneš. But he also observed:

> In the early years after the war the British representatives and consuls in the neighbouring States had not been inspired by any too friendly feelings towards Czechoslovakia; but the situation had now changed, and in the person of His Majesty's Minister and other representatives he had found real friends.[135]

Masaryk had unequivocally repudiated the idea of military alliance with France. His reassurances vindicated Clerk's view that a visit by the Czech president would go far to repair the harmonious relationship that had so evidently deteriorated during the Beneš visit in July. The visit was a great success, 'the most cordial point in the interwar relations between Britain and Czechoslovakia'.[136] Clerk was present in London for some period between 18 October and 6 November, leaving Maurice Peterson in charge of the legation in Prague. But it is unclear whether he played any official part in the proceedings. On 8 November, he informed Crowe that Masaryk and Beneš regarded the London visit as an unqualified success and that 'they and the policy they stood for were appreciated and would in the future be even better understood than in the past'. Beneš

hoped it was realized 'how much their European policy had in common with that of His Majesty's Government'.

> Otherwise I do not think I have anything of particular note to record since my return here. The Czechs remain as narrow and shortsighted and tiresome in smaller matters as they are sensible and solid on most of the big questions. But one realises more than ever after a brief return to the civilisation of London how much of their good repute abroad rests on the two men, Masaryk and Beneš, and the lamentable absence of any reserve fund of statesmen on which the country can draw.[137]

The Franco-Czech alliance was formally signed on 25 January 1924.[138] Lord Crewe, the British ambassador, carefully monitored the negotiations between Beneš and Poincaré in Paris. When Crewe saw the Czech Foreign Minister in December, Beneš affirmed unequivocally that 'the idea of a military convention…had been dropped', and that whilst the French government would have been very glad to extend the agreement to include a military convention 'he had held out firmly against this'. He had therefore confined the political treaty to permitting 'general military conversations of the kind that were held between England and France before 1914'. The Foreign Office, monitoring developments carefully in London, seemed to have taken no exception to the thrust of the negotiations between the two governments, regarding them as perfectly consistent with the assurances afforded by Masaryk in his visit to London in October.[139] However, on 1 January 1924, *The Times*, in a mischievous and disingenuous editorial, mounted a frontal assault on the negotiations and the principles underlying Czechoslovak foreign policy.

The Times editorial had conjured up the spectre of military alliance.[140] Both Curzon and Clerk were caught unawares by the intensity of the scrutiny to which Czech foreign policy was suddenly subjected. The latter was on leave for much of December and early January. He was unable to get at Beneš until he returned to Prague on 7 January. In a hurried interview with the Foreign Minister, after his train had been delayed by snow, there was a decidedly frosty tone to the content of the discussion about the nature of the treaty negotiations. 'British public opinion naturally looked on the treaty as a further step in a deliberately French policy,' Beneš was curtly informed, and until the terms of the treaty were made public, they would naturally assume that Czechoslovakia, like Poland, had become the 'faithful vassal of France'. Clerk refused to apologize for the speculation in the British press, because 'it would do no harm for Czechoslovak public opinion to be taken into consideration in questions of high policy'. Beneš was flustered. He went on to make a sort of 'apology' for the treaty, reading the text of the treaty in such a way, as the British Minister was simply unable to digest it. Beneš insisted that the treaty maintained a 'freedom of action' where French and Czech policy were not in accord as, for example, in the instance of Russia, and defended the treaty on national security grounds 'especially in regard to Hungary and Poland'. Clerk remained unsure how far Beneš had committed himself to France. He doubted whether the treaty, as reported by Italian and Polish sources, obliged Czechoslovakia to mobilize five divisions 'if and when required'. Nevertheless, he speculated that 'Monsieur Beneš may have bound himself and his successors more closely than he quite realises.'[141]

Beneš had to be in London on 16 January, as he continued to serve on the League of Nations committee dealing with the Hungarian loan. He had a rather awkward conversation with Lord Curzon at the Foreign Office carried on, according to the foreign secretary, 'at even more than his usual rate of speed'. He was interrogated rigorously about the exact meaning of the agreement. Beneš denied that the treaty was accompanied 'by any sort of undertaking, understanding, pledge, or promise, with regard to military matters', or provision for joint military consultations. Curzon was not convinced. If this treaty was 'so innocent, and even platitudinous', why have a treaty at all? The real reason Beneš replied was security: 'Within fifteen years from now Germany might recover and be a strong menace on the North and West; Austria and Hungary were temporarily out of action, but might also revive.' As for Poland, it might 'at any time in the future go under'. The explanation did little to diminish Curzon's displeasure. He thanked Beneš for his explanations, and 'bade him adieu'.[142]

The Franco-Czechoslovak treaty of January 1924 did not contain a military convention.[143] However, Beneš did not succeed in allaying British fears that the treaty was an extension of French hegemony in Central Europe. The Czechs protested strenuously that a military convention had not been signed. Rumours continued to persist. Stresemann, the German Chancellor, was exceedingly suspicious, and German newspapers continued to allege that a secret military agreement existed.[144]

Many factors may have prompted the Czechs to sign the alliance. In his conversation with Curzon on 16 January, Beneš had emphasized the threat to national security posed by Germany, but, in the autumn of 1923, the Weimar Republic seemed to be on the verge of disintegration, racked by communist revolution, counter-revolutionary monarchist movements and, in Munich, Hitler's notorious Beer Hall *putsch*. But Weimar collapse would have led to permanent German weakness. In Berlin, the British ambassador, Lord D'Abernon, was informed by a Czech source that Czechoslovakia had succumbed for economic reasons, after 'immense pressure' from France.[145] Clerk believed that Hungarian revisionism was the crucial influence. He told Curzon:

> On the whole, I am inclined to think that the treaty is partly the fruit of pressure which the Czechs found it difficult to withstand without giving actual offence, and partly, as Dr. Beneš said to me, the best means that he could see to obtain that final security in regard to Hungary and Poland which he feels to be vital to the peaceful development of the country. After all, there is little doubt that the Hungarians had good grounds for believing in French sympathy or at least a benevolent neutrality that success would have turned into active sympathy, at the time of the Karl 'Putsch,' and Dr. Beneš quite naturally wishes to eliminate any such possibility in the future.[146]

For Clerk the treaty was a heavy blow and he nursed a deep sense of betrayal. There was a harsher tone in the official despatches, a deeper pessimism about the international situation, a keener desire to grant credit to the peacemakers of 1815 than was traditionally the case with the proponents of *The New Europe*. This disenchantment was clearly reflected in an eccentric introduction to the annual report of 1923, submitted to the Foreign Office early in March 1924. Clerk commented that it was 'the Czech alone who

counts in the political development of the republic', and that 'for all its prating of unity and democracy', it remained in essence a Czech oligarchy. Before 1914, the Czechs were 'an almost unknown ingredient in the motley Habsburg Empire', conveying 'something of a romantic and oppressed Garibaldian, with a touch of pine-clad mountains and a vague reminder of the motto and crest of the Prince of Wales'. The effect of those 'exotic professors and journalists' who had trudged into the Foreign Office during the Great War and the paramount need to defeat Germany had committed the Allies not only 'to the rescue of nationalities of whose existence no one in the British Empire…had any idea in 1914, but to obligations which had to be implemented'. A romantic sentimentality had blinded the British public to the brutal nature of these new nationalities. This new Europe of the Versailles settlement had to be accepted 'since anything is better than another general upheaval'. Czechoslovakia still had the capacity to become 'one of the greatest justifications of the Treaty of Versailles'. But 'if she collapses or fails, the statesmen of 1919 will be proved to have been bungling amateurs when compared to their predecessors at Vienna 100 years before'.

Sir George Clerk was no unequivocal champion of the Versailles settlement of 1919. His reservations had surfaced when he had counselled against the imposition of reparations against Hungary. But he had vigorously supported Czechoslovak diplomacy in its defence of the peace treaties in 1921. There had been no hint of revisionism in his attitude towards the territorial integrity of Czechoslovakia or the peace treaties between 1920 and 1923. The Franco-Czechoslovak alliance of 1924 was the catalyst for nagging doubts and a growing sense of disillusionment. This coincided with, and was exacerbated by, a growing concern about the inner vitality of the state. 'Politics in the most sordid sense of the term rule the roost,' he fulminated in the annual report. 'Corruption and political pull' were its dominant features. Paragraph after paragraph provided detailed examples of venality and corruption in the Czech state.[147]

In the ensuing months, Clerk continued to relay incidents of scandal and impropriety that rocked the upper echelons of Czech government and society. These revelations reflected his deepening distaste for the Pětka, the coalition of Czechoslovakia's five major political parties led by the Agrarian politician, Antonín Švehla, which had ruled Czechoslovakia since 1922.[148] The arrest of Dr Svátek, a close confidant of members of the Švehla administration, on charges of bribery and peculation in March 1924 particularly disturbed him. His downfall, Clerk noted, 'not only leaves the foreigner gasping, but makes us ask one another if there is any Czech whom we can ask to our houses'. Clerk could not bring himself to accept rumours of any involvement by Masaryk in hushing up the affair. The prime mover was the Prime Minister who:

> finds his best means of keeping his unruly team together is to have in his hands the proofs of the pecuniary misdoings of the various coalition parties, so that when obstruction and opposition arise a threat of exposure quickly brings those who are recalcitrant to heel.

Concluding this astonishing attack on Švehla, Clerk commented: 'His means are as cynical as those of any Walpole.'

Clerk's informant for much of this information was the Czech legal adviser to the British legation and intimate of Masaryk, Dr Bouček,[149] who was convinced that

'corruption was spread through the whole land', and who had furnished Clerk with 'instance after instance of swindling and corruption' involving high government officials, from alcohol to the sale of oil stoves. The Augean stables would have to be cleansed, but without root-and-branch political and economic reform of the Pětka and the civil service the kleptocracy would go from strength to strength.[150] Miles Lampson welcomed Clerk's conversion to the side of the sceptics, and was eager to circulate his views to King and Cabinet. 'It is all to the good that someone of such authority as Sir G.Clerk should have spoken out about the Czechs. There is too much inclination to look upon them as perfect,' he minuted.[151]

Clerk's disenchantment showed few signs of abatement throughout 1924 and the early months of 1925. Despite Beneš's hopes, the advent of a Labour government did not reconstruct the Anglo-Czechoslovak relationship and the MacDonald government rejected the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, which Beneš had strongly advocated in July 1924. In March 1925, Baldwin's Conservative government formally rejected British participation in the Geneva Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, a measure strongly supported by the Czechoslovak government. The Czech Foreign Minister's ubiquitous efforts to promote European security excited no little scorn. In his annual report of 1924, Clerk observed that 'the peripatetics of Dr. Beneš and his active eloquence at every international gathering at which he appears, have established him as a European bore, a fate that sometimes overtakes the big men of small countries'.

Relations were also ruffled by the activities of Robert Smallbones, the British Consul at Bratislava, who had succeeded Captain Cartwright in July 1922.[152] Since his appointment, Smallbones had been strongly critical of Czechoslovak policy towards its minorities, thus reawakening concerns in the Foreign Office, which had been dissipated by Sir George Clerk's earlier despatches. In 1923 and 1924, the indefatigable Smallbones made extensive tours of Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine. Through his desire to get to the root of Czechoslovakia's treatment of its minorities in Slovakia, and the clumsy and inept response of the Czechoslovak authorities to his activities, 'Bones', as he was known in the Foreign Office, further contributed to the growing sense of unease with which both the Foreign Office and Sir George Clerk viewed the Czechoslovak government in 1924.[153] Czech failure to exploit the advantages of the Barings loan, the second tranche of which was finally issued in May 1924, their business and financial methods, 'more suitable to chaffering in a village fair than to sound discussion with British industry and finance', continued to exasperate the British minister. Becka, the Minister of Finance, was pursuing financial initiatives of his own in London, Paris, Amsterdam and New York without the knowledge or approval of Beneš, to secure a new foreign loan. Becka had evidently decided to bypass Baring Brothers, employing 'agents of a more than doubtful character' to carry out his work.[154]

Beneš continued to prevaricate over Czechoslovak debts. In March 1924, the Treasury again invited the Czechoslovak government to discuss repayment of specific debts to the British government. In October, Beneš requested that the repayment of specific war debts to Great Britain, especially regarding the repatriation of the Czech legions from Siberia, should stand over and await a general settlement of inter-Allied debt. This was exasperating for the British and a particularly dubious ploy on the part of Beneš.[155] His reputation reached a new nadir. For Miles Lampson, he was nothing more than 'a busy-body' and impertinent to boot. 11 est capable de tout & quite untrustworthy' was the

initial impression of the new Conservative Foreign Secretary, Austen Chamberlain.[156] In June 1925, the Central Department composed a memorandum on war debts. The Treasury was about to renew its quest for war debts with new vigour under the leadership of Winston Churchill. The minutes accompanying this document went to the heart of the relationship between Great Britain and Czechoslovakia. C.Howard Smith minuted on 16 June: 'I can see no reason why we should be tender to the Czechs. Politically they are of small importance to us.' Harold Nicolson, once singularly imbued with the idealism of *The New Europe,* agreed: 'Let us keep our cold water for more important fires,' he observed. 'Why should *we* pay for the *freedom* of the Czechs?' asked Lampson, a question of greater irony thirteen years later. It was left to Sir Austen Chamberlain to remind his officials of the 'admiration' both he and Churchill had felt for the valour of the Czechs in Russia, and the need not to 'scold like an angry fishwife'.[157]

It was the Locarno Agreements of October 1925 that rejuvenated Sir George Clerk's dwindling faith in the capability of the Czechoslovak government. In February 1925, the German Foreign Minister, Stresemann, made a proposal of a security pact to the French government. This proposal was a significant departure from the main thrust of German foreign policy up to this point, based on the pro-Russian 'eastern orientation' of the Treaty of Rapallo of 1922. In London, the reaction of the British Foreign Secretary, Chamberlain, was one of wariness.[158] However, the proposal held attractions for the new Conservative government: it was a ready-made security scheme, which relieved the pressure on the Conservatives to mount a proposal for an Anglo-French military alliance themselves, and as Lord D'Abernon observed in Berlin, offered the prospect of a direct rapprochement between France and Germany, thus increasing the general chances of peace 'two or three hundred per cent'.[159] As Beneš carefully studied the memorandum initiated by the German government in February 1925, one wonders whether his reaction was conditioned by a need to avoid compromising his reputation as 'a reasonable and realistic politician',[160] for he was scarcely that to the Foreign Office. Nevertheless, in a speech to the Foreign Relations Committee of the Czech Senate on 1 April, he welcomed the German proposals as 'a certain advance in the universal work for peace' and dismissed concerns about the meaning of the proposals for Eastern Europe as 'somewhat exaggerated or at least premature'.[161] But he explained his support for the Rhineland pact somewhat more equivocally in a conversation with Clerk on 8 April 1925.[162]

It was clear that these proposals placed Beneš in something of a quandary. It was axiomatic that Czechoslovak security depended as much on the integrity of the Treaty of Versailles in the east as much as in the west. But he did not believe the integrity of Poland's frontiers, especially the Polish Corridor and Upper Silesia, could be maintained.[163] He seemed to draw a sharp distinction between the position of Czechoslovakia *vis-à-vis* Germany and the position of Poland. Czechoslovakia had less to fear from German revisionism over Versailles than Poland did. Beneš was eager but unable to make direct contact with Stresemann in the summer of 1925. He was forced to gamble on the likely repercussions of Franco-German rapprochement.[164]

The Locarno Agreements consisted of five treaties: the Rhineland Pact, a reciprocal treaty of non-aggression and a treaty of mutual guarantee restricted to Germany's western borders, guaranteed by Britain and Italy, and four arbitration treaties between Germany and France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Poland. France also concluded treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia. These were not, however, part of the Locarno

Agreements.[165] The French security system in the east was distinctly weakened by Locarno. French obligations to Czechoslovakia and Poland were circumscribed by the obligations assumed under the Rhineland Pact. Beneš dismissed the risks for Czechoslovakia. He gambled that the Franco-German rapprochement implicit in the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee would strengthen moderate opinion in Germany, weaken the nationalists, augment the forces of German democracy, and reinforce peace. German entry to the League of Nations was a further measure of reinsurance. In this atmosphere of *détente* and spirit of Locarno, the Deutsch-Böhmen question would wither away. He had always rejected the 'myth' that the German minority in Czechoslovakia was oppressed. It simply fought for 'a share of power', not for 'national and cultural existence'.[166] Finally, the Locarno Agreements, by bringing about Anglo-French rapprochement and a British guarantee of Germany's western borders, effectively solved the problem of the Franco-British security pact, which had dogged Anglo-French relations since the collapse of the tripartite pact of guarantee or Anglo-American guarantee in 1920.

Beneš had 'resented' the failure of the British government to support the Geneva Protocol. He regarded Locarno as 'a second-best settlement'. Nevertheless, when it was proffered, he eagerly grasped it. Sir George Clerk believed that Locarno was 'a relief to the Czechoslovak government, not because it alleviated the threat from Germany, 'for that country as the Czechs know, has no territorial revenge to seek on Czechoslovakia', but because in Clerk's view, the German-Polish arbitration treaty had freed Czechoslovakia 'from an ever possible, even though remote, obligation to back its Slav neighbour against the Teuton'. By his good work at Locarno, Clerk believed that Beneš had 'restored his position in foreign public opinion, which had showed signs of weakening towards the end of 1924'.[167] Beneš accepted Austen Chamberlain's prescription that governments had to 'will the peace' after Locarno. If there were to be a Central European Locarno, Clerk told Chamberlain on 23 November, Beneš was 'obviously the man to play your part'. When Clerk warned that there still remained many obstacles in Central Europe to overcome, Chamberlain's response was paraphrased by his private secretary: 'He points to a goal:—from time to time he will point again, *but he is in no hurry*. *The country which destroys the hope*, will presently find itself without a friend in the world, but the work itself is a work of longue haleine.'[168]

Conditions were now being created for the promotion of a Czech—German rapprochement or 'inner Locarno' within Czechoslovakia. Between 1923 and 1925, Clerk had commented with some asperity on the role of the 'Pětka', or committee of five delegates of each of the major parties which made up the governing Švehla coalition, and which enabled Czechoslovak government to function. The Pětka enshrined the all-national principle in Czechoslovak politics; political parties were bound together by the necessity of maintaining a common front against the German minority in the Czechoslovak parliament. Clerk had always maintained that Czechoslovak stability and prosperity rested on its ability to improve relations between the Czechs and the Germans. In 1925, the Pětka struggled to maintain its unity. Economic measures such as the imposition of taxes on imported grain divided the Socialists and National Socialists from other members of the coalition. By far the greatest challenge to it, however, was the growing conflict between church and state, and its ominous overtones in Slovakia, which threatened to engulf Czechoslovakia in 1925. In November, the Pětka suffered a major

setback when parliamentary elections reduced its majority over the opposition parties to eighteen, and it was forced to expand itself to a council of six.[169]

On 17 March 1926, the Švehla coalition fell, and was succeeded by a new administration formed by Jan Černý, which hastened rapprochement between the German minority and the Czechs by loosening party lines and loyalties. Clerk noted that the new political divisions were 'tending to break down the barriers of nationality'. German agrarians were voting with Czech agrarians for a tax on agricultural products from abroad, and German socialists lining up with the Czech socialists to oppose.[170] In April 1926, the Czechoslovak Court of Electoral Matters found in favour of the appellant, the German Farmers Union Party, in an appeal to transfer an electoral seat from the control of the Czech agrarian party. In Clerk's view, this afforded one more instance of the fact that the judicature of Czechoslovakia was independent and impartial, and that 'the Minorities here are sure of the rights which the laws grant to them, even in cases where natural feeling is likely to be most actively roused'.[171] Clerk was optimistic about the advent of the Černý government, which was a very real break with the immediate past:

> The present Government, is probably the most efficient body of administrators that the country has yet had, and for the first time Parliament will be able to discuss and vote on the measures placed before it on their merits. But such a state of things can only be provisional. There will not always be in Czechoslovakia a Zeus in the form of President Masaryk from whose head a governmental Pallas Athene can spring fully equipped However, for the time being it is a relief to everyone, except the small group of professional politicians, to be freed from the perpetual intriguing and wire-pulling behind the scenes.[172]

In June 1926, Czech and German parties combined to support the salaries bill to increase the pay of civil servants. This was more evidence of a 'positive' and 'activist' programme. 'The longer the Černý Government remains in office and accepts the present unofficial cooperation between Czech and German, the less easy it becomes to rule out the possibility of its being succeeded by a full blown Czech-German Coalition Government,' Clerk observed.[173]

In May 1926, the Pilsudski military *coup d'état* in Poland had enormous internal and external repercussions for both Czechoslovakia and Poland. It evoked nervousness in Czechoslovakia, which prompted the legation to analyse the development of fascism in Czechoslovakia, which was increasingly associated with General Gajda, the acting chief of the general staff of the Czechoslovak army. Gajda's power base had been Kosice in eastern Slovakia, a region that had seen some evidence of fascism as early as 1922. This had 'crystallised' into the *Rodobranci* or 'Hlinka's *Sturmtruppen*', complete with blackshirt uniforms and the Slovak double-cross emblem, in 1923. The movement gained little support up to 1926, but began to make real headway in reaction to the Czechoslovak language laws and Locarno. There was a dualism about fascism in Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovak fascists were offshoots of the National Democratic Party whose leader, Kramář, had already hailed General Gajda as 'future dictator'.[174] In March 1926, Gajda had assumed the position of acting chief of staff. He had become increasingly fascinated with Italian fascism. In the wake of the Pilsudski coup, rumours about his intentions

became rife, and his notoriety grew.[175] Early in June, Sir George Clerk lunched with him. Gajda unequivocally affirmed his loyalty to the democratic government. Nevertheless, Sir George Clerk's fears were not dispelled. Gajda, he observed, 'did not succeed in removing the impression I have always had of him as a rather sinister personality in whom I should never place implicit trust'. Shortly afterwards, a Czech of 'high standing' informed Clerk that Gajda had financial difficulties, and that when studying at the École de Guerre in France, he had been in the pay of the Soviet government. Clerk's informant was again Dr Bouček, who had gone to Masaryk with the information.[176] An investigation for misconduct was initiated. There were rumours of a Gajda putsch or a 'march on Rome' throughout July 1926.[177] In August 1926, Gajda was declared medically unfit and placed on the retired list. In October 1926, Clerk visited Masaryk at his country residence in Slovakia. He confirmed that Gajda had been working for the Soviet government. The Czechs had deciphered telegrams sent from the Soviet trade delegation in Prague as early as 1921. This work had been carried out in Switzerland.[178]

The Gajda affair did not end with his retirement in August 1926. In December 1926, a military tribunal convicted him of contact with the Soviet government. He retired from the army. In a civil court proceedings Gajda sued for libel, and a military court of appeal retried the case in 1928. Little evidence of coup plotting was unearthed in the subsequent inquiries, and the evidence of his espionage does not seem entirely convincing. The affair has been described as 'a factional dispute accompanying the intrigues of Czechoslovak political parties in 1926'. It was hardly 'a full-fledged conspiracy to overthrow the government by military force'.[179] Clerk dismissed fascism as a serious threat to Czechoslovak stability in 1926. There was 'as little fear of a "Fascist" danger in this country as there is little need for a "Fascist" salvation,' he wrote. The bonds of society had not been weakened and 'democracy is firmly planted in the mentality of the majority of the people'.[180] In the Gajda affair, Masaryk was doing more than defending the democratic system against fascism. He struck at Gajda because he saw in fascism an implicit threat to a policy of racial rapprochement, which had been so long in the making that it could have been discounted as a positive factor in Czechoslovak political life. Masaryk had devoted his life's work to 'the making of the state'. On the verge of triumph in 1926, he was not prepared to allow Gajda to undermine that ideal.

Czech—German rapprochement continued apace. In July 1926, the National Congress of the German Farmers Union approved the policy of cooperation with the Czech liberal parties advocated by its leader Dr Spina. 'The "Locarno spirit" is awakening here; and it is not only the image of its prototype,' the legation pronounced, 'it is in fact the logical, historical offspring of the new spirit inspired into international relations at Locarno.'[181] On 13 October 1926, the Černý cabinet resigned, to be replaced by a new administration led by Anton Švehla, which included two representatives of the German Agrarian and Christian Socialist parties. The inclusion of Dr Spina and Mayr Hart ing in this government was, Charles Dodd in Prague proclaimed, 'a turning point'. When Francis Aveling observed in London that, in the aftermath of Locarno, the Deutsch Böhmen could no longer expect the help of the Reich, Chamberlain excitedly scribbled on the despatch: 'So Benes predicted to me at Locarno.'[182]

On 28 October, Independence Day, Sir George Clerk gave the address as doyen of the diplomatic body in Prague. He reminded Masaryk of his speech one year before in which

he had made allusion to the hopes that sprang from Locarno. 'Aujourd'hui nous pouvons dire que ces espoirs se sont en grande mésure realises,' he observed.

> Notre audience, M. le President, coincide presque avec la formation d'un nouveau Gouvernement qui s'appuie sur une base ethnique plus large que les gouvernements precedents. Pour La Tchécoslovaquie ce fait a une signification spéciale, que nous ne sommes pas qualifies a discuter—c'est une affaire intérieure qui ne concerne que le pays—mais qu'il nous soit permis de dire que pour nous et pour l'opinion des pays que nous représentons, ce fait nous donne une exemple éclatant d'un pays où tout classe et toute race participe, ou peut participer, à la direction des destinées du peuple.[183]

Clerk's speech attracted the ire of Gajda's allies, the National Democrats. Karel Kramář, who had embraced Gajda's cause earlier in the summer, angrily accused Clerk of internal meddling in the affairs of the state.[184] Clerk was in his final days at Prague. In view of the furore surrounding his speech the previous day, an official dinner held at the Hradčany on 29 October contained no official speeches. On the eve of departure, Clerk wrote to Beneš:

> We have passed together through the early difficulties of the Republic and now I leave it at a time when I can say that the confidence which I felt from the inception of the State has fully justified itself, and that Czechoslovakia has proved itself to be a constant force for stabilisation and progress in Europe.

Prager Presse observed on 31 October: 'Sir George Clerk proved himself here not only a good observer and watcher of the interest of his own State but also a frank and devoted advisor of and co-operator with our responsible leaders at the head of affairs.'[185]

Sir George Clerk raised Prague into a fulcrum of British influence between 1920 and 1924, shaping British policy on the premise that British interests were best served by association with economically stable and democratic states. The apex of this strategy was the Bank Agreement of October 1921 and the negotiation of the state loan in April 1922. But British policy towards Central Europe between Versailles and Locarno lacked consistency. Central Europe was a crucible of Anglo-French rivalry, as Danubian hegemony became a central objective of French security policy. French strategy too lacked coherence, selecting then discarding Budapest in 1920, enlisting Warsaw in 1921, and courting Prague with intensity from 1922 as a centre of French power. Clerk's vigorous attempt to preserve Prague's independence in 1923 failed because the Foreign Office did not deem Czechoslovakia worthy of the support Clerk advocated. Hungarian reconstruction undermined Anglo-Czechoslovak relations. By seeing Hungarian reconstruction in exclusively economic terms, the Treasury and the Bank of England ignored the political complexion of the Hungarian regime and the political implications of their policy. Their ruthless and unprecedented use of financial pressure left a bitter distaste between Beneš and British officials, which had serious implications for the future. Disillusioned by the perfidy and ingratitude of the Czechs, Clerk was rejuvenated by the Locarno agreements of 1925 and the advent of a Czech—German ministry in

1926. He left Prague convinced that Czechoslovakia had justified its existence. But the adverse impression of its leaders, even of Masaryk, instilled into the Central Department of the Foreign Office between 1923 and 1925 showed little sign of dissipation between 1927 and 1933 under the leadership of Orme Sargent. Such impressions were fertile soil for the later views of Sir Joseph Addison on the artificiality of the Czech state and the need for a territorial revision of the Versailles settlement, which paved the road to Munich.[186] On the eve of his departure from Prague, *Ceskoslovenská Republika* wished 'that the friendship which Sir George Clerk has shown till now for the Republic and her President, might remain undisturbed for ever'.[187]

4
Repairing relationships
The New Turkey 1926–33

> I consider you my friend because you have understood my policy and have made it clear to your Government. It is very fortunate for the relations between the two countries that you came here as Ambassador. Had it been someone whom I did not like and who did not understand my policy, the situation would have been very different.
>
> (Atatürk's statement to Clerk cited in Clerk's letter to Oliphant, 4 November 1932)

Sir George Clerk officially succeeded Sir Ronald Lindsay as ambassador to Turkey on 12 November 1926. He had spent almost six years as the first British Minister in Prague, and he had done remarkably well there. His transfer to Turkey and the attainment of ambassadorial rank must have been gratifying to him. Turkey represented a daunting challenge. But he had served there in the 'happy days' before the Great War, and he had at least some acquaintance of its language and culture.[1]

Both Czechoslovakia and Turkey were successor states born out of the ruins of the great empires that had collapsed in 1918. But whereas Czechoslovakia had been the fulfilment of the idealism of *The New Europe,* a liberal democracy, liberated by the Versailles settlement from the subject nationalities of the Habsburg Empire, its leaders beholden to Sir George and the Allies for its existence, Turkey was its antithesis, a single-party dictatorship forged out of the inferno of the war and the bitterness of its own imperial failings. Its leaders owed their ascendancy to military prowess and were beholden to none, and were committed to the destruction of the peace settlement, which had spawned it. Turkey was a revisionist state. It never regarded itself as an oppressor of nationalities; it was an 'oppressed nationality'. Its intentions, clouded by a xenophobic chauvinism and an embittered sense of cultural inferiority, were exceedingly difficult to read. As Clerk began his long journey from London aboard the Orient Express in November 1926, he doubtless pondered these considerations.

He arrived in Constantinople on 15 November, and proceeded to Angora six days later. Intrigue was already in the air. For much of October, the Turkish government of Mustafa Kemal had been engulfed in rumours of an imminent Italian invasion, and in November its foreign minister, Tevfik Rüştü Aras, had made a precipitate visit to see the Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Chicherin, at the Black Sea port of Odessa.[2]

Mustafa Kemal, the 'Ghazi' or warrior leader of the New Turkey, evoked the kind of denunciation from British diplomats that dissolute Roman emperors had suffered at the hands of Suetonius. For Lindsay, the Ghazi was a mediaeval anachronism and sexual

degenerate, ‘a Ghenghis Khan or a Hulagu’, leading his victorious hordes across the land and interrupting his campaigns only for ‘hideous debaucheries of wine and women’.[3] Clerk got his own opportunity to form an impression of the Turkish leader on 22 November, when he visited his residence at Chankaya to present his credentials. The new ambassador was less judgemental. He perceived no evidence of the debauched existence the Ghazi was alleged to lead in Angora, he told Chamberlain, but the embassy staff who had seen him a year before thought him greatly deteriorated. ‘A determined, rather brutal looking man, clean-shaved with a carefully-trained Napoleonic frown, and a singularly charming smile,’ Clerk observed later of the great Turkish leader. For his part, Mustafa Kemal evinced no little pleasure at seeing the embassy diplomats in his presence, which struck Clerk as ‘a little dig at a Constantinople-keeping Embassy’. In his speech to the Turkish leader, Clerk called for a strengthening of relations between two countries ‘qui ont une si longue tradition d’amitié et de bon accord’.

Clerk had been quickly struck by the friendly disposition of the Turkish Foreign Minister, Tevfik Rüştü Aras, when he met him on 21 November,[4] and both the ambassador and the embassy staff were evidently buoyed by the warmth of the welcome they received at Angora.[5] Clerk was eager to improve the image and standing of Great Britain politically and culturally among ordinary Turks, and quickly sought the opportunity to contribute numerous British journals to the Turkish educational institution *Turk Ojaghi*.[6] He was also convinced that Anglo-Turkish relations would improve if the ambassador spent more time in Angora, the real pulse of the New Turkey, than had hitherto been the case under Lindsay.[7] Initial contacts between Clerk and the Turks were constructive. He informed Sir Austen Chamberlain at Christmas that, in his view, they were far from the days when the British government was portrayed as ‘the disturber of the peace, as the jealous Imperialist, who could not forgive the new Turkey for bursting her swathing bands and trying to take her place as an equal among the European nations’.[8] The Eastern Department of the Foreign Office was more circumspect in their appraisal of Turkish policy at this time. Such sentiments could only mean the Turkish desire for a financial loan in London.[9]

In the early weeks of his arrival, Clerk pushed hard to build on the growing rapprochement between the two powers initiated by the Mosul agreement of 1926. When Tevfik Rüştü attempted to secure the support of the British government to settle the Ottoman public debt question early in January 1927, Clerk was sympathetic. The Ottoman debt was ‘the one big contentious point left between us and the Turks’, the ambassador noted. His assessment of Turkish financial policy was somewhat more optimistic than the prevailing views of Otto Niemeyer at the Treasury and Sir Adam Block, the representative of the bondholders of the Ottoman debt. Clerk believed that the Turks were genuine in their desire to settle the debt question, that they did want to re-establish their credit on the international markets, that they were prepared to make use of foreign capital but not foreign loans, which they viewed with ‘dread’, and that the Turkish government was capable of living ‘within his means’. Failure to settle the debt question, Clerk believed, would mean ‘an unhappy setback to our general relations with the Turkish Republic’.[10] Nevertheless, Clerk did not see this as a prelude to any general economic rapprochement, which would advance Turkish interests. He had grave reservations about doing business in the New Turkey, and he could never banish the ambivalence that dominated his attitude towards the Turks for much of his embassy. Any

rapprochement, in his mind, would have to rest on a political and diplomatic rather than an economic axis. Moreover, Clerk's early optimism quickly gave way to a more pessimistic appraisal of the Turks, shaped in part by the recent history of Anglo-Turkish relations, but also by the views of his staff in Constantinople and Angora.

Anglo-Turkish relations in 1926 were bedevilled by the bitter legacy of the Great War, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the imposition of the Treaty of Sèvres. In the aftermath of the armistice agreement signed in October 1918, the British government had anchored warships off Constantinople and installed Allied high commissioners in the city. In London, Lloyd George was captivated by Venizelos the Greek Prime Minister and his vision of the historic mission of Greece in Turkey. Curzon and the Conservative Party were more pragmatic, less enamoured of philhellenism, but favouring a weaker Turkey divested of its control of the Straits. Generally, the British were infected with a deep aversion of the Turks. To Harold Nicolson, they were 'a race of Anatolian marauders', perpetrators of the 'brutal savagery' of Kut and the Armenian massacres.[11]

Foreign intervention and partition had fanned the fires of nascent Turkish nationalism in 1919. Italian forces landed at Antalya to secure the fruits of the treaty of St Jean de Maurienne. Greek forces took possession of Smyrna on the western Anatolian coast. French forces occupied Cilicia. In March 1920, the British carried out a full military occupation of Constantinople. But it was the Treaty of Sèvres in June with the loss of Thrace, Smyrna, the establishment of an autonomous Kurdistan, international control of the Straits, the continuation of capitulations, thus making 'almost every Turk…a Nationalist', which created that mass nationalist movement that had emerged in Anatolia under the former Ottoman army officer, Mustafa Kemal, in response to Greek invasion.[12] In the next two years, Kemal dealt a series of crushing blows to the invaders, culminating in the so-called Chanak crisis in September 1922, which led to the resignation of Lloyd George and the fall of his coalition the following month. At the conference of Lausanne, the New Turkey conceded to British demands for free passage through the Straits, but secured the abolition of capitulations and retained its territory in Thrace. The status of the Straits continued to be a source of friction, as was the question of Mosul, which was deferred for further negotiation to be finally settled by the Anglo-Iraqi-Turkish treaty of Angora on 18 July 1926.[13]

Between 1919 and 1938, Mustafa Kemal fashioned a New Turkey out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire. He abolished the Sultanate in 1922, and proclaimed a Republic the following year. He abolished the Caliphate in 1924, and instituted a new constitution. The driving forces of this revolution were secularism and nationalism.[14] The revolutionaries 'aspired to convert the Turkish people from the Islamic way of life as embodied in the old Ottoman Empire to the Western way of life as embodied in post-revolutionary France'. The Shariah was replaced by a civil and penal code based on the Swiss and Italian models; the introduction of the Civil Code prompted Jewish, Armenian and Greek Orthodox communities to renounce their rights under the minority clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne. Following the Kurdish revolt of 1925, with almost Henrician ruthlessness, all religious houses and orders were dissolved in Turkey. The wearing of hats was made compulsory for both public and private individuals, provoking riots in the southeastern and northeastern regions of the country. The emancipation of women from the veil and their entry into the professions was encouraged; state and private and foreign schools were brought under the umbrella of the Turkish state.[15] Islam was disestablished in 1928.

Latin replaced the Arabic alphabet as the medium for the teaching of Turkish in schools. By the middle of 1929, the Latin alphabet was mandatory in administration and business with the exception of bank notes and money orders.[16]

The Turkish Revolution was, therefore, a cultural as much as an economic and political phenomenon. It was a reaction against nineteenth-century European imperialism, but unlike the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia, it did not pose a revolutionary threat to the international economic and social order. Its long-term aim was integration into the international system on an equal basis through a policy of forced Westernization and modernization. There was, therefore, in principle no inherent conflict between the New Turkey and the British government, if the legacy of the Great War and its aftermath could be forgotten. But the New Turkey of Mustafa Kemal was also a single-party dictatorship of a crude and repressive kind. This dichotomy between Turkish Westernization and Turkish political repression posed considerable difficulties for British diplomats including Sir George Clerk. It is this dichotomy that still prevents the Turkey of the twenty-first century from being fully embraced into the continental vision of the European Union.

The legacy of Anglo-Turkish conflict clearly influenced the perceptions of British diplomats towards the New Turkey in 1926. On the eve of Clerk's departure for Turkey, Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary, had addressed the issue of Anglo-Turkish relations at the Imperial Conference in London on 20 October 1926. He could not discount Mussolini's jocular aside that nervousness about Italian designs had had a salutary effect on the Turks. The authority of Mussolini, 'the creator and the symbol of Fa[s]cism', contrasted sharply, in Chamberlain's eyes, with the 'purely personal, and therefore impermanent, authority' of the Turkish leader, Mustafa Kemal. Ignoring Mussolini's own destruction of democracy since his accession to power in Italy in 1922, Chamberlain proceeded to catalogue the litany of measures taken by Kemal to silence Turkish opposition. His objective in all of this was the modernization of Turkey or what Chamberlain derisively called 'the enforced adoption of the bowler hat and the jazz band', but its corollary had been rabid nationalism, expulsion of surviving Greek and Armenian minorities, xenophobia and the harassment of foreign economic interests, and the violation of the Treaty of Lausanne. Chamberlain hoped that 'a breeze of common sense' would 'dissipate the mists and miasmas of Angora' but until it did so, Turkish misgovernment remained, he pronounced, 'a menace to the peace of the world'.[17]

There was constant debate amongst British diplomats about the durability of the regime, the personal importance of Kemal to its survival, the relative strength of the opposition and extent of its achievements. Lindsay remained convinced in 1926 that the regime was on the verge of collapse.[18] However, there was not always such a clear consensus. In October 1923, Mustafa Kemal had established a new Turkish capital at Angora. This posed a delicate diplomatic problem for accredited powers, who now scrambled to establish some kind of suitable residence for their representatives in Anatolia. It was clear that there could be a marked disparity of perspective from the 'outposts' established in Angora and the view afforded from the embassies in Constantinople. This would certainly be true for the British perspective during Clerk's years as ambassador. But there was little evidence of this in 1926. As Sir George Clerk took up his post, there was a general tendency among British diplomats from wherever

they were posted to view the Turkish government with contempt, to denigrate its policies, and to castigate its achievements.

In Constantinople, Reginald Hoare, the counsellor in charge of the embassy, held Kemalist Turkey to be the least effective of the new dictatorships that had emerged since 1917. Its leaders, he proclaimed, were possessed of a mentality 'more medieval than that of Abdul Hamid himself. The regime paled in comparison to Soviet Russia or fascist Italy. Turkish revolutionaries simply lacked the 'savage energy and conviction' that had enabled the Soviet government to establish itself, or 'the inspiration and genius' that had led Mussolini to create an autocracy 'based largely on consent'. Turkey was nothing more than 'a rickety edifice'. But Hoare was reluctant to predict its downfall. For him, the Smyrna and Angora trials, which followed the failed attempt to assassinate Kemal in 1926, simply confirmed his own conclusion that 'the dream of a civilised "European" Turkey' could be allowed 'to fade into oblivion'.[19] In Angora, even the acting counsellor, Geoffrey Knox, who was capable of adopting a more liberal view of Turkish policies, pronounced Mustafa Kemal and his entourage to be nothing more than 'crude Orientals, the sons of undistinguished soldiers, of village doctors and schoolmasters', and their policy of Westernization 'still in the main no more than an ignorant aspiration'.[20] Clerk was clearly influenced by these perceptions, which quickly dissipated the initial optimism with which he viewed the Turkish regime. As he awaited the historic visit of Mustafa Kemal to Constantinople in July 1927, he could only pronounce that, in sharp contrast to Masaryk in Czechoslovakia, whereas the Ghazi could justly claim the title of 'Saviour', he had not yet won that of 'Father' of his country.[21]

British policy towards Turkey was clearly in transition at the end of 1926, and there was evidently confusion among British policy-makers as to how to proceed. The British Foreign Secretary, Sir Austen Chamberlain, despite his very real reservations about Turkish policies, was desirous that British business should continue its presence in Turkey and that British commercial interests maintain 'a footing in the railway interests of Turkey, whatever the fate of Turkey herself may be'. It was clear that British officials in Constantinople were reluctant to go even that far. Hoare observed that 'unless people have money to burn, there is no possible object in taking risks such as those embarked on by the Belgian and Swiss railway groups, or indeed in tying up money in Turkey at all'. Hoare was particularly critical of Turkish economic performance. In a despatch to Chamberlain of 15 March 1927, he declared Turkey to be 'no longer a Great Power', and even more pertinently to lack 'the economic resources of a Great Power'. The Turkish government had not come to terms with its economic weakness, although the Turkish people themselves had. Turkey lived beyond its means; its peasantry was overtaxed and public expenditure on defence devoured greater portions of its budget. Railway development, the great economic panacea, was, like the future of Turkey itself, nothing more than a gamble. Privately, Hoare was even more vitriolic about the situation. Turkey was 'in a state of dry rot', he told Lancelot Oliphant, the assistant under-secretary at the Foreign Office, in a personal letter on 16 March, and would Very gradually and gently sink into a state of almost primative barbarism only relieved by the antics of Angora. I do not believe any wealth is being created and I believe that on the whole wealth is being steadily destroyed.'[22]

The embassy at Constantinople clearly evinced a marked pessimism about Turkish prospects. Clerk was fully exposed to these views. It is clear that in a matter of months

after his arrival that he came to share them. Economic engagement entailed considerable risk for British trade and commerce. In a despatch of 5 March, Clerk assessed the risk of private capital participating in public works projects in Turkey such as railway and port construction. In considering the financial aspect of contracts entered into by Belgian and Swedish consortiums, Clerk counselled against financing of public works projects on the basis of long-term credits offered by the Turkish government, and concluded that any offer of a loan to the Turkish government was 'to offer a hostage to fortune'. The Belgian and Swedish groups had already assumed a considerable risk: bonds backed by Turkish banks were so intimately linked to the Turkish government that no financial security could be guaranteed; any need to increase the military budget would immediately deprive non-military departments of funds; the plight of Turkish farmers, the backbone of the regime, might diminish revenue receipts; railway projects would be unlikely to be profitable for some time. Clerk preferred British firms to subcontract from existing consortiums rather than engaging in undertakings directly with the Turkish government.[23]

In a despatch of 3 May, in response to Chamberlain's inquiry about the possibility of British participation in railway enterprises in Turkey, Clerk urged British companies to take preliminary precautionary measures when dealing with the Turkish government. He was careful to avoid giving 'a general and unconditional warning…against the investment of British capital in Turkey'. But if British firms were unable to obtain greater security than that offered to Belgian and Swedish groups, he was reluctant to recommend undertakings that entailed any extension of credit to the Turkish government without certain safeguards. British firms should not invest in any undertaking that was not economically sound, and should insert a clause in the agreement in the event of default on the part of the Turkish government that revenues should be hypothecated to the company; contracting groups should be given a direct lien on revenues in the event of default; long-term contracts should be avoided and guarantees of security of payment should be exacted in the event of war; other foreign groups should be allowed to possess no prior right of payment. Mining, manufacturing and agricultural schemes, Clerk concluded, posed less of a risk.[24]

In the summer of 1927, Clerk and his colleagues in Constantinople saw little hope of rapprochement proceeding on the basis of economic ties. The view from Angora was equally bleak. In a lengthy despatch from Geoffrey Knox, the Foreign Office received an extensive analysis of the political and economic complexion of the Turkish regime. It was in the realm of economic development, Knox believed, that the least progress had been made, and where the regime was most acutely threatened. He was tempted to dismiss the New Turkey as a 'republic of children', who since the Treaty of Lausanne had waged 'three years of almost open war against foreign and "minority" enterprise'. Turkey's assets were inconsiderable, her mineral wealth inaccessible. Depopulation, debt, excessive public expenditure especially on defence, vain pursuit of grandiose schemes to turn an Asiatic civilization into a developed Western state, bribery and peculation were the real hallmarks of Kemalist Turkey. Knox sensed a parting of the ways: either gullible foreign investors would risk bailing the Turks out, or the government would have to submit to some kind of economic supervision along the lines of the Dawes plan. Alternatively, Knox postulated, Turkey might seek no solution 'but jog on contentedly and ineffectively in a chronic state of semi-bankruptcy'.[25]

Sir George Clerk summed up the paradox of Turkish economic policy late in June. Drawing on confidential economic reports supplied by the British manager of the Ottoman Bank in Constantinople, Clerk concluded that Turkey was caught in 'a vicious circle', set on the path of Westernization on the one hand with its necessity for a balanced budget and a sound policy of economic development, 'such as the East has never known', but on the other hand in need of capital and unwilling to attract it from abroad by facing unpaid debts and making concessions to foreign trade. Paris, London and New York were not prepared to lend to Turkey so it had been left to German capital to finance railway and public works schemes. German firms were 'sweeping the steel, iron and machinery markets of Turkey', and had secured 'a strong economic hold on Turkey'. Little security was offered to these enterprises and venality and corruption were rife. Thus it was Clerk's impression that Turkey was 'hazarding a very great deal in a gambler's throw of the dice' in its crusade to Westernize.[26] There was a clear consensus at this time amongst Foreign Office and Treasury officials that Turkey was not a suitable focus for British capital and investment. When Helbert, Wagg and Co. raised such a possibility with Montagu Norman, the Governor of the Bank of England, Norman was said to be Vehement in his remarks regarding…the Turks and their general incompetence'.[27]

In July 1927, the Turkish government finally reached an agreement with the foreign bondholders of the Ottoman debt for the repayment of the debt. The prospect of the resumption of payments prompted the embassy at Pera to a further re-examination of the question of Turkey as a field for the investment of British capital. Edib Servet Bey, a deputy in the Turkish Parliament, raised the question of a British loan with British officials at Angora at the end of June.[28] R.H.Hadow, the second secretary at Constantinople, analysed the issue carefully in a paper in August, especially those factors that had induced German capital so prominently into the Turkish economy, and then assessed the prospects for British capital investment. The prognosis was grim. Turkey remained 'a warlike State, governed to-day by an absolute semi-military camarilla', whose desire to join the League of Nations was constantly vitiated by her closest ally the Soviet Union. Commercial questions still remained to be settled such as the Constantinople Municipal Loan of 1909. No prospect of a financial loan was feasible. Great Britain should maintain 'a friendly attitude' and 'smooth the path of the British trader' provided that Turkey abandoned its ways of 'petty persecution', which did so much to undermine trade. British manufacturers should supplement the capital needs of foreign enterprises such as the Swedish consortium chafing under German financial pressure. 'This would open the door for further British activities in Turkey to British manufacturers, who are to-day fast loosing their remaining hold upon this once profitable market.'[29] This slightly more optimistic assessment was quickly dissipated by a series of consular reports that Clerk forwarded to the Foreign Office five days later, which summarily illustrated the difficulties of conducting business in the New Turkey.[30]

By the end of 1927, British officials in Turkey saw little prospect of a diminution of that aggressive nationalism and its attendant xenophobia, which militated against the growth of foreign trade and commerce. In December, Hadow submitted a lengthy memorandum to the Foreign Office, which offered a stinging indictment of Turkish commercial and economic policy since the Treaty of Lausanne. Since the abolition of capitulations by that treaty, nationalism and xenophobia had become 'endemic' in Turkey. The government had instituted extensive legislation to protect Turkish industry

and insurance, and to define Turkish nationality, which discriminated against foreign shipping, insurance and banking. They had provided for the compulsory use of Turkish and reserved to the Turkish flag all port services, along with other Vexations'. Discrimination against foreign commerce was accompanied by ethnic and religious discrimination against Christian and Jewish minorities. The attack on foreign business was 'planned, insistent and increasing in severity to the extent of being well nigh unbearable'. The memorandum considered various forms of defence against this attack, which appeared to Hadow to be a premeditated and flagrant violation of the articles of the Treaty of Lausanne, and the various measures that could be taken to combat Turkish harassment.[31]

It is evident that Sir George Clerk's initial reaction was to put his full force behind the recommendations of the Hadow memorandum. He advocated a joint Anglo-French-Italian and German *démarche* against the Turks.[32] In an interview with Tevfik Rüştü and Ismet Inönü on 12 January, Clerk decided to 'shake up the minister for foreign affairs' presenting him with an *aide-mémoire* outlining twenty-nine cases necessitating a response from the Turkish government.[33] The Foreign Office supported this initiative, but was reluctant to adopt all the prescriptions advocated in the Hadow memorandum. 'I am all for hitting the Turk when we have a strong case and the Turk is in the wrong,' Oliphant reminded the ambassador on 14 January, 'on the other hand, I know you will agree with me that we must walk delicately when the Turk is on fairly firm ground and we are in a less favourable position.'[34]

Despite this admonition, Clerk remained a firm advocate of the measures contemplated by Hadow. In a private letter to Oliphant of 25 January, Clerk remained unequivocal in his support. The campaign against British subjects engaged in maritime occupations was in Clerk's view, 'a pre-arranged Governmental policy'; both article 4 of the Residence Convention and the rights conferred by the minority clauses of the Lausanne treaty could force the Turks to abandon its policy of discrimination against non-Muslims. Turkish policy was pernicious because Turks could not perform the complex tasks formerly assumed by the minorities. 'You can picture the chaos that would result in the Office,' Clerk affirmed, 'if 50% of our clerks and members of all Depts. up to the Heads had to be recruited suddenly from illiterate yokels forced on us by a new Govt. without any regard to aptitude, previous training, or even desire to work!' Britain and Turkey were at a parting of the ways on this issue, which the British government had been content to ignore because of the conflict over Mosul and because of a desire to avoid propelling Turkey into the arms of the Soviet Union. Now Clerk affirmed:

> Mosul is settled, Russia has largely shot her subversive bolt, the Turk has shown pretty conclusively that he has not the slightest intention of plunging as regards Russia, and the world generally is a less uncomfortable place than it was two or three years ago. Meanwhile the fires of nationalism are burning here more fiercely than ever and foreign commercial interest are becoming convinced that unless the principal signatories of the Treaty of Lausanne turn the hose on, they will be burnt to ashes.

It was rather a case of 'now or never if we are to put up a fight for such commercial interests as we still have in Turkey'.[35]

Clerk continued to keep up the pressure on the Turks. On 1 February, he associated himself with a joint protest mounted by the French, Italian and German embassies against Turkish restrictions on shipping agents.[36] On 17 February, after consultation with the Board of Trade, Chamberlain authorized Clerk to lodge a protest demanding that the rights laid out in article 4 and the minority clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne be respected. He was given *carte blanche,* if necessary, to co-ordinate his protest with other embassies.[37] On 9 February, the Italian government had intimated to the Foreign Office its desire to appeal against Turkish policies to the permanent court of international justice at The Hague or to the League of Nations under article 17 of the Covenant.[38] This action caused all parties to reassess the thrust of their policies towards Turkey and whether the kind of commercial brinkmanship advocated by Hadow and embraced by Sir George Clerk best served the national interest and the course of Anglo-Turkish relations.

It is clear that Foreign Office officials began to have grave serious reservations about the Italian *démarche*. On 24 February, W.L.Knight had registered his clear concern about using the minorities in Turkey as a 'tool' for British commercial interests. Such action would 'infuriate the Turks, probably bring about no improvement in the commercial situation, and almost certainly involve the complete ruin of the greatly reduced minorities that have managed to survive'.[39]

From Angora too came a call for caution. In a personal letter to Oliphant on 11 March 1928, Geoffrey Knox registered his own unease about using the minority question as a lever against the Turkish government. He had been 'a little disturbed' when he had first seen Hadow's prescriptions. Despite his ignorance about 'Constantinople conditions', Knox was convinced that they were 'not quite as black as Hadow paints them' and that Hadow 'draws some at least of his colour from the warblings of a naturally chauvinistic Press'. Knox did not find Hadow's arguments convincing, and strongly opposed intervention on the basis of the minorities clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne:

> Wherever we can usefully intervene in our direct interests we must clearly do so with all the weight we can command, but I am quite convinced that it would be the worst possible policy to attempt to advance them by butting in as champions of Yanni and Moise.

Clerk was preparing to go on leave. There was considerable debate about how to proceed. Knox recalled the discussions:

> We went into the question fully in Constantinople before the Ambassador left and it is more than probable that no action will be taken. This means so complete a volte-face that, in the Ambassador's absence, I would hesitate to touch the question officially.

Clerk had evidently decided to proceed on a case-by-case basis; if a British firm complained, the embassy would take up the matter.[40] The ambassador had evidently been swayed by Knox's arguments. On 12 March, Oliphant noted: 'Sir George Clerk's personal opinion is that in some ways things have been going better lately and he

questions the desirability of making a big to-do about this just now.[41] The Eastern Department of the Foreign Office noted that there were two schools of thought represented in the British embassy in Turkey: 'One holds that things will go from bad to worse, the other that they are going from bad to less bad.'[42]

From his vantage point in Angora, Geoffrey Knox strongly opposed the measures advocated by Hadow, embraced by Clerk, and adopted in their strongest form by the Italian government. His views were conditioned by his presence in Constantinople during the occupation of 1919–22 and in 1923 when the Treaty of Lausanne had been signed. He had been conscious of the 'over-zealous even fanatical support' given in the early stages of the British occupation to Christian minorities. This had left a legacy of disillusionment, which went some way to explaining the periodic waves of nationalism and xenophobia that engulfed the business communities. Moreover, Knox perceived the plight of business to be not as desperate as it appeared and that acute nationalism and xenophobia were on the wane. Turkey's policy was 'to encourage foreign enterprise simultaneously with a vigorous fostering of Turkish economic development'. There was little difference between Turkish nationalism and 'that of most of the new-born or revolutionary states of Europe'. There was 'no ground to despair of the future'. But one should recognize that New Turkey was 'essentially an animal of tricky temper that is best ridden gently on the snaffle and without whip or spur'. Appeals to the 'heavy artillery' of the permanent court or the League should be avoided; diplomatic measures or 'vaseline' would heal disputes between business and Turkey.[43] In a despatch of 31 March, Knox unequivocally urged the British government not to invoke the minorities' clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne in favour of British commercial interests. To do so would be 'inexpedient, unless ill-treatment of the Minorities became so scandalous as to force our hand'. The Jewish minority had never been subject to systematic persecution by the Turks, while the Armenians were adaptable and with 'their successful tradition of emigration' could always uproot themselves if unable to survive economically. As regards the Greeks, they were an 'irreductible element'. But treaties were only 'a temporary palliative'. The problem of non-Muslim minorities in the New Turkey would be solved in the same way as the problems of Upper Silesia, the Polish Corridor or *Anschluss*, by time and natural forces.[44]

It was no surprise that Clerk should wish to highlight the plight of minorities in Turkey, given his traditional support for 'oppressed nationalities', but it was undoubtedly reckless to link such an explosive question to the issue of British commercial interests in Turkey. Knox and some members of the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office had very real reservations about the overall wisdom of such a policy. On his return from leave at the end of April, Sir George Clerk outlined the circumstances that persuaded him not to proceed along the lines of Chamberlain's despatch of 17 February. With implicit acknowledgement of the strength of Knox's arguments, the question of invoking the Treaty of Lausanne on behalf of non-Muslim nationals was 'in suspense'. The embassy would continue to press the general question of shipping agents and British nationals with acquired rights. The Turks would be forcibly reminded of the political and economic implications of their discriminatory policies. Clerk would proceed legally, requesting the advice of the Foreign Office's Legal Adviser whether Turkish law was justified in removing British subjects with proved acquired rights from their positions of employment. Tyrrell, the Permanent Under-secretary, approved Clerk's strategy.[45] Any

representation based on a violation of treaty rights was, in his eyes, unlikely to be effective.[46]

In June 1928, the Turkish government finally signed a contract with the bondholders of the Ottoman public debt, thus bringing to an end an issue that had strongly coloured Western attitudes towards the New Turkey. Nevertheless, there was little change in the British government's general attitude to investment in Turkey. When Sir George Clerk was informed in October 1928 that some kind of financial mission based on the City of London was envisaging financial assistance to the Republic, he continued to counsel against a foreign loan and warned of the risks foreign capital would incur when investing in private enterprises in Turkey. He envisaged financial support only for public works such as railway development, in carefully graduated stages with payment based on Turkish bills. The Turks were simply not a reliable economic bet. They had been less than forthcoming over a plethora of other financial issues that continued to dog Anglo-Turkish relations in 1928: the Constantinople Municipal Loan of 1909, the failure to settle prewar British claims, the Ipranosian case that bedevilled relations with the Bank of England. Until such matters were cleared up, Clerk argued it was simply Very difficult to encourage investment of further British capital in Turkey'. Nevertheless, there was a slight adjustment in his attitude. Financial assistance to Turkey might be encouraged 'on proper conditions'. He was prepared to keep an 'open mind' on the matter, and to give a cautious approval to the despatch of a British commercial mission to Turkey.[47]

There was no rapprochement between Turkey and Great Britain by the end of 1928. Relations were generally characterized by bitterness and mistrust. What particularly concerned Clerk about the intermittent xenophobia and chauvinist legislation emanating from Angora was not just the persecution of foreign interests that this entailed, but also the covert Turkish desire to eliminate the Greek and Levantine minorities from their privileged commercial position within the Turkish state. In his annual report for 1927, Clerk acknowledged that it was 'utopian' to expect the Great Powers to impose a credit embargo on the Turks or to use the minorities' clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne to protect them. Consequently, there was nothing left but to play 'a lone hand' and to exercise all pressure where British interests were concerned 'in the hope that time, education, and constant remonstrance may eventually bring the Turk to realise the folly of his present ways'.[48] Nor were there signs of any economic rapprochement between Great Britain and Turkey in 1928. A more harmonious relationship would have to be built on political foundations. Despite the distrust that governed their relationship, the succeeding years would witness a remarkable transformation in the political relations between Great Britain and Turkey, which would have great implications for both countries.

Mustafa Kemal's hold on the country at this time was as firm as ever. In July 1927, Kemal visited Constantinople for the first time since 1919. In October, he delivered his monumental six-day speech to the People's Party congress. Turkey carried out its first systematic census, a prelude to a more vigorous programme of cultural and social reforms. The British embassy was continually struck by the dichotomy between the ideas emanating from Angora and the harsh reality of existence in Turkey. The great engine of social transformation was the development of railways. But the geography of the country still made it difficult to get a clear picture of the impact of the Turkish Revolution on Turkish society as a whole. British diplomatic reports attempted to assess the extent of

the social and economic change Turkey had undergone since the Great War. Alex Helm, the second secretary at Angora, noted the great demographic decline Turkey had undergone as a result of war, deportation and the exchange of populations when he travelled through Anatolia in search of missing British airmen in 1927.[49] The embassy care-fully monitored the progress of education and public health reform.[50] Westernization induced a grudging approbation of Turkish achievements. Clerk observed that 1927 was 'a good year in the early history of the Republic'. Nevertheless, his first annual report also conveyed a 'rather embittered review' of Anglo-Turkish relations.[51]

Hostility was slowly being transformed into a kind of studied ambivalence on the part of British officials, who were never certain that they had solved the enigma of Mustafa Kemal. The lifestyle of the Ghazi constantly encouraged rumours of his imminent demise, which in turn prompted speculation whether the Turkish Republic could survive the ambitions of its rivals, Greece, Italy and the Soviet Union.[52] There was a gradual, grudging approbation of the Ghazi's work and an acceptance that the continued rule of Mustafa Kemal was a *sine qua non* of the stability of the Republic.[53] This ambivalence was very much reflected in Sir George Clerk's assessment of the Kemalist regime. When King Amanullah of Afghanistan paid a state visit to Angora in May 1928, Clerk listened intently to the speeches of both leaders. He told Chamberlain:

> I do not mean that the Ghazi is actively pro-British, but I believe that his policy is at present steadily set to reaching, if possible, a close and good understanding with us and the Western Powers as against the rival policy, which has its influential adherents in this country, of combination with Russia and Germany.[54]

Nevertheless, his annual report in 1928 speculated whether Kemal's insatiable appetite to 'épater' all exploits and all rivals might not yet lead Turkey to 'catastrophe'![55]

The sheet-anchor of Turkish foreign policy in the early years of the Republic was the Soviet—Turkish alliance signed in Moscow in March 1921, and reaffirmed in 1925. As long as Turkish nationalism adopted an anti-Western stance, there was a natural relationship between international communism and world revolution, and the embattled Turkish state of Mustafa Kemal. But it was also clear that this rapprochement was more fleeting than permanent. Its high points were the years between 1919 and 1922, and 1925 and 1926, when anti-Western sentiment was at its highest. Following the tripartite treaty between Turkey, Iraq and Great Britain in June 1926, which settled the issue of Mosul, there was a clear attempt by the Turks to move beyond the Soviet orbit. The first manifestation of this was apparent in May 1928, when the Turkish Republic signed a pact of friendship, neutrality and conciliation with Mussolini's Italy. The terms of the pact contained no provisions that might have alarmed a third power. The treaty was of great significance because it was the first political treaty concluded between the Turkish Republic and a great Western power. Moreover, it signalled a more conciliatory attitude between Turkey and Italy, in sharp contrast to the animosity which had existed in 1926.[56] Then, Clerk observed, Italian consular officials had been at no pains to hide the fact that the 'the flag of Savoy would soon be waving in the fertile Cilician plain'. Now, he noted, 'the lion and the lamb have lain down together'.[57]

Italian foreign policy was difficult to read. From 1926, it was clear that Mussolini had committed himself to the building up of a system of alliances and ententes in Southeastern Europe, which was of particular concern to the French government. In November 1927, Mussolini had signed the Treaty of Tirana with Albania, which paralleled a Franco-Yugoslav treaty signed earlier that month. In 1928 both France and Italy sought to avoid conflict in the Near East. The Italian rapprochement with both Greece and Turkey was viewed as part of a more general Italian policy of *détente* between Italy and France in the eastern Mediterranean. Furthermore, Mussolini hoped to supplement his treaty with Turkey with a Graeco-Turkish settlement.[58] But the real significance for Great Britain of Italo-Turkish rapprochement was that it provided the clearest evidence yet that there were limits to the Turkish rapport with the Soviet Union. In a conversation of 3 July 1928, Tevfik Rüştü Aras went to great pains to emphasize that his policy of 'Pacts of Friendship' must contribute to the general good. Clerk was unclear why Tevfik had 'unbosomed himself in this way, but appreciated it 'as a mark of his confidence'.[59] At Angora, British officials monitored the depth of the relationship between Turkey and the Soviet Union. The Turks were 'convinced of the failure of the communist system in Russia'; they had 'no use for communism in Turkey'. Perhaps some sort of Iraqi—Turkish pact might weaken the Soviet position further.[60] Political and diplomatic considerations, therefore, were more likely to induce Anglo-Turkish harmony than economic policy. A corresponding decline in Franco-Turkish relations occasioned by the dispute over the delimitation of the frontier between Turkey and Syria, which burst out anew at the end of 1928, was also unlikely to impede further rapport.[61] It was possible that a new orientation of Turkish policy was in the process of crystallizing, which might have significant implications for Anglo-Turkish relations.

This was exactly the point made by Alex Helm in a memorandum written to the Foreign Office on 10 February 1929. In a carefully balanced assessment of Turkish progress, and conscious of the possible implications for Kemal of the collapse of Amanullah's Westernizing regime in Afghanistan in January 1929, Helm perceived the existing regime to be 'perhaps better than any conceivable alternative', although hardly popular in a Western democratic sense. The reform programme had come to a temporary halt; the pace had been 'too hot to be continued indefinitely'. But without the Ghazi, 'the future could only be envisaged with the deepest concern'. As long as the Mustafa Kemal—Ismet Inönü alliance remained intact, Helm foresaw the influence of the 'parasitic sycophants' of 'the Chan Kaya clique' and the Ghazi's own predilection for 'excitement and novelty' circumscribed and contained. But the future of Turkey depended not on the narrow nationalism of many of the leaders of the regime, but on her ability to secure capital from the Western nations for economic development. In short money was 'the key to the future of Turkey'. Kemalist Turkey had reached the limit that could be attained by her own unaided efforts. It was approaching a critical point in its existence, and was now desirous of cultivating closer relations with Great Britain, 'whose moral support she considers will be most efficacious at some future date'. France, Italy, the Soviet Union and Germany could all be discounted as serious contenders for Turkey's hand. The fact that Turkey had eschewed all pretensions to territorial expansion should endear her to the British government. Helm foresaw the possibility of an Anglo-Turkish non-aggression pact and the further possibility of Turkey joining the League of Nations. Turkey might also offer to the prospect of a bloc of friendly states, including Iraq, Persia

and Afghanistan, which would provide greater security for India, stability in the Near and Middle East and a favourable position for British commercial expansion. In conclusion, the British government might consider the need to abandon the policy of 'passivity' and to replace it with the policy of 'a helping hand'.

In his covering despatch, Sir George Clerk expressed his broad agreement with Helm's analysis of the Turkish position. Nevertheless, he questioned the form in which Turkey would demand assistance and the form in which Great Britain could give it. The Turks, in his view, had to go 'beyond the stage of vague hints'.[62] Clerk was not quite ready to proffer 'a helping hand'. Anglophobia remained rife in the Turkish press, which had attributed the fall of Amanullah in Afghanistan to the intrigues of the government of India. Moreover, the ambassador had suffered a deep personal affront. A fire had broken out in the predominantly Greek quarter of Constantinople on 21 January. Both Clerk and the ambassadress had responded quickly to the emergency. Lady Clerk had organized charitable relief for the victims in the Tatavla quarter. The local press was indignant. They accused the ambassador of 'sowing dissension between the various nationalities' and launched a fierce personal attack upon his integrity, accompanied by a xenophobic assault upon foreign-owned utilities companies, which had allegedly failed to respond quickly enough to the emergency. This Turkish attitude towards its minorities vexed Sir George deeply. The incipient Anglo-Turkish rapprochement was not built on sand, but these events did little to advance the prospect of 'a helping hand'. These incidents probably indicated a Turkish desire to reassure the Soviet Union that they had not inclined 'a little too far to our side of the fence', Clerk suggested to Chamberlain.[63] He took up these matters vigorously with Tevfik Rüştü in Angora on 12 February.[64]

Anglo-Turkish relations remained in a transitional stage in 1929. For Clerk, the disparity between protestations of Turkish friendship and outbursts of Turkish xenophobia were difficult to reconcile. But there were encouraging diplomatic signals: a greater appreciation of Turkish progress and a more optimistic assessment of Turkish social reform. Mallet and Troutbeck's consular tour of southern Anatolia, at the end of 1928, conveyed a more favourable picture than an earlier tour in 1926.[65] Even a proposal for land reform, a subject often likely to raise Clerk's hackles, was greeted with cautious approval.[66] Turkey's first children's week in April 1929 was symptomatic of a desire 'to make the new spirit in this country something more than a flash in the pan'. Health and hygiene reforms, which lowered infant mortality, and educational reform were very effective instruments in revolutionizing the lives of women and children, and were potent symbols of the 'new Turkey'. The abolition of the harem and veil were laudable. Nevertheless, Clerk's innate scepticism was not easily abandoned. He could only wonder for instance whether a people 'which is rapidly throwing away its religion and family traditions will find moral support enough in a half-baked Westernism'.[67] When the Turkish government deferred a decision to close a Scottish missionary school in Constantinople, it illustrated 'in a small way what the Mosul settlement did in a large one, that the one way to secure a success with the Turks is to make up one's mind and to stick to it'.[68] In February 1929, Clerk urged the British government to encourage British banks to support British firms bidding for defence contracts from the Turkish government. He discounted any question of Turkish credit unworthiness.[69] The Turks reciprocated the courtship. During the Franco-Turkish frontier negotiations of 1929,

Tevfik Rüştü urged the French ambassador to imitate 'the treatment the English have given us'.[70]

The zenith of continuing Anglo-Turkish rapprochement was reached with the visit to Constantinople of Admiral Field and the Mediterranean squadron on 12 October 1929. Clerk reminded the new British Foreign Secretary Sir Arthur Henderson of the sharp contrast between the 'inky blackness' of that wet December evening in 1923 when *HMS Ceres*, the symbol of British military occupation, departed the Bosphorus and 'the bright morning sunshine' that greeted the Admiral's arrival. The visit was an unqualified success. 'British stock stands higher in Turkey than it has done at any time since the armistice,' Clerk pronounced,[71] and was further taken aback by the warmth of the Turkish response to the naval visit at the Independence Day dinner at the foreign ministry in Angora. Clerk had never found the Ghazi 'so simple and friendly, so clearly desirous to shew his appreciation of the relations between our two countries, and so devoid of the Napoleonic pose which has hitherto been present in even his more expansive moments'. Clerk was almost as much surprised as the Turks at the development of Anglo-Turkish relations:

> I do not mean to convey by this that we are now established as the Turks' best friends or that we can expect any especial favours in the way of materials or provision of technical advisers… But what it does mean is that the Turks feel we have confidence in their pacific policy of putting their house in order and seeking nothing but peace alone, while they for their part equally see that we have no hidden intentions against Turkey and ask for nothing better than to be best of friends with them.[72]

On 17 December 1929, the Soviet—Turkish Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression, signed at Paris four years before, was again reaffirmed. On 12 December, the Soviet vice-commissar for foreign affairs, Karakhan, visited Angora. The Soviet Union wished to check the 'westward tendency' in Turkish foreign policy. Clearly, the Turks were still prepared to acquiesce in maintaining the delicate balance between the Soviet Union and the Western democracies.[73] Nevertheless, it was impossible to deny a clear change in Turkish policy towards Great Britain. When Sir Robert Vansittart, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, analysed the existing state of international relations in his search for the 'Old Adam' in May 1930, he did not even include Turkey in his discussion of 'Lesser ex-Enemy Countries'. Of perhaps greater concern might have been the fact that there was only the barest reference to Turkey at all in the memorandum, and it was from his ambassadors in Berlin and Rome rather than Sir George Clerk in Constantinople that he had sought consultation for his appraisal![74]

In 1930, Anglo-Turkish relations continued to be characterized by what Clerk called 'friendliness in high places'. There was a second British naval visit to Constantinople during the summer of that year, and the Turkish government lent some priceless treasures to be shown at the Persian Art Exhibition in London. The thorny issue of British prewar claims presented under article 71 of the Treaty of Lausanne was also settled and the Turkish government consented to pay the sum of £30,000 in five annual instalments. An Anglo-Turkish treaty of Commerce and Navigation was signed in March. The increasing amity between the two countries brought into sharper relief two areas where discord

continued to reign. The great irritants in Anglo-Turkish relations remained the hostility of the Turkish press, which continued, in Clerk's view, to misrepresent British imperial policy in India and to make allegations of British involvement in the internal affairs of Turkey, and the frostiness of the Turkish General Staff to the growing spirit of *détente*. Anglo-Turkish rapprochement remained undeniably political. In 1930, the Turkish economy plunged into the dark night of depression, thus removing even further any economic conditions for a closer amity.

The onset of the Great Depression reawakened the reservations that had always clouded Sir George Clerk's perception of Turkish economic policy. He compared its effects, which engulfed Turkey in 1930, to the words the Fairy Blackstick addressed to the infant Prince Giglio in William Makepeace Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring*, that the best thing she could send him was a little misfortune. He hoped that Turkey's misfortune would be the making of the Republic as it was the infant prince and cure it of its profligacy. For Clerk, the legacy of years of imprudent finance and the expulsion of its minorities 'matured at a time when the whole world was entering into an unparalleled phase of depression'. Faced by a vicious cycle of falling agricultural prices, adverse trade balances, and an exchange rate crisis, the Turkish government adopted a more protectionist economic policy in order to secure a more balanced budget and sought to stabilize the exchange rate by the establishment of a state bank. In February 1930, the Turkish government intimated that, after the payment of the coupons due in May, it would not be able to honour its debts as laid out under the debt agreement signed with the Council of Foreign Bondholders on 13 June 1928.[75] Clerk believed 'a critical point' had been reached in the evolution of Turkey and feared the possibility 'of the whole structure built up by the Ghazi and his helpers collapsing'. Turkish officials believed that the Turkish domestic crisis reflected the onset of the world economic crisis. British officials including Clerk attributed it to the policies pursued by the Turks themselves.[76] The Turkish government had shown great antipathy to the contraction of foreign loans, which were associated with the 'capitulations' of the nineteenth century. This policy was mostly strongly associated with the nationalist Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inönü. But in February 1930, the Turks had despatched a secret mission to Holland to canvass the possibilities of a loan on the Dutch market. On 25 February, Clerk noted that there was a new consensus in Turkey, which was prepared to favour a foreign loan.[77]

The exchange rate crisis had serious ramifications for the relationship between Great Britain and Turkey. The Turks inferred that the depreciation of the lira was intrinsically connected to the volume of their debt payments. The Ottoman Debt Council despatched two officials to Angora to open negotiations with the Turkish government, including the president of the Ottoman Debt Council, Stanley Wyatt, and another official, Fernand des Closières. Conversations between Ismet Inönü and Wyatt quickly confirmed that the Turks were 'at last anxious, in principle…for a foreign loan'. British officials in Angora welcomed this. The economic crisis might destabilize Turkey politically as well as economically, thus enabling the Soviet Union to increase its influence within the country; financial and economic decay might signal the abandonment of Westernization and a return to 'orientalism'; the army might be weakened, thus increasing civil dissension. This could only redound to the advantage of the Soviet Union with grave implications for the security and stability of Iraq, the Straits and the eastern Mediterranean. The Soviet ambassador was allegedly advising the Turks to 'let the lira go where it will'. Any

attempt by the Turks to secure a foreign reconstruction loan, therefore, was ‘an important step in the right direction’.

However, Turkish tactics did not fully inspire confidence. The Turks continued to labour under the misapprehension that foreign capital was ‘yearning…to pour into the country’, and failed to realize that ‘to get any capital at all they must accept burdensome conditions’. Wyatt’s own prognosis of the Turkish financial situation was fully consistent with Clerk’s: the collapse of the lira owed less to the payment of the Ottoman debt coupons as much as to the extravagance of the Turkish government in buying abroad.

The arrival of the Ottoman Debt Council negotiators had encouraged the Turks to hope for a renegotiation of the agreement of 1928, and prompted their consideration of a foreign loan. Ismet Inönü had raised the prospect of such a loan first with des Closières, whom British officials believed to be more of an intermediary for the French embassy than the Debt Council. He urged the Turks to accept the appointment of the French economist Charles Rist as their financial adviser. The appointment of a French representative of the Ottoman Bank as financial adviser to the Turkish government would be a considerable asset to the French government as it sought to expand its influence in Turkey. French pressure on the Turks would either increase French influence in Turkey to the detriment of Great Britain or force the Turks into the arms of the Soviet Union. Neither option was palatable to the British government.

Ismet Inönü quickly backed away; the Turkish government preferred a more independent intermediary. On 21 March, the Turkish Prime Minister asked Wyatt to secure a loan of £20 million and to act on their behalf as the Turkish adviser in its financial reconstruction. Wyatt cited a conflict of interest, but later took the opportunity to urge the Turks to honour the debt convention and accept the appointment of a controller of ceded customs revenues. In response to a Turkish request, Wyatt was prepared to work out a debt conversion and unification plan, and to sound out in a private capacity the prospect of a foreign loan in London or Paris.[78]

Clerk proceeded to London to discuss these issues with the Treasury and the Foreign Office. In a meeting at the Treasury on 1 April, Clerk informed Sir Frederick Leith-Ross that the Turks were ‘genuinely anxious to put their house in order’ but had no conception of the practical measures to be adopted. There was no question of them accepting Rist, the nominee of the Ottoman Bank, as their financial adviser, since they regarded the Ottoman Bank as ‘a purely French institution’. Clerk had met with Sir Herbert Lawrence, the chairman of Vickers Ltd, and a powerful voice in the City of London, who had informed him that it might be possible for an international syndicate to arrange a loan if the Turks would accept supervision. The Turkish search for a foreign loan ‘represented a great change in their outlook’, argued Clerk, who urged the appointment of Wyatt as financial adviser.[79] Clerk and his colleagues hoped for a change in the British government’s attitude to Turkey as a borrower. The Turks were earnest in their desire to modernize and would meet their obligations if they were able to, hence the importance of an economic adviser. British officials hankered back to the days of Sir Richard Crawford before the Great War. French and Italian candidates were dismissed as ‘politically suspect’. They clearly hoped to steer Turkey into the British orbit. Nevertheless, they recognized the political undesirability as well as the unfeasibility of one country alone providing a loan.[80]

There were further discussions between Clerk and Wyatt with George Rendel at the Foreign Office and with Leith-Ross and Niemeyer at the Treasury on 3 and 4 April. Clerk wanted closer budgetary control of Turkish defence spending, and that if any loan was to be secured, the Turks would have to be far less passive than hitherto. The security of the loan was another consideration. Wyatt's prescriptions were likely to be unpalatable to the Turks, but they would seem less so when the financial crisis grew more acute. The Turks would never accept a French financial adviser, and the French would resist an English appointment. Deadlock was likely to ensue.[81] Clerk continued to advocate Wyatt's candidacy in a meeting on 4 April, and Wyatt himself seemed more receptive.[82] In a further meeting at the Foreign Office of Eastern Department and Treasury officials on 16 April, Clerk stressed that it was 'useless' to force Rist 'down the throats of the Turkish government'. It was agreed that he might inform the Comte de Chambrun, the French ambassador in Turkey, that French insistence on the appointment of Rist as financial adviser would be 'disastrous', and he was authorized to inform Wyatt accordingly.[83]

Clerk proceeded to Paris to have discussions with Wyatt and des Closières. In his discussions with the latter, he emphasized the need to prevent any Turkish 'redressement politique', an allusion to the risk of Turkey 'looking towards Russia for help'.[84] In his own account of this meeting, Clerk commented how important it was to appoint joint English and French financial advisers rather than a single French adviser 'working in complete disloyalty to everyone except the French banks'. But he studiously avoided saying so in the meeting.

He returned to Constantinople on 21 April before proceeding to Angora the next day. Tevfik Rüştü and Ismet Inönü barely allowed Clerk 'a how do you do' before asking for his 'news' from London. He had to state that there was 'no definite news'. There was 'no ardent desire to lend money to Turkey' in London, but there was sympathy with their attempts to modernize. The possibility of a loan was 'by no means excluded', provided that the Turks maintained their obligations to the bondholders, and that any Turkish scheme for a loan was 'countersigned' by some financial expert of considerable reputation. The Turks had to realize that 'Colonel Brown, on half pay in his villa in Cheltenham' and 'Monsieur Dubois, retired grocer in Bourges' would 'raise a howl, which would shake Turkish credit to its foundations', if the Turks failed to pay customs revenues into the Ottoman Bank in June. Clerk had seen Wyatt, des Closières and Chambrun, and it was agreed they would not press for the appointment of Rist as financial adviser. Turkey would be asked to maintain her obligations, but given the deadlock that was likely to ensue, the bondholders were prepared to unify and consolidate the debt with the possibility of a loan if Turkey maintained its payments and accepted the advice of a recognized financial expert. This was evidently not what the Turkish leaders had wanted to hear. Tevfik vented his frustration on the French and 'inveighed bitterly' against Rist and the Ottoman Bank, and hinted darkly of Turkish non-payment of customs revenues, whilst Ismet was more 'sensible', preferring to wait upon events.[85]

On 7 May, Clerk reported that the Turkish government had invited Charles Rist to examine and report on the Turkish financial situation. This was a volte-face on the part of the Turks and a setback for Clerk's attempt to increase British influence in Turkey. In his letter of 6 May, the Turkish Minister of Finance, Şükrü Saracoğlu, had requested that, during the period of the Rist mission, two-thirds of the payments made to the Ottoman Bank should be returned to the Turkish government as short-term loans, and that it should

be exempted from converting the remaining one-third into foreign currency, if the expert's report declared this to be detrimental to financial stability. This was approved by the Ottoman Debt Council with the condition that this concession was to expire on the publication of Rist's report or at the latest 25 October 1930.[86] The gist of Rist's conclusions was intimated to Clerk as early as 1 July, and they painted a bleak picture of Turkish finance and economy. The Rist report published on 15 September was clear in its expectation that the Turkish government had an obligation to honour the November annuity in full.[87] The report was deeply disappointing to the Turkish government. It notified the Ottoman Debt Council in November that it would not pay in full the annuity due on 25 November, thus breaking the agreement signed in June 1928.[88]

The Turkish government had reluctantly decided to swing towards France in the summer of 1930. There was evidently a power struggle taking place within the Turkish government between Ismet Inönü, the Prime Minister, who had always opposed foreign loans, and Ali Fethi Bey, the Turkish ambassador to Paris, who favoured closer financial and economic cooperation with the Western democracies, especially France. In August 1930, Fethi was allowed to establish an opposition party in Turkey, thus ushering in an incipient era of Turkish democracy. This remarkable decision to allow the establishment of the Liberal Republican People's Party was the product of a meeting at Yalova between Mustafa Kemal and Ismet Inönü. It was seen as a major defeat for the latter. Fethi had the strong support of the French ambassador, the Comte de Chambrun, and the Quai d'Orsay in his quest to secure Mustafa Kemal's favour.[89] But the Rist report did considerable damage to the Fethi cause and to its French supporters, and allowed the Ismet faction to strike back. The depth of this factional strife became evident to Clerk early in September when Tevfik Rüştü launched the accusation that Rist had wished to 'enslave' Turkey to France. When Clerk begged to differ, Tevfik asserted that Rist 'was the Quai d'Orsay'.[90] The British government lost little sleep over this. As Rendel observed at the Foreign Office:

> The Turks have only themselves to blame as regards M.Rist. There was every indication, from the first, that he would act mainly in the interests of the French Govt. & the French banks—but if an unseemly Franco-British wrangle was to be avoided, H.M.G. had no choice but to remain neutral…. Their capitulation to French insistence is bringing its natural consequences.[91]

The evolution of the Ottoman debt crisis did not intrinsically damage Great Britain's standing in Turkey. As Sir George Clerk noted, France had to bear 'the lion's share of the odium', which resulted from their predilection for two incompatible policies *vis-à-vis* Turkey, the desire, on the one hand, to increase Turkish affection for France and, on the other, to gain political and economic control of Turkey through the Ottoman Bank.[92] But it did little to extend Britain's 'slow rapprochement' with the Turks into the economic sphere, and thereby weaken Soviet influence. In retrospect, Clerk believed that the bondholders had made serious tactical errors by their insistence on full payment of the November coupon, and by their failure to send representatives to Angora to negotiate with the Turks after the publication of the Rist report.[93] There was nothing to be gained from declaring Turkey a defaulter, and there was a strong Turkish moral case for

repudiation or repayment of a diminished debt payment. Clerk had recently read Donald C. Blaisdell's *European Financial Control in the Ottoman Empire*, published the year before, to see 'what benefits Turkey got from the loans for which she now has to pay back millions'. He urged Oliphant at the Foreign Office to read it. To force Turkish repudiation only played into the hands of the Soviet Union. The bondholders had to avoid the 'useless policy of putting a pistol at Turkey's head'. If the contract was repudiated:

> the Bondholders can storm as much as they like and call the Turkish government every name under the sun, but, if they want to see the colour of any their (sic) money, they will eventually have to come hat in hand to Angora and beg for it!

A window of opportunity had opened in 1930 to enable Turkey to rejoin the liberal economic order. But it had quickly closed, confirming Turkish statesmen in their commitment to étatism.[94]

Moreover, the exercise in Turkish democracy launched by Mustafa Kemal in the autumn also came to grief. In November 1930, Fethi Bey's Liberal Republican People's Party dissolved itself in the aftermath of serious rioting, which greeted his arrival in Smyra in September. Fethi had focused his attacks upon the financial policy of the government. The democratic experiment was clearly incompatible with Turkish étatism. In his annual report for 1930 written in early 1931, Clerk concluded that 'the shadow of the leading-strings of the Quai d'Orsay' helped bring about its downfall. Francophobia was given further vent when Turkey was not invited to participate in the negotiations for a European Federal Union promoted by Aristide Briand. In December 1930, at the Turkish town of Menemen, there was an Islamic rising led by the Naqshibendi dervishes against the secularizing policies of the Turkish government. Mustafa Kemal suppressed it with particular ferocity. There was no avenue for legitimate protest within the Turkish state. The rising was a clear reflection of the frustration felt by elements of the Turkish population against the policies of the Turkish government, and the economic malaise that afflicted them.[95]

In October 1930, the Turkish government attended the Balkan conference at Athens. This was the product of a gradual détente, which began to prevail between Turkey and Greece throughout the year, and which led to the signing of a convention on 10 June, liquidating questions arising out of the application of the Treaty of Lausanne and the subject of the exchange of populations. Arising from this agreement was an invitation to Venizelos, the Greek Prime Minister, to visit Angora. This took place between 27 and 31 October, and resulted in the signing of a treaty of neutrality, a protocol on naval armaments and a commercial convention.[96] Clerk believed Tevfik Rüştü was genuinely committed to Balkan unity. He discounted any Turkish aspiration to join the dangerous alignment of a Russo-Italian bloc comprising Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria and Albania. But he was puzzled by Turkey's relationship with Italy. Whereas relations with the Soviet Union precluded any approbation of communism, Turkey seemed more pragmatic in its attitude towards Mussolini. Fascism not democracy was for the Turks 'the exemplar of the national State'. Nevertheless, they remained suspicious about Italian designs on the Levant. But it was 'the fear of French hegemony' that was a major influence on the direction of Turkish policy.[97] This was not intrinsically inimical to the interests of the

British Empire. One year later, Clerk could observe that Turkish policy was one of 'peace and friendship abroad,…and of rigid economy and personal sacrifice at home'. There had been no diminution of anti French hostility. 'Her tendency has been to side with the anti-French States, among which Turkey places Great Britain—a fact explaining in part her friendliness towards our country.'[98]

Clerk's analysis was confirmed in February 1931, when the Anglo-Turkish rapprochement took on a new complexion as the Turkish ambassador in London raised with Sir Robert Vansittart the possibility of Turkey joining the League of Nations with a semi-permanent seat on the Council. Europe was divided into two groups: the contents and the malcontents, specifically Italy, Germany and the Soviet Union. It was to avoid being driven towards this group by French policy that Turkey was approaching Great Britain, which was 'free from any tendency towards this uncomfortable and dangerous group system'. The British viewed the Turkish request with sympathy but could only urge the Turks to apply for membership and then seek election to the Council.[99] In April there was a further reaffirmation of Anglo-Turkish rapport with the visit of H.R.H.Princess Alice and the Earl of Athlone to Constantinople. In July, King Feisal of Iraq visited Angora. The latter visit was particularly significant. Feisal was 'astonished and impressed' by his conversations with Mustafa Kemal, who had emphasized his disappointment with the Russians, distrust of the French, and ambivalence towards the Italians. The Turkish leader had outlined what Sir George Clerk termed one of Mustafa Kemal's favourite political conceptions, 'namely, a close understanding, if not an actual alliance, between Turkey, Iraq, Persia, Afghanistan, and, one day, Syria, and possibly…the small Soviet republics to the north-east of Turkey'. The British attitude should be to view this bloc if it ever came into existence as a policy 'which makes for stability and peace in the Near East'. Clerk was in general agreement with the thrust of Turkish foreign policy, but was never entirely comfortable with the Turks. In more 'concrete questions' between Great Britain and Turkey, he told the Iraqi Prime Minister, Nuri Pasha, Turkey remained 'obstinate, tricky, unreasonable, and blindly nationalistic, though even then patience and sincerity does sometimes bring them to a more possible frame of mind'.[100]

In October 1931, Turkey's desire to be conceived as a pacific power was reinforced by its prominent role at the second Balkan conference held in Constantinople on 20–26 October. The Graeco-Turkish entente, which had been clearly such an important development in 1930, was further enhanced by a second visit of Venizelos to Constantinople in August 1931. But this paled into insignificance compared to the visit made by Ismet Inönü and Tevfik Rüştü to Athens between 3 and 6 October *en route* for Budapest. Moreover, it was clear that Turkey was prepared to act as a mediator between certain Balkan states, for example between Greece and Bulgaria, and both Greece and Turkey were instrumental in attempting to promote closer co-operation between the states of Southeastern Europe. There was not a great deal to show from the second Balkan conference. Despite some agreement on social and economic co-operation, there was acrimonious discussion on the issue of minorities between Yugoslavia and Albania and Bulgaria.[101] It was to the credit of Tevfik Rüştü and the Greek delegate Papanastassiou that the conference did not break up. Clerk observed that 'if Balkan union was ever to be achieved, it is Turkey and Greece that must be mainly instrumental in bringing it about'.

There was evidently a flurry of diplomatic activity in Turkey in October 1931. At the end of the month, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs Maxim Litvinov visited Angora ostensibly to join in the celebrations of Turkish national independence. Clerk described his reception in the capital as 'distinctly flat'. Evidently Litvinov was informed of Turkey's desire to join the League of Nations. Turkey was free to pursue its own course was the response. In his annual report for 1931, written early in 1932, Clerk observed: 'In short, Turkey has become impatient of Russia's leading strings, and is only awaiting a favourable opportunity to lengthen them until such time as she is in a position to cut herself completely free.' Anglo-Turkish relations remained cordial. The Turkish introduction of import quotas in November 1931 in response to the economic depression created friction, as did the Turkish opposition to the Islamic congress in Jerusalem in December.[102] Nevertheless, Tevfik Rüştü's volcanic response to the rumours in November that France was contemplating the offer of the throne of Syria to King Feisal of Iraq, suggested to Clerk that Turkish suspicion of French policy in Syria, or the policy, as the Turkish Foreign Minister saw it, of Berthelot and the French banks, left the British ambassador in no doubt of the vehemence with which the French government was still regarded in Angora.[103]

Throughout 1932 the Turkish government wrestled with the problem of economic depression and its impact on Westernization and modernization. Its policy was to avoid adverse trade balances through a policy of carefully rationed imports and control of exports. The Turks themselves believed that 'few countries were better fitted to weather the economic crisis'. Since 1926 Clerk had always held that Turkey would never contract a foreign loan on conditions that would imply 'any sort of control of its financial independence'. In early April, however, financial and economic difficulties became so acute, Clerk was informed, that the Turkish government wished to postpone payments to foreign contractors and were beginning to seek a foreign loan 'on almost any terms', a policy which seemed to reflect a further rift between Mustafa Kemal and the ultra-nationalist policy that had been pursued by Ismet Inönü.[104]

Later that month, Ismet Inönü and Tevfik Rüştü paid a visit to the Soviet Union, the first time in history that a Turkish prime minister had done so, which included a meeting with Stalin on 29 April in Moscow and their attendance at the May Day parade. On Ismet Inönü's return, a long-term credit of $8 million dollars had been secured without interest for the purchase of Soviet industrial equipment. On 21 May, both Turkish ministers set off for Rome to be received by Mussolini. In the course of this visit, the Turco-Italian treaty of 1928 was prolonged for a further five years and Italy agreed to advance Turkey a credit of 300 million Turkish lira, a loan which seemed to have been initiated on the authority of the Duce without the knowledge of the Italian Foreign Office or the Ministry of Finance. The nettle of a foreign loan had indeed been grasped.

In 1932, the Turkish government made a much more concerted effort to settle the Ottoman public debt question. This was a clear indication that the Turkish government was embarking on a renewed attempt to secure rapprochement with France. In October 1932, agreements were signed to settle both the Turkish and Syrian property rights issues, and the Adana to Nisibin railway question. These agreements seemed to pave the way for a further foreign loan, if necessary, in Paris. In order to maintain a balanced budget, the Turkish government increased taxes to offset the decrease in customs revenue. By the beginning of 1933, Clerk was forced to concede that Turkey had passed through the year

better than many industrialized and developed European countries. Railway construction was maintained and opened to traffic most notably between Samsun and Sivas and Kutahya and Balikesir. The Turkish people had responded to calls for thrift by increasing the volumes of deposits in bank accounts dramatically compared to 1921.

In July 1932, the Turkish government joined the League of Nations. Evidently the whole thrust of Turkish foreign policy in 1932 was to maintain the economic stability of the regime and maintain the course of Westernization without alienating Turkey's principal relationship with the Soviet Union. This was a very skilful achievement. Clerk continued as best he could to foster Anglo-Turkish rapprochement. His presentation to the Ghazi of the *Official History of the Dardanelles Campaign* was received with the enthusiastic approbation of the Turkish President, although its effect was partially eclipsed by Harold Armstrong's less than complimentary biography of Mustafa Kemal, *Grey Wolf*.[105]

Relations continued to blow 'hot and cold' in 1933. Turkey's entry into the League of Nations was an essential step in its progress towards Westernization. Turkey participated in the Disarmament Conference, which had opened at Geneva in February 1932. But they took considerable umbrage at the MacDonald plan because it allegedly understated Turkish aerial strength compared to Yugoslavia and Romania, and omitted Turkish armies from the list of armies of continental Europe, thus implicitly questioning Turkey's European credentials. The Turkish Foreign Ministry deeply resented the affront. The Ghazi was also incensed, telling the Iraqi minister in Angora that Turkey had been belittled by the convention. Tevfik Rüştü told James Morgan, the counsellor at Angora, on 18 March that 'ill-will' was discernible in the British delegation at Geneva. Such sentiments may have been a major factor in moving the Turkish government to the conclusion that the MacDonald plan could be used to justify the proposal for the remilitarization of the demilitarized Straits zones, thus repudiating the agreement signed at Lausanne in 1923. The British made belated attempts to soothe Turkish *amour propre*, which had proven again to be a catalyst of Turkish foreign policy, but rejected the request, which appeared to them to increase the danger of Turkish—Soviet co-operation and the value of a Turkish-Soviet alliance.[106]

On the more positive side, Turkey vehemently opposed Mussolini's Four Power Pact proposal of March 1933, and counselled strongly against the decision of Hitler's Germany to leave the League of Nations in October. At the World Economic Conference in London in June, the Turkish government was prepared to support such confidence-building measures as the establishment of an International Credit Bank, but seemed disappointed that she was unable to carry greater weight and influence among other delegations. Rapprochement with France continued and the Ottoman debt question was finally settled early in 1933. A series of pacts of friendship and non-aggression were concluded between Turkey, Romania, Greece and Yugoslavia. At the end of the year, the Turks approached the Foreign Office about a non-aggression pact, to include Great Britain, Persia, Iraq, the Soviet Union and Afghanistan.[107]

In his annual report for 1932, Clerk maintained that Turkey's future could not be 'a matter of indifference to Great Britain'.[108] In fact, Turkey was of vital strategic importance to the security of the British Empire, which only perhaps became properly understood by British policy-makers in April 1939, when Lord Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, sought to establish a barrier against Axis expansion in Eastern Europe.[109]

British policy towards Turkey remained passive during Clerk's embassy. Junior diplomats and Foreign Office officials with responsibility for Turkish affairs were reluctant to acknowledge the realities of Turkish Westernization. Diplomatic officials failed to abandon traditional nomenclature such as Smyrna, Constantinople and Angora even when the Turkish government had proclaimed official name changes, such as they did for Istanbul and Ankara in March 1930. In 1933, Clerk had to remind the Foreign Office that Angora *[sic]* not Constantinople was the official seat of Turkish government especially on any official publication.[110]

Turkish policies continued to evoke a diverse range of reactions from British officials, who could not divest themselves of their prejudices against the Turkish regime. There were constant assessments of the strength of the regime, and whether its collapse would herald anarchy and chaos. Too thin-skinned, too susceptible to xenophobia and *amour propre*, Turkey continued to exasperate British diplomats as Clerk's embassy drew to its close. 'Spoilt ignorant children' was Helm's assessment in response to Turkish harassment of the chaplain to the Evangelical Union Church of Pera and Dr Fisher of Robert College in September 1933.[111] Some yearned for the days of the Ottomans. In Izmir, Greig, the Consul-General, evidently felt more empathy for the *ancien régime* than the New Turkey, seeing little beyond bolshevism and atheism in the prevailing government. But as George Rendel of the Eastern Department pointed out in an astute minute, the disease of nationalism was hardly peculiar to Turkey, but also existed in the Soviet Union, and in fascist Italy and Nazi Germany 'where Mr Greig might even welcome their results!' The fact was, Rendel maintained, that prewar Islam in Turkey was 'far from implying a general philosophical & settled belief in God', and the new regime had achieved 'some remarkably fine practical results, & certainly galvanized a decaying nation into a new life which may eventually lead to a new civilization'.[112]

This was ultimately Sir George Clerk's verdict. Clerk's attitude towards the New Turkey softened gradually between 1926 and 1933. British officials found Kemalism exceedingly difficult to read. The Turkish leader could not compare to Stalin or Mussolini as a single-party dictator, but his impetuosity allowed no licence for complacency. In 1932 Clerk summed up the nature of the regime astutely: Kemal remained a dictator 'but a dictator who aims at making future autocrats and dictators impossible'.[113] Clerk believed that Turkey had a vital role to play in the Near East and the Balkans, and still carried great influence with public opinion in Afghanistan and India despite its abjuration of Islam. He impressed this strongly on Sir John Simon early in 1932 in support of his suggestion that the British Foreign Secretary consider a private visit to Turkey in the spring. But Simon showed little inclination to defer to his request.[114]

By the end of his mission in Turkey, Clerk displayed a greater acceptance of the mighty metamorphosis the new Republic was undergoing in the interwar period, and was worthy, in his view, of sympathy and consideration. In a 'frenzy' of Europeanization, it was willing to discard its Asiatic, Arabic and Persian heritage, and deep-seated inferiority complex, for the garb of European civilization. The country was 'conscious of growing strength and increased prestige among the nations' and her *'moral'* was good. The strength of her army made the Turkish state 'already inclined to arrogance in dealing with other countries, and encourages it to demand that it should not be left out of consideration in international affairs'. It had come out of the 'lean years' without a loss of strength and its parliament had been 'a valuable training ground' for its deputies, and even in the

absence of an official opposition, there were debates. Nevertheless, Clerk could never exorcise the 'dark side' of the picture. In their treatment of foreigners and foreign commercial and business interests, the Turks were 'mendacious, venal, overbearing to their inferiors as any of the old regime'. Ultra-chauvinist and swollen headed, their attitude in minor questions, proclaimed Sir George, remained characterized by 'obstruction, procrastination and chicanery'.[115]

The acceleration of Anglo-Turkish rapprochement was the salient feature of Clerk's embassy in Turkey between 1926 and 1933. A major reason for this rapprochement was Clerk's relationship with Mustafa Kemal. Clerk had always believed that it was essential for the British ambassador to spend more time in Angora. But a major obstacle had been the nature of the accommodation available in the new Turkish capital for an ambassador and his family. It is clear that Clerk spent a considerable amount of time during his embassy alone in Angora, and that Lady Clerk remained at Pera. Sir George's successor, Sir Percy Loraine, regarded the accommodation in Angora as entirely inadequate for himself and Lady Loraine and considered commuting by private plane. On the eve of Clerk's departure for Belgium, Oliphant, in a perhaps injudicious minute, described the accommodation as adequate only for a 'bachelor ambassador' and saluted Clerk as a 'hero' for making the best of it there. Whether Clerk's decision to spend more time in Angora was influenced by domestic circumstance is a matter of conjecture. But it had undoubted beneficial effects for British policy, because it placed the ambassador himself in closer proximity to Mustafa Kemal.[116]

In November 1932, he gave a fuller picture of the nature of the relationship he had established with Mustafa Kemal in a letter to Oliphant. He recounted the words the Ghazi had uttered to him at a dinner commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Republic in October 1932:

> I consider you my friend because you have understood my policy and have made it clear to your Government. It is very fortunate for the relations between the two countries that you came here as Ambassador. Had it been someone whom I did not like and who did not understand my policy, the situation would have been very different.

Clerk was under no illusions about the significance of these words. He told Oliphant:

> Now that is all very nice and very satisfactory so far as it goes, but you will see that the Gazi's appreciation is 'au fond' based on what he believes to be our understanding, and sympathy with, his general policy, rather than on his understanding of *our* policy. We must therefore be under no illusion that I have any direct influence over the Gazi and his policy. Where he and his Government are hesitating, I may perhaps sometimes move them to take one direction rather than another. For instance, I am pretty sure that, for better or for worse, they consider me as one of the chief factors in their joining the League of Nations. But what I cannot do is to impose my policy upon them and if ever we have to take a line which comes into conflict with Turkish policy, the Gazi's friendship would vanish overnight.[117]

This was a realistic and sober assessment. Nevertheless, the rapport between Clerk and Mustafa Kemal, established in Angora in the 1930s, sowed the seeds of that engagement between the two nations which led later to the Anglo-Turkish alliance of October 1939, and ultimately to that Turkish neutrality so vital to Great Britain in the dark days of 1941.

Anglo-Turkish *détente* evolved in many ways in despite of the views of the ambassador. Clerk could offer no encouragement to British capital to invest in Turkey. Nor could he divest himself of his distaste for the way the Turkish government harassed foreigners and foreign business. He had always been disturbed by the Turkish treatment of its minorities. He had been deeply incensed by Tevfik Rüştü's remarks at dinner in Angora in November 1926, that he intended to expel the Kurds to Persia and treat them like the Armenians.[118] His sympathy for Greek Christians and Jews emanated from the meritocratic belief that these minorities comprised the most industrious and enlightened elements in Turkish society, and who had been the great driving force of Turkish commercial and economic progress during the Ottoman Empire. In 1928, he had evidently considered an all-out attack on the Turkish government using the minorities' clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne. When sober voices in Angora and London urged restraint, Clerk wisely desisted.

The Anglo-Turkish rapprochement forged under Clerk was overwhelmingly political in complexion, and was in part due to a careful shift in Great Power rivalry. Turkish fear of Italian expansionism, her unease in the Soviet embrace, her antipathy to French economic aggrandizement, all helped to prompt a remarkable accommodation between Turkey and Great Britain. The year 1929 offered to be an even greater turning point with the prospect of a foreign loan and the appointment of an economic adviser. With the failure of this *démarche* in 1930, Anglo-Turkish entente resumed a more circumstantial course: Turkish entry to the League of Nations; Turkish promotion of Balkan unity; British withdrawal from and independence for Iraq. These achievements maintained the accommodation between the two countries, which had developed since 1926.

Sir George Clerk left Turkey on 1 October 1933 much to the chagrin of the Turkish government. Suritz, the Soviet ambassador, told James Morgan that Clerk through his patience and tact had 'worn down Turkish suspicion and soothed Turkish susceptibilities' so that 'friendship and confidence took the place of hostility and distrust'. The 'special position' won by Clerk was reflected in Mustafa Kemal's decision to take leave of Clerk in Constantinople rather than Angora. There was 'genuine regret at the loss of a personal and admired friend'.[119] Simon and the Foreign Office paid tribute to Clerk's achievements in Turkey since his arrival in 1926.[120]

As Clerk rested in Norfolk after his return from Turkey, he was asked to comment on the views of Kiamil Bey, the former Secretary General of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who had made bitter comments about the Turkish leadership and its corruption. Clerk was not prepared to view the situation in Turkey in such stark terms. He observed:

> People who have opinions of their own and express them are apt to be unpopular with the present Turkish régime, though some such do exist and remain unmolested. The situation is analogous to, though not so bad as, that in Italy or Germany. It must be remembered that in Turkey the cultural level is very low, and if the Gazi and Ismet tend to ride rough-shod over their fellow-countrymen it is largely because they are the only

> two who have the brains to drive the country forward. The Gazi may be arrogant—it's amazing that he isn't more so—but he is far from being a maniac, and Ismet may be fond of power as well as, what Kiamil doesn't say, very vindictive, but he *is* an honest and disinterested patriot working for what he believes to be the good of the country and conscious of his limitations. As for Tevfik Rüştü, you've seen the man: there's little or nothing that is great about him, but he has shown himself an intelligent executor of the Gazi's and Ismet's foreign policy.
>
> Again, there undoubtedly *is* much corruption, but in the present vicious circle in which Turkey lives…it is inevitable, but anyhow the evil is realized and serious efforts *are* made to end it. The fact is that the administration literally cannot afford to pay its functionaries, from Judges of the Supreme Court down to Customs guards a decent living wage, and until it can corruption will go on. Moreover, there is much inefficiency in the administration and corresponding waste, but as the employe's gain experience and above all courage to take responsibility for their acts, this will improve.

In conclusion, Clerk recognized that the Turkish people were excessively taxed, and that harshness and inequality were endemic, but he refused to concede that the inhabitants of the New Turkey were 'deliberately ground down and oppressed'.[121] Clerk's estimation of Atatürk and Ismet Inönü in 1933 had come to mirror in some ways the veneration with which he had held Masaryk and Beneš, the architects of the Czechoslovak state, in the 1920s. In August 1938, as the shadow of Hitler lengthened over Eastern Central Europe, Clerk wrote an article entitled 'Memories of Istanbul' for *The Times*. What had happened since the Great War in Turkey, was 'a miracle', he wrote on 9 August:

> Much has been lost that sentiment can properly regret, but what has been gained has been the revival of a nation by its own efforts, driven by the master-mind of a great man, until it now fitly takes its place, and a high one, among other peoples. A nation that is dependent on no one, that fears no one, that will work out its own destiny and has already established itself as one of the factors of peace in our disordered world.[122]

Turkey took its toll on the Clerks. They had passed seven years there. The court of Mustafa Kemal at Angora was not known for its outward graces of civilization. Its 'offensive drunkenness' and its 'bear fights' did nothing to enamour it to Sir George, who thanked the heavens for the absence of his wife in Constantinople. And yet there was a slow reformation in Turkish manners and morals, which made it perhaps more bearable to a less discerning eye.[123]

One of the highlights of the Clerks' existence during these years was the arrival of visitors. Sybil, Lady Colefax, the celebrated London hostess, Ethel Sands, the artist, the Sitwells were particularly welcome. These visits, Clerk told Lady Colefax, left him '*very* lonely & depressed'. He relied on friends to relieve the *ennui* of Constantinople and Angora. Books were a passion and a pleasure. Sybil Colefax sent him E.M.Forster's *Pharos and Pharillon* and Franklin F.Ellsworth's *The Band-wagon*. Trips to the Riviera

for some ‘modest gambling’ and London were highly prized, but the mountain forests of Romania and its Black Sea coast were also a welcome respite. In London, Clerk was a frequent visitor to the Colefax residence. ‘You know so well what a joy it is to me to have a glimpse of these lovely ladies and brilliant men,’ Sir George observed, ‘so long as I’m not asked to be either lovely or brilliant—and through my months of exile and hardship with “chers collègues” and “colléguesses” the memory of such an evening enables me to endure the most revolting forms of boredom.’ His attendance at *Porgy* in 1929 was an evening of such ‘pure delight’, he told Sybil Colefax, that it rivalled ‘the very “first nights” of the Russian ballet—*Thamar, L’Après-midi, Cygne, Spectre de la Rose* and so on, Pavlova and Nijinsky at their best—the original *“Yeomen of the Guard”* and *“Gondoliers”* and such like golden nights’.[124]

In October 1933, Sir George Clerk left Turkey to take up his new post as ambassador to Belgium. It was apparent to Clerk that this would be his final assignment.[125] It also seems clear that Clerk was less than enamoured of the prospect of Brussels, and that Sybil Colefax went to some lengths to convince him of its merits.[126] In 1933 and 1934, the British government had been forced to make a plethora of new diplomatic appointments following the retirement of a succession of senior diplomats, engendering newspaper speculation about the burdens of modern diplomacy.[127] Clerk had been carefully considered for Berlin on the retirement of Sir Horace Rumbold in June 1933. Rumbold favoured Clerk and was surprised and not entirely impressed when Clerk was passed over in favour of Sir Eric Phipps.[128]

Clerk’s brief sojourn in Belgium was marked by the tragic death of Albert I who died in a rock-climbing accident near Namur on 17 February. Clerk went to the palace at Laeken, the following morning. The King lay ‘on a small camp bed. The top of the head was heavily bandaged, but the features were extraordinarily composed and peaceful, and death had removed the traces of many years.’ It was a poignant moment. It must have cast Clerk back to an earlier moment thirty-two years before, when he was in attendance on Albert, then a young prince, at the Coronation of Edward VII. The death of the hero King was a heavy cross to bear. ‘Belgium could not have suffered a more cruel blow at this moment,’ Clerk remarked; internal division threatened the country, and the King had been ‘their sheet-anchor’ at this difficult hour.[129]

In retrospect, one can only wonder what would have been the effect on Clerk’s subsequent reputation had he been appointed ambassador to Hitler’s Germany. Rumbold was no friend of National Socialism. His endorsement of Clerk’s candidacy was a clear indication on his part that Clerk would be no apologist for Nazism, and would convey the right message to London. In fact, Clerk had become acutely aware of the malaise, which had begun to afflict the system of international affairs, well before the accession of Hitler to power in Berlin. Listening to Arthur Henderson’s speech at the World Disarmament Conference at Geneva early in February 1932 on his radio, Clerk had been struck by the ‘painful’ contrast between the high hopes, expressed by the former Foreign Secretary, and the reality of the telegrams pouring into the Foreign Office in previous weeks from ‘the Far East, Paris and Berlin, to say nothing of most of the South American republics’. He could not help feeling that Henderson was ‘oppressed by the grim antithesis of Geneva and the world outside’ and his speech, he told Simon, lacked ‘fire and real conviction’. In his letter Clerk expressed the hope that the Foreign Secretary had recovered from a recent illness, for Simon would need ‘every ounce of strength for the

work ahead'.[130] This was ironic. Clerk too would need his strength. For nothing in his career thus far had prepared him for his mission to France.

5
‘Ripe for a mighty enterprise’
France 1934–5

> Since our last talk the Paris succession continually recurs to my mind, and the more I think of your idea of Sir George Clerk the less I like it. I would agree at once that no one could possibly be such an ass as he looks; and I am prepared to exercise my imagination to the point of accepting for him a rating of B+. But this is by the standards of his own branch of our Service, for by those of the rest of our Service he would not be more than a B−.
>
> (Sir Warren Fisher to Vansittart on the prospective appointment of Clerk as ambassador to France in 1934, 8 January 1934)
>
> My only consolation is that every one, at home or abroad, who knows the situation thinks as I do and is as furious as I am. Outside our precious island we shall seem more incomprehensible than ever and our stock will fall correspondingly
>
> (Clerk to Eden on Eden’s failure to be appointed foreign secretary in June 1935, 8 June 1935)

Sir George Clerk was described by Sir Robert Vansittart in his memoirs as ‘one of those coming men who never quite arrive’.[1] This was a fitting comment. But in the spring of 1934, to his evident astonishment and delight, Clerk was appointed ambassador to France.[2] As he prepared to embark on his mission to Paris, the political parties put the best gloss they could on the appointment. The Liberal MP, Sir Archibald Sinclair, described him as ‘a man ripe for a mighty enterprise’. Lord Derby, the Conservative grandee, noted that it was not the first time that Clerk had gone to a country with difficult times ahead, but that Clerk had always come through with ‘flying colours’. Lord Stanhope observed on behalf of the British government that ‘England was sending…her best’ to France.[3]

In February 1934, Lord Tyrrell decided to retire from his position as ambassador in Paris on the grounds of ill health. At the Foreign Office, Vansittart considered his options. He had seen little to choose between Clerk and Phipps for the post in Berlin. But the latter had won by ‘a short head, a very fair verdict…and one accurately reflecting form’. With the strong backing of Tyrrell, Clerk was now considered for the Paris position. A complicating factor was that Phipps, who was Vansittart ‘s brother-in-law, also expressed an interest in the Paris embassy, and actively canvassed for the position.

Vansittart and Simon favoured Clerk's candidacy, as did the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald.[4] But there were other parties interested in the appointments process. On 8 January, Sir Warren Fisher, the head of the Civil Service, urged the transfer of Phipps back to Paris. It was imperative, he said, to apply selection 'pure and simple'.

> Since our last talk the Paris succession continually recurs to my mind, and the more I think of your idea of Sir George Clerk the less I like it. I would agree at once that no one could possibly be such an ass as he looks; and I am prepared to exercise my imagination to the point of accepting for him a rating of B+;. But this is by the standards of his own branch of our Service, for by those of the rest of our Service he would not be more than a B−;.
>
> It must be common ground to all that our Paris embassy is and will continue to be of the first importance; for if Europe is to be saved from a further conflagration, there must be confidence—I do not necessarily say an understanding—between England and France.[5]

Vansittart was not swayed by Fisher's *démarche*. Clerk's appointment to Paris would release the embassy in Brussels, and facilitate the problem of placing Sir Esmond Ovey, whose presence in England for the previous six months on half pay, on the grounds that he did not wish to serve in a 'distant post', had occasioned comment in parliament.[6] Fisher, a very powerful political influence in the 1930s, did not hold the Foreign Office in high regard, and apparently wanted to reform it, root-and-branch.[7] In a letter from Berlin to Sir Orme Sargent, the Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, Phipps lamented his own failure to secure Paris, and observed: 'G.C. will doubtless be a great success; but it must take many months of groping, since he has never served a day in Paris!'[8] It was in these somewhat inauspicious circumstances that Sir George Clerk, at the age of 59, after a lifetime of service in the Foreign Office, began his mission in Paris.

The Paris embassy was a daunting challenge for Clerk, and it is clear that circumstances did not render it a successful one. The Foreign Office had firmly stipulated that Lady Clerk should play the part of ambassadress to the full. She was alleged to be too eccentric to fill such a role. She suffered, according to Valentine Lawford, who served in the embassy in 1937, from a 'paralysing shyness' and a 'congenial horror of official functions'. Moreover, the Clerks were alleged by this time to be barely on speaking terms.[9]

Paris was not the most appropriate appointment for Sir George Clerk in 1934. Throughout the 1920s he had been preoccupied with the prevention of a French hegemony over Europe. Moreover, his greatest triumphs were in states in which foreign policy formulation was the preserve of a relatively narrow but benevolent decision-making élite, namely Masaryk and Beneš in Czechoslovakia, Mustafa Kemal and Ismet Inönü in Turkey. Nothing had prepared him for the political vicissitudes of France. In June 1934 he told the Anglo-American press association that he came as 'an ambassador for peace' in the guise of a D'Abernon. This was not entirely reassuring, Lord D'Abernon's predilection having been to strengthen Germany in order to curb a strong France.[10] What had transformed the landscape of Europe was the appointment of Adolf Hitler as German Chancellor in January 1933. This should have shattered the old

stereotypes of French power. Between 1932 and 1934 France had become the 'sick man' of Europe. There were six changes of ministry during this time; the French economy experienced unemployment and the collapse of trade, and its society was mired in the Stavisky scandal. The British government was eager to press its own agenda on the French. Clerk recognized this reality. At lunch with Geoffrey Dawson, the editor of *The Times*, the journalist A.L.Kennedy and others in April, he remarked that his predecessor Tyrrell had been 'first-rate at expounding the French view to the British Govt; what I have got to try to do is to explain the British view to the French Govt'. He added: '& now, you, gentlemen, tell me how I'm to do it.'[11]

Clerk's arrival in Paris coincided with internal and international crisis. On 17 April, the French government had issued a Note condemning the increase in German defence expenditure as a clear violation of the armaments provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, thus rendering continued negotiations impossible. This Note effectively brought to an end the hopes of disarmament, which had accompanied the launch of the Disarmament Conference in February 1932. Negotiations were still possible, but a German return to the League of Nations was necessary if any armaments convention was to be concluded. At Geneva on 30 May, the French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou re-emphasized that, in any search for world peace, French security not disarmament had to assume the first priority. There was an angry clash between Barthou and Simon. 'La guerre est la principale industrie de la Prusse,' spat Barthou, recalling the words of Mirabeau. Barthou was a minister in Gaston Doumergue's new government of national unity, which had replaced the Daladier Cabinet after the riots of 6 February. It was French policy that needed analysis.[12]

In the absence of private papers and diaries, it is difficult to assess Sir George Clerk's precise views on Nazi Germany and the German menace.[13] Nevertheless, Clerk was under no illusions about the gravity of the international situation. On 28 June, two days before Hitler unleashed the 'Night of the Long Knives' against the *Sturmabteilung* leadership, Clerk sent Vansittart a private letter recounting a conversation with the Czechoslovak ambassador, Stefan Osuský, a confidant both of Beneš and the Quai d'Orsay. In Germany, Osuský predicted, Hitler would come down on the side of the Reichswehr and the big industrialists, rather than what he termed the 'national communism of Goebbels'. War was inevitable whatever happened in Germany.[14] Clerk did not underestimate Osuský's cautionary words. He lunched with his old friend Bruce Lockhart and Bernard Bracken, the close friend of Winston Churchill, in October 1934. There was 'a good deal of talk about war, which G.R.C. thinks is quite possible,' Bruce Lockhart noted in his diary.[15]

Throughout the spring and summer of 1934, Barthou made every effort to strengthen the framework of French security. He attempted to shore up France's eastern alliances, visiting Warsaw and Prague in April. In June, with the aid of Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, he drafted a scheme for an East European pact or an Eastern Locarno consisting of a mutual assistance pact between Germany, Poland, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic states, together with a Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance operating within the framework of the Pact of Locarno and the Covenant of the League.[16] This Eastern Locarno arrangement was not meant to imply that Anglo-French entente was now less of a priority for France. Barthou went to great pains to reassure Clerk of this on the afternoon of 13 June. The successful conclusion of an

Eastern Locarno would be followed by a Mediterranean Locarno, in which it was essential that the British government play a part.[17]

On 20 June, Clerk sent the Foreign Office a cogent and clear analysis of the significance of the Barthou policy. The Doumergue Cabinet was first and foremost 'a Government of the Right' and its strong men were Tardieu, Marin and Barthou. Left-wing governments had insisted on linkage between security and disarmament. 'Security has now taken first place as the objective with disarmament a bad second.' French policy, according to the nationalist press, was 'strong and positive'. She was seeking 'to assume the initiative in Europe', and no longer willing to subordinate her policy to pressure from Great Britain, the United States and Italy. There was a greater air of unilateralism about French policy, which was strongly influenced by the Comité des Forges and the General Staff, especially General Weygand. France was fashioning a system of security that, 'if accepted by Germany, will enable disarmament again to be discussed. If not accepted by Germany, the system becomes automatically the best method of restraining Germany.'[18]

Faced with this new conviction and assertiveness in French policy, the British government tried to adjust. Barthou proceeded to London for major discussions with Simon on 9 and 10 July. The British gave their support to an Eastern Locarno. There was agreement that the conclusion of such a pact and Germany's participation in the system of reciprocal guarantees would afford the 'best ground' for the resumption of negotiations for an armaments convention, which would provide for the application of 'the principle of German equality of rights in a regime of security for all nations'. Resumption of negotiations for an armaments convention was not to be made a *sine qua non* of British support for an Eastern Locarno. Barthou would only admit that by the conclusion of an Eastern Locarno 'a better situation would arise in which to consider the rearmament of Germany'. Simon had, therefore, made a considerable concession to the French position at this meeting.[19]

However, Barthou's project was ultimately doomed to failure. Nazi Germany was not the type of regime to promote international trust. On 30 June 1934, on the eve of Barthou's London visit, Hitler carried out the 'Night of the Long Knives'. This was quickly followed in July by an abortive Nazi coup in Vienna, which led to the murder of the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss. On 30 July, the Conservative Party leader, Stanley Baldwin, warned the British people that 'when you think of the defence of England, you no longer think of the chalk cliffs of Dover; you think of the Rhine'.[20] In Paris this statement was regarded by the French press, in Clerk's words, as 'tantamount to an admission that England and France must stand or fall together'.[21] Eastern Locarno had the support of Czechoslovakia, the Baltic states and the Soviet Union, who entered the League of Nations in September. Mussolini's Italy, alarmed by events in Austria, also gave its approval. However, in September both the German and Polish governments, bound together by the Nazi—Polish non-aggression pact of January 1934, effectively rejected the French proposals. This was a defeat for Barthou, but also for Simon who had accepted an Eastern Pact as the best ground for the resumption of a disarmament convention.

On 9 October 1934, Croatian terrorists in Marseilles assassinated King Alexander of Yugoslavia and Louis Barthou. Pierre Laval became the new Foreign Minister four days later, but the Doumergue government was unable to withstand the Shockwaves of the assassination. It fell on 8 November and was replaced by a Cabinet led by Pierre-Etienne

Flandin. Barthou's tragic death found Sir George Clerk away on leave, and he returned to Paris on 10 October. The embassy attempted to assess the significance of Laval's appointment for the thrust of French policy as shaped by Barthou. Ronald Campbell, the Minister in Paris, saw Laval on 29 October. Laval's policy, whilst 'cautious and unsensational', would have a strong nationalist complexion; he would be 'peculiarly open' to the influence of his permanent officials, and he was 'genuinely imbued' with a desire to work with the British government. Doumergue had initially selected Laval, Campbell surmised, in preference to Flandin, because the latter 'might take too independent a line'. Finally, the ascendancy of Laval would strongly reflect the influence of Alexis Léger, the Secretary General of the Quai d'Orsay, and its permanent officials. Laval's views were already 'indistinguishable from them in so far as he has yet had time to form them,' pronounced Campbell.[22]

Clerk went on leave on 20 October, and he did not return until 7 November. His own assessment of Laval's policies came in the form of a private letter to Sargent, written on 5 December. Laval had made a statement of foreign policy to the Chamber of Deputies on 30 November. In general, Clerk deduced, observers were meant to understand that Laval's policy 'will not differ materially from that of his predecessor'.

> From the internal point of view the speech is designed to meet the growing criticism that M.Laval was relaxing the firm policy of M. Barthou which had found great favour with the country at large. M. Laval is essentially a realist and an opportunist, and he has adapted himself without difficulty to the change which the situation both at home and abroad has undergone since he was last in office. Whilst following the Barthou lines, M.Laval's policy will nonetheless be free alike of his predecessor's fulsomeness on the one hand and intransigence on the other. Without differing much in its main lines it will be more supple.[23]

In a later letter to Sargent, he described Laval's policy as 'different in manner than in matter from that of Barthou'.[24]

As the Paris embassy waited for French policy to crystallize, the British government was becoming more and more concerned about the magnitude and depth of German rearmament. In October, the British embassy in Berlin had been instructed to conduct conversations with their German counterparts on the assumption that Germany was violating the Treaty of Versailles, and intended to violate the clauses in Part V.[25]

In a memorandum written at the Foreign Office on 29 November, Simon assessed the implications of German rearmament for Anglo-French relations. Both the British and German governments had tacitly acknowledged German infractions of Versailles. By saying as much to the French, Simon believed, this had received official recognition in Paris as well. Consequently, it was 'a definite gain to have moved away from the unreality created by pretending or imagining that the Treaty of Versailles could, in this respect, be made a restraining influence on Germany'. Any legalization of German armaments would cause 'severe strain' in Anglo-French relations, but Simon discounted the objections. Britain's position resembled that of Abraham Lincoln's in 1858. The United States could not remain half slave and half free; Europe could not remain half free

and half bound in the issue of armaments. Simon discounted the risk that concessions on armaments would accelerate German demands for territorial revision.

> All these things will come in time no doubt, but I doubt whether we should really be hastening the pace by recognising the inevitable and getting such terms as we can while we recognise it. We followed the French for twelve years in holding on to reparations and no good came of it. It is the case of the Sibylline Books.

Simon wanted a comprehensive agreement with Germany: legalization of German armaments on condition of a German return to the League and to the Disarmament Conference. He dismissed French security objections and protestations that blackmailers should not reap the fruits of their evildoing. Such a line was 'disastrous'. There was simply no alternative to this policy other than an escalating arms race and even greater retribution in the future.[26]

Laval's new 'suppleness' came quickly to the fore in his reaction to the impending Saar plebiscite. An international force with British and Italian participation should carry out the policing of the Saar.[27] In London, the proposal exacerbated tensions within the Cabinet between Simon and Anthony Eden, the Minister of League of Nations Affairs. Simon's 'blow hot blow cold' diplomacy exasperated Eden, who regarded Simon as incompetent and irresolute, incapable of framing a coherent policy and acting upon it.[28] Eden went to his mentor Stanley Baldwin to win over the Cabinet and quash the argument that British public opinion would never sanction participation in an international force. On 5 December at the League Council, a force consisting of British, Italian, Swedish and Dutch contingents was authorized to supervise the plebiscite.[29]

Clerk reported the reaction in France: Anglo-Italian co-operation was viewed as an essential step towards a more general pacification; the French press saw the proposal as a vindication of the League of Nations and contrasted the 'wise and supple policy' of Laval with the 'categoric diplomacy' of Barthou.[30] The embassy was staunch in its support of Eden's *démarche*. They saw it as a major blow against the more isolationist tendencies within the Cabinet. Ronald Campbell praised it as 'a wonderful coup'. The British government 'will get more credit from it,' he told Eden, '—and rightly so—than from anything they have done for a long time. The French are so pleased they can hardly believe it.'[31] The Saar plebiscite was ultimately a propaganda victory for Hitler. But it removed a painful sore from the face of Franco-German relations and appeared to contribute markedly to a new spirit of *détente*, which was strengthened further by Laval who calmed the Yugoslavs at Geneva in the aftermath of the assassinations, thus exorcising any prospect of an anti-revisionist alliance of France and the Little Entente against alleged Italian and Hungarian complicity in the King's murder.[32] Laval had created a constructive first impression.

Simon now sought to capitalize on the new spirit infused into the international system to bring about a general settlement with Germany and to address the problem of German rearmament. He proposed to invite Flandin and Laval to London and instructed Clerk accordingly.[33] On 13 December, Clerk outlined in clear terms the general conception of policy Laval intended to pursue: an international declaration of Austrian integrity, rapprochement between Yugoslavia and Italy, and an Eastern Locarno. Laval would be

ready to discuss German rearmament only after the conclusion of an Eastern Locarno. Clerk was unequivocal about Laval's position. Laval believed that 'hitherto the cart had been put before the horse and that it had been useless to talk of disarmament before the several countries were sure of their security'. Flandin had mentioned 'something…about a visit to London'. He thought it 'inopportune'. Consequently Clerk made no mention of Simon's request.[34] This prompted Simon to consider a preliminary meeting with Flandin and Laval in Paris. Simon was adamant:

> M.Laval's conversation…creates the impression that the French are prepared to let the question of German re-armament drift and are hoping to get contributions out of Germany, such as adherence to the Eastern Pact, without paying the necessary price. This is fundamentally opposed to the view of His Majesty's Government because we consider it illusory, and we must not lend ourselves to mere postponement when the present situation offers an opportunity of doing something definite. Time will not mend matters. It will only make matters worse if we do not act.[35]

The Paris embassy did not relish the prospect of Simon's visit. He was to arrive in Paris on 22 December *en route* to Cannes.[36] On 16 and 17 December, the embassy despatched three letters to Sargent at the Foreign Office from Oliver Harvey, the First Secretary at the embassy, and Clerk himself. The letters were unequivocal statements of the principles guiding French policy. They focused in stark terms on the different policies pursued by Great Britain and France; they were an implicit criticism of the policy of Sir John Simon.

In his letter of 16 December, Harvey was deeply disturbed. He had been taken aback at the revival of the Flandin—Laval visit to London. The embassy thought the matter had been dropped until the government 'had evolved their own policy a little further'. The Simon visit troubled him, for 'if he comes with the idea of persuading the French Government "to pay the price" as it is put in the telegram, I fear the results will be absolutely nil'. Simon's attitude was unrealistic. 'Disarmament here without security is unthinkable,' said Harvey. France would prefer to see a continuation of an illegal German rearmament than accept rearmament without security guarantees; Herriot and Marin would resign and bring the government down rather than accept such a thing. Laval's policy differed only 'in manner rather than in substance' from Barthou. This policy was based on the assumption that the British government would not accept any further commitments themselves in continental Europe. 'We blessed the Barthou policy but refused to participate in it,' Harvey legitimately observed. If the Eastern Pact failed, France would probably turn to a bilateral agreement with the Soviet Union, which would be 'the worst possible prelude to any disarmament agreement'. Until French security concerns were addressed, France would not 'marcher' over disarmament. It was for the British government, Harvey insisted, to make a 'generous offer'. It was they who 'must pay the price'! The British offer to police the Saar had transformed the situation. Now, Harvey concluded, 'a really generous offer to accept further responsibilities for a collective system in Europe would transform this situation'. The offer had to be 'generous, effective and striking' or it would only make matters worse. 'It is no use trying to buy with 2/6 what costs 15/- or £1.'[37]

In a second letter to Sargent the same day, Harvey intimated that Clerk was 'in general agreement with my views but I think he may be unwilling to say so as much as I do'. Furthermore, Harvey added: 'I need not add that the chances of fruitful discussion wd. be much increased if the matter were handled by Eden instead of Simon.'[38]

On 17 December, Sir George Clerk submitted his own analysis. His letter drew heavily on Harvey's first letter to Sargent. Clerk had seen Flandin on 16 December, and had rubbed in the fact that since Italy and Poland were responding so tepidly to the Eastern Pact, disarmament discussions were unlikely to get underway in the near future. Flandin made no response. Clerk took the opportunity in his letter to Sargent to re-emphasize the points made by Harvey.

> Present French policy, laboured, unsatisfactory and slow as it seems to us, is based on the assumption that British policy in respect of further European commitments has not changed and will not change. If British policy changed, as it changed in the Saar, an entirely new situation would arise. But short of that, I fear we shall have the greatest difficulty in getting the French to alter either their methods or their tempo. After all their policy was evolved as a result of the breakdown in April; we blessed that policy in July; in French eyes it has not yet finally broken down and there has not yet been any fundamental change in the situation such as to justify them in discarding it.

There was no support in Paris for reopening the disarmament issue and virtual unanimity on French security.[39] The message sent by Harvey and Clerk was clear. Anglo-French relations were at an impasse. There could be no prospect of a more general *détente*, unless a new initiative came from the British government. To continue to force concessions from the French government over German rearmament simply would not work. The correspondence clearly illustrated the frustration felt by senior members of the embassy for the policies being pursued by Simon. The embassy preferred a change of leadership at the Foreign Office. Their sympathies lay with Eden.

At the Foreign Office, Sargent understood the differences that existed between the French and British positions over German rearmament. In a minute of 14 December, he envisaged making 'concrete inducements' to narrow the divergence of policy between Great Britain and France. But he was less sympathetic to the French position than Harvey may have supposed. The possibility of direct Anglo-German discussions might still 'frighten' the French into a common policy. Simon agreed. 'That's it we *cannot* drift,' he scribbled on the minute.[40] Vansittart also shared this view. The German government was likely to make a new approach to Great Britain and France following the Saar plebiscite. It was essential that agreement be achieved before then. This was likely to be the last opportunity of its kind. By the spring of 1935, 'Van' intimated, 'the last Sibylline book would have been burned'.[41] On the eve of the Simon visit to Paris, a Foreign Office memorandum carefully considered the French position in the light of the Clerk—Laval conversation and the Clerk despatches of 13 and 17 December. Its central conclusion was that, in the matter of German rearmament, France was 'not yet in what we should consider a wholly realistic frame of mind'.[42]

At the Quai d'Orsay in Paris on Saturday 22 December, Simon was insistent that the Allies not drift on German rearmament, and again raised the prospect of Anglo-French discussions in London. He noted that 'the National Government ought not to be regarded as so firmly established that it could disregard British public opinion'. Flandin and Laval capitulated. The position taken up on 17 April was no longer tenable. Laval would go to Rome to secure a Franco-Italian agreement over Austria. The negotiation of the Eastern Pact 'should be regarded as postponed to a later date, and should be taken up in combination with, and not before, discussion with Germany of agreement about armaments'. In accepting this doctrine of simultaneity, Laval had made a considerable concession to the British position. He had abandoned one of the major premises adhered to by Barthou. Simon 'thanked M.Laval warmly for the advance he had made'. This meeting effectively overrode the concerns about French security policy outlined by both Harvey and Clerk. It was the French government that was still inclined 'to pay the price'.[43]

In January 1935 Laval signed the Rome Accords with Mussolini. By this agreement Laval gained Italian support and consultation in the event of a German violation of the armaments clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, and staff talks for military action in the event of a German attack on either France or Austria. Further staff agreements were concluded between the air ministries and Generals Gamelin and Badoglio in June. In return, Mussolini obtained a statement of France's 'disinterest' in the economic sphere in Ethiopia and the participation of Italian capital in the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway. The accords became the source of great controversy. The Rome Accords clearly alienated permanent officials like Léger and Charles Corbin, the ambassador in London. In fact, Léger had threatened to resign on the eve of the Rome visit, but he did not. Léger suspected that Laval had given Mussolini some kind of silent or tacit consent for a 'free hand' in Ethiopia. The evidence is not entirely convincing. The issue may well have been left purposefully vague.[44] The accords offered France an illusion of security against future German aggression. But they also contained the seeds of a major international conflict, which created the conditions for rapprochement between Nazi Germany and fascist Italy.

Simon congratulated Laval on the Rome Accords when he met him in Geneva on 12 January. They were 'a bitter pill' for Germany, Laval observed. Further conversations would be conducted in London. It was essential 'not to build on sand'. Laval and Mussolini had both agreed in Rome: negotiation with Germany was the only viable policy.[45]

Simon now set out his own preconditions for the London conference. There could be no question of any discussion of Anglo-French-Belgian military consultations, he informed Clerk on 21 January, and the issue should not be raised. He dismissed Laval's concerns about press allegations that his views on German rearmament had changed. The attitude of the French was 'pusillanimous'. Their government should educate their public opinion 'not merely lie down before it'.[46] As the London conference approached, recrimination increased. Simon sent a draft formula for the conference to Clerk and urged him to impress it on the French ministers. The formula envisaged the abrogation of Part V of the Treaty of Versailles as part of a general settlement of armaments and security, entailing a German return to the League. If there was a positive response, Clerk should tell the French that the British government would publicly associate itself with the Rome

Accords, refusal to accept a unilateral abrogation of the armaments clauses of the Versailles treaty, and consultation with France and Italy if the independence of Austria was threatened. The draft formula excluded all mention of the Eastern Pact.[47] Clerk and Campbell saw Flandin and Laval on 26 January. The French ministers were intransigent: parliament and public opinion would never accept the abrogation of the Versailles clauses without German adherence to the Rome Accords and the Eastern Pact. They were 'pained but not surprised' by the veto on military conversations. It would simply make it all the more impossible for them to justify the draft formula to the French Parliament.[48] France was committed to seeking 'pacification by pacts', Clerk was told two days later. She would not encourage Germany 'a se désinteresser des pactes' by agreeing to disarmament discussions based on recognition of German rearmament. 'La paix sans la securité c'est la guerre,' said Laval.[49]

Simon was incredulous at the French rejection of the draft formula. Laval had completely misunderstood the British proposals. He trusted Clerk had corrected this erroneous impression.[50] Clerk denied that there had been any misunderstanding. Flandin and Laval had run ahead of public opinion and their Cabinet colleagues. They were

> scared by thoughts of publication of the formula and frightened of committing themselves in advance of their arrival in London to anything that looks like an admission of an abrogation of part five of the Treaty of Versailles even as part of a general settlement.[51]

As the conference loomed, there were rumours that Laval was not keeping the Quai d'Orsay abreast of British proposals. Vansittart made a personal appeal to Léger in the hope of avoiding failure.[52]

Anglo-French conversations were held in Downing Street on 1–3 February. The Anglo-French declaration of 3 February envisaged the abrogation of Part V of the Versailles settlement in return for a general settlement negotiated simultaneously whereby Germany would accept the Eastern and Central European Pacts, return to the League of Nations, join negotiations for an air pact and accept a new armaments convention.[53] The declaration opened up a wave of diplomatic initiatives. On 14 February, the German government held out the prospect of a Simon visit to Berlin.[54] The Cabinet decided to authorize such a visit for 7 March. There was deep unease in the Foreign Office about this. Simon was suffering from 'Beaconsfieldism'. 'Visions of "Peace with Honour" are apt to float before the eyes of English politicians when they think of Berlin,' Sargent tartly commented to Phipps. Moreover, Simon was too close to Lord Lothian, Lloyd George's former secretary, who had visited Hitler in January.[55] However, on 5 March, Hitler cancelled the visit on the grounds that a cold had rendered him unable to speak. But the real reason was more likely the impact of the British White Paper on Defence, which had been beefed up by Vansittart for publication the previous day.[56]

The German government now seized the diplomatic initiative. In an interview published in the *Daily Mail* on 11 March, Göring admitted to the existence of a German air force. On 16 March, Hitler announced the introduction of conscription thus unilaterally abrogating Part V of the Versailles treaty. The British Cabinet had decided to continue to authorize Simon's visit to Berlin as early as 6 March. Eden, who was to

accompany the Foreign Secretary, would go on to Warsaw and Moscow.[57] Simon's position had been considerably weakened by Hitler's initiatives. Laval took a grave view of the situation in Paris; the 'omens' were not propitious for Simon's visit to Berlin. The French Foreign minister envisaged his own *voyage de Moscou*. He urged the convention of an Anglo-French-Italian meeting. Ronald Campbell did not want Simon to labour under any illusions: Hitler had refused to participate in any Eastern Pact; there was no prospect of the French government negotiating an arms convention with Germany. In the French view, the German government was 'merely playing with us'. The abrogation of the armaments clauses of Versailles had created 'a new situation'. Any move towards an armaments convention would be equivalent to 'payment of blackmail', and might invite 'fresh excesses' such as the denunciation of the demilitarized zone in the Rhineland.[58]

By 19 March, the French internal situation had taken a turn for the worse. Laval's replacement by Herriot, Campbell conjectured, would spell the end of any general settlement and lead to the encirclement of Germany. Laval pleaded for an Anglo-French-Italian meeting in Paris on 22 March, three days before Simon and Eden's visit to Berlin. Campbell supported Laval's plea only 'because I fear consequences of his departure from the scene'. 'Responsible circles' regarded war as 'a certainty' in six months unless some kind of Anglo-French-Italian entente could be achieved.[59] It was agreed to send Eden to Paris. Laval told Clerk the following day that a further meeting should take place in northern Italy, so that Mussolini could attend.[60]

Eden met Laval and Suvich, the Italian Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in Paris on 23 March, and proceeded to Berlin where he and Simon held discussions with Hitler on 25 and 26 March. This Anglo-German meeting convinced Eden that any chance of a general settlement with the German chancellor was a chimera. Hitler offered the prospect of bilateral naval discussions, but was evasive on the Eastern Pact, the League of Nations, Austria, in fact all the component policies that would constitute a general settlement. Eden had been sent to Paris because Neville Chamberlain, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had persuaded Simon that for the foreign secretary to go would prejudice any chance of success in Berlin. Eden's contempt for Simon, his increasing uneasiness about Anglo-French relations, his disenchantment with Hitler who made an uglier impression on him than on a previous visit over a year earlier, plunged him into depression. He became convinced that collective security through the Covenant of the League of Nations was the only recourse. He proceeded on to Moscow without Simon. The Soviet Union had resumed its seat at the League of Nations in September 1934. Stalin was convinced that the international situation with its growing threat from Germany and Japan called for an international commitment to collective security. In Warsaw, Josef Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, was antipathetic to any Eastern Pact. In Prague, Eduard Beneš and Jan Masaryk were more supportive.[61]

As the Stresa conference between Great Britain, France and Italy approached, Sir George Clerk painted a convincing and clear picture for the British government of French security concerns. At Berlin, the German and British representatives had agreed to begin informal conversation on naval armaments. On 3 April, Clerk emphasized that any decision to begin such conversations before the Stresa conference would have a 'disastrous reaction' in Paris.[62] Some days earlier, Clerk had submitted a lengthy despatch tracing the course of Franco-Soviet rapprochement. He wanted Simon to be under no illusions about the thrust of French policy on the eve of the Stresa conference.

Clerk spelt out the French position in clear language. The rise of Hitler had transformed the relationship between France and the Soviet Union. ‘His assumption of supreme power, Germany’s withdrawal from the League and from the Disarmament Conference, the flagrant re-armament and military training, the Nazi persecution of Jews and Socialists combined to dismay almost every section of opinion in France.’ It had created new converts to Franco-Soviet rapprochement, which was no longer confined to commercial interests and Herriot’s *Cartel des Gauches*, but now included the French General Staff. France remained opposed to a military alliance, but it wanted to use the Soviet Union and dispense with Poland in the ‘collective system for restraining Germany’. Hitherto, French policy had been based on the establishment of a satellite system in Central Europe held together by a network of military alliances. Since 1932 this had been abandoned as the French government sought to establish ‘a non-exclusive collective system based on Geneva’. This new system was the Herriot-Boncour plan of security revived from the Geneva Protocol of 1924. It was into this framework that Barthou had endeavoured to fit Litvinov’s proposal for a military alliance in the spring of 1934 by insisting on Soviet membership of the League of Nations and participation in an Eastern Locarno. French public opinion was under no illusion in regard to ‘the value of Russian military assistance in the field’. The General Staff clearly recognized that the Soviet army, whilst able to conduct a defensive war, was unable to mount an offensive outside its borders. The principal value of Soviet rapprochement therefore was to prevent a new Rapallo. If the proposals for an Eastern Pact failed, Clerk was adamant that a Franco-Russian alliance would be signed. Clerk was inclined to accept Léger’s claim that his influence had prevented a Franco-Soviet alliance up to this point. But Laval’s decision to postpone his meeting with Litvinov until after Stresa may have owed itself in part ‘to his intention to clinch matters in Moscow if the result of the Stresa meeting appeared to justify him in doing so’. The moral of Clerk’s despatch was clear. Failure to recognize French concerns at Stresa would bring about Franco-Soviet alliance. The Berlin conversations had done nothing to banish this prospect.[63]

Clerk also gave an insight into the attitude likely to be adopted by the French government at Stresa. French public opinion was outwardly calm. But this was deceptive. ‘At no time since the war,’ Clerk perceived, ‘has there been anything comparable to the anxiety now prevailing in virtually all classes of the population.’ Although Hitler had abandoned his efforts to intimidate Europe through rearmament, he was in the tradition of *Mein Kampf* ‘deliberately, remorselessly, preparing a war of revenge’. Seduced by the possibility of an armaments agreement, France had neglected her own defence requirements. ‘There are to-day many responsible Frenchmen,’ Clerk observed, ‘not usually prone to scaremongering, who believe that we may wake up any morning to learn that a surprise attack has been launched overnight on whatever quarter is thought to be the most promising objective.’ Clerk added: ‘Whatever be the justification for this state of alarm, it exists.’ It had influenced the government in recent days to announce increased military measures to deal with the threat. The French government would inform their allies at Stresa that ‘the time for seeking a general settlement with Germany is passed’. Corbin had passed a summary of the Berlin conversations to his government. Laval would consequently ‘show no inclination at Stresa to seek any fresh basis for a general settlement with Germany’, and urge that no time be wasted on ‘so fruitless a quest’, and that they proceed at once ‘to organise security on a collective basis’. He would want to

know what actions would be taken in the event of an assault on Austria or a violation of the demilitarized zone, or a *coup de main* against Memel or Danzig. He would ask the British for a formal statement of the action they would take in the event of a violation of the demilitarized zone. He would embrace a policy of greater firmness, but he remained 'by personal inclination a strong partisan of a settlement on reasonable conditions. At the first sign of a possible basis of agreement he will be among the first of his countrymen to wish to explore it.'[64]

Simon did not take kindly to these despatches. He had his doubts about any French predilection for a Franco-Russian alliance. Corbin had called on Vansittart on 6 April. On collaboration with the Soviet Union, the ambassador 'clearly did not wish to be drawn too far in this direction if it could be avoided', Simon observed. 'This tends to dispose of the suggestion that the French have any hankering for a Russian alliance,' he concluded. Litvinov had said as much to Eden in Moscow.[65] Simon's view was not shared by his permanent officials. Sargent believed the alliance was inevitable. Vansittart agreed. There had to be a strong display of solidarity at Stresa. Collective security through the League of Nations was 'the real answer'.[66]

At the Stresa conference on 11 April, the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald emphasized that British ministers had come 'to demonstrate their solidarity of purpose' and to make it clear that Great Britain, France and Italy were agreed that Germany 'must not assume that she could resort with impunity to such actions and methods as those for which she had recently been responsible'. Simon and Eden had gone to Berlin, said MacDonald, to find out 'what was in Germany's mind', and in the hope that she could be brought into 'a peaceful reorganisation of Europe', and induced 'to give full and active and loyal support to the League'. The object of Stresa was to discuss 'ways and means'.[67] On 14 April, the Allies issued a joint resolution concerned with the issues raised in the Anglo-French Declaration of 3 February. The powers agreed to continue negotiations for an Eastern Pact and for an air pact in the west. The independence of Austria was reaffirmed and they recommended the negotiation of a Danubian Pact as suggested in the Rome Accords. They agreed to pursue a co-ordinated policy at the League of Nations concerning German violation of Versailles. They also agreed to continue to press for a limitation of armaments. An Anglo-Italian Declaration of 14 April reaffirmed existing commitments under the Locarno Pact. The Final Declaration of the conference announced the agreement of Great Britain, France and Italy to oppose any further unilateral abrogation of treaties protecting the peace of Europe. In the course of the conference, Laval announced that he would sign a mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union.[68]

The Stresa conference has been seen as a pivotal step in the movement to create a front against the threat of Nazi power. In reality, the unity forged at Stresa was more apparent than real. There was much Anglo-French friction. As the conference met, Italian troops were pouring into Somaliland in preparation for a major offensive against Ethiopia, and Sir Robert Vansittart informed both the French and Italian delegations that Britain was about to begin naval talks with Nazi Germany.[69] The fragility of the agreements was quickly exposed by a further series of events. On 2 May, the French government signed a Pact of Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union. This was an attempt to synthesize the old tradition of the Franco-Russian military alliance of 1892–4 with the realities of the new Europe of the League of Nations. The obligations assumed

under the pact were carefully couched within the framework of the Covenant of the League. On 16 May, a Czechoslovak-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance complemented the earlier agreement. On 18 June, Hitler got his own bilateral armaments agreement when Joachim von Ribbentrop signed the Anglo-German Naval Agreement in London. By this agreement Germany was allowed to build up her navy equal to 35 per cent of the combined navies of the British Empire. German submarine tonnage was allowed to be 45 per cent of the British total.

Such developments had a marked impact on the forces of the Right in France. The agreement was a colossal shock for the morale of French conservatism and delivered a shattering blow to the unity of the Stresa front. It would render any British effort to rally French support against any Italian violation of the Covenant in Ethiopia nugatory. On 7 June, Baldwin replaced MacDonald as Prime Minister and Simon became Home Secretary. Six months before, the Paris embassy had made clear their preference for Eden over Simon. Eden hungered for the Foreign Office. He believed it was his by right. Baldwin was inclined to play safe. He admitted Eden into the Cabinet but chose Sir Samuel Hoare.[70] In Paris, Clerk was incredulous. He wrote to Eden:

> My only consolation is that every one, at home or abroad, who knows the situation thinks as I do and is as furious as I am. Outside our precious island we shall seem more incomprehensible than ever and our stock will fall correspondingly.
>
> Well, there it is—anyway, you will I hope do *all* the journeying and thus be for foreigners the real Foreign Secretary—but I do feel very bitter about your not being the titular one as well. The one good thing is that your being a member of the Cabinet will add immensely to your weight in Geneva and foreign capitals.
>
> *Don't* answer—I just had to let off steam seeing the list in my Daily Mail at breakfast.[71]

The Anglo-German Naval Agreement created a storm of protest in France, only loosely connected to the fact that its signature coincided with the 120th anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. The agreement was the product of a complex series of circumstances. On the British side were a number of formative influences: pro-German sympathizers in the Conservative Party, who were intrinsically authoritarian in principle; members of the fighting services and a more ideological group who admired the Nazi impact on German society. But the real driving force behind the agreement were the Admiralty who were committed to the abandonment of the old system of ratios associated with the Washington Naval Conference of 1922 and who hoped to induce Germany to support British proposals to establish a new framework of naval limitation in the future, hence their eagerness to secure agreement. A further complicating factor was the minis-terial crisis and ministerial changes, which engulfed both France and Great Britain during the course of the negotiations. In Paris, the Flandin administration collapsed on 31 May. The Bouisson interim administration fell on 4 June, to be replaced three days later by a new Laval coalition, in which Laval assumed the position of Prime Minister, but maintained the Foreign Ministry as well. The decision in London to accept the German offer took place sometime between 4 and 5 June. Preoccupation with ministerial changes meant that

neither the British nor the French governments were able to focus properly on the diplomatic implications of the agreement. There was little recognition that the agreement could cause crisis.[72]

On 7 June, Sir Robert Craigie, the head of the American Department at the Foreign Office, sent Clerk a letter informing him that the French embassy in London had been informed of the impending agreement. Corbin had called to see him. Craigie stressed that the agreement meant French permanent superiority of 30 per cent over the German fleet. Corbin seemed to be 'reasonably satisfied with the explanations' and was going to place the matter 'in as favourable a light as possible' before the French Cabinet, Clerk was informed.[73]

Sir Robert Vansittart might have been expected to sound the diplomatic alarm in the Foreign Office. However, he seems to have tacitly acquiesced in the agreement, which might provide a stepping-stone to even more meaningful agreements.[74] In Berlin Phipps was a staunch proponent of the agreement. Despite his generally caustic despatches on the Nazi regime, Phipps believed in the possibility of Anglo-German agreement. He told Simon that not only Britain but also France and Italy should 'feel thankful for small mercies, and that we should not miss opportunities in the naval sphere, like we have done on land and in the air, owing to French shortsightedness'. There was growing unease about the integrity of Laval himself and his own commitment to Franco-German rapprochement and desire to undertake the *voyage de Berlin*. Advantage should be taken of Laval's position at the head of the French government, Phipps argued, 'and of his notorious desire to come to some reasonable understanding with Germany'.[75]

Clerk monitored French reaction in Paris to the impending agreement in London. Léger 'unburdened his heart with great frankness' on 15 June. The Stresa front had been 'torn to ribbons' by Hitler's so called '13 points' speech of 21 May and the 'Abyssinian imbroglio'. He viewed with 'the utmost anxiety the turn which the European situation is taking'. Hitler's speech was 'the cleverest attempt yet made to drive a wedge between Great Britain and France'. If his ruse succeeded and naval limitation without limitation of land armaments concluded, 'the French public would inevitably feel that it had been sacrificed on the altar of British egoism'. The growing crisis over Ethiopia was being exploited to weaken Mussolini's resolve over Austria. The French government had not yet responded officially to the prospect of naval agreement, but it would be 'unfavourable', intimated Léger. Clerk pressed him for more detail, but the French government had to consult with its naval authorities. No reply would be forthcoming until 17 June.[76]

The French press was becoming 'disconcerted' over the agreement, Clerk reported the following day, and Fernand de Brinon and other French conservatives were now urging their own Franco-German rapprochement.[77] Clerk saw Laval on 17 June. Léger had apparently not briefed him on their conversation of 15 June. Laval hoped to reply to the prospect of naval agreement the following day! He did not fault the naval ratio agreed between Britain and Germany or with the British desire for 'catching the German ball as it bounced', but little remained of the Anglo-French declaration of 3 February. Clerk defended British policy and their own 'faithfulness to the common cause', and hoped that Laval would prevail on the press to avoid polemics. Laval was unimpressed, and 'clearly moved from his usual serenity'.[78] On the evening of the publication of the agreement, Clerk and Campbell went to see Laval and Léger. The news was grim: Herriot had

mounted an assault against Laval in the Cabinet that day; vigorous criticism was anticipated from the Foreign Affairs Commission. Clerk observed:

> M.Laval (a man whose instinct is to reach agreement whenever and wherever he can get it) having only been brought round with some difficulty to collective policy of the Quai d'Orsay, is naturally prone to take exaggeratedly tragic view and he plainly feels let down.[79]

The British government was forced to ride out the storm. On 20 June, Eden was despatched to Paris in a clear attempt at damage limitation. The following day, Eden and Clerk had a series of difficult conversations with Laval, Léger and René Massigli at the Quai d'Orsay.[80] In London, Vansittart also attempted to repair the situation, especially in view of events in Ethiopia.[81] But there was also a feeling in other circles that the French government was largely grandstanding. Hoare regarded the French press reaction as a 'campaign'.[82] François Piétri, the Minister of Marine, was a particularly vocal critic of the agreement. Lord Derby told Clerk, on 2 July, that although Piétri was 'a little unhappy at the way it has been done, he thinks our agreement is a good thing—but that is between ourselves'. Derby had just returned from France with a posse of generals who had been touring the battlefields. Despite the general friendliness of the people, he sensed a feeling of 'soreness' that was 'not confined to the army and navy'. He had dined with a prominent Frenchman who had been 'quite bitter on the subject'. However, he thought it would 'all pass off'.[83]

This was wishful thinking. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement was a catastrophic blow to Anglo-French unity and a vindication of the diplomatic methods employed by Hitler since his accession to power in 1933. It came at the very moment when Anglo-French relations were being plunged into fresh crisis over Ethiopia.

6
The crisis of security

France 1935–7

> France is at present profoundly pacifist and will consent to nothing likely to endanger peace unless French interests are directly attacked.
>
> (Clerk to Hoare, 25 November 1935)

The immediate cause of the Ethiopian crisis was the conflict, which had broken out at the oasis of Walwal in the Ogaden province, between Ethiopian and Italian led-tribesmen on 5 December 1934.[1] In Geneva, some days later, Eden received an urgent telephone call from Massigli. He proceeded to the League building to hear an Ethiopian account of the incident. 'It smells bad to me, like Manchuria,' Massigli told him. They were joined by Laval. The French Foreign Minister appeared not to be acquainted with the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. He kept repeating it: 'A-bé-ba. Que c'est chic, ça. A-bé-ba.' It was an inauspicious beginning.[2]

Rumours of Italian military preparations against Ethiopia had begun well before the Walwal incident. There were even rumours suggesting that Mussolini had been given 'a free hand' for military conquest before the Rome Accords.[3] In Addis Ababa, the British Minister, Sir Sidney Barton, urged the British and French governments to support the independence of Ethiopia and withstand Italian aggression. But, in London, there was no support for this position.[4] On 25 February, Sir Robert Vansittart attempted to formulate a policy: Italy had to be dissuaded from a war of aggression against Ethiopia. She needed her hands free for 'graver matters in Europe'. Her actions might deal the League of Nations a deadly blow with a concomitant effect on British public opinion. But this had to be achieved gently, without the British government becoming the focus of opposition, a position all too likely given the apparent attitude of France, and without engendering Italo-German rapprochement.[5]

The Stresa conference offered an excellent opportunity to discover Mussolini's intentions. MacDonald and Simon assured a bedridden Eden that Mussolini would be 'confronted' on Ethiopia. Simon was taking Geoffrey Thompson, an Ethiopian expert, for that very task. But Ethiopia was never mentioned. An incredulous Eden blamed Simon.[6] But British and French ministers simply did not take Italian military preparations seriously. French diplomats were equally guilty. According to Léon Noël, Flandin's *Chef de Cabinet*, Alexis Léger and Paul Bargeton were contemptuous of Mussolini, fascism and Italians.[7] Vansittart was silent, deferring with unaccustomed deference to the prerogatives of the professional politicians.[8] On 23 April, he minuted: 'My attempts at warning were side-stepped at Stresa; but I did not get an opportunity with Mussolini alone.'[9]

It was not until 9 May that Sir John Simon instructed Sir George Clerk to discuss the Ethiopian question with the French government, with a view to a joint Anglo-French *démarche* in Rome against military action in East Africa. Clerk was to impress on the French government the need to prevail on Ethiopia:

> to follow a policy more in accordance with modern conditions by recognising Italian claims to take a fuller part in increasing the trade between Abyssinia and the outside world and in assisting in the development of the economic resources of the Abyssinian Empire.[10]

The French government gave clear indications that they wished to keep in step with the British. Bargeton, in the absence of Laval and Léger in Moscow, responded quickly to the British request.[11] At Geneva, Laval emphatically denied that he had given Mussolini any encouragement to military action during the Rome conversations in January, informing Eden that he thought Mussolini was 'mad'. Eden believed that only a strong display of Anglo-French unity would force Mussolini to moderate his policy, and in this he had strong support from Massigli, who endeavoured to impress on Laval the consequences of Mussolini's policy for the League of Nations and for the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente.[12] The permanent officials of the Quai d'Orsay were making a concerted effort to forge a common policy and pressure Laval into line. On 23 May, Léger told Clerk that if Mussolini committed the folly of forcing Great Britain and France to choose between him and the League of Nations, 'there could be no doubt which way the choice must lie. It was unthinkable that for Italy's sake we should destroy at one stroke the whole structure upon which the peace of Europe was based.'[13]

On 15 June, in a conversation with Clerk, Léger completely reversed his stance. Laval was in a 'delicate position' and had to be careful not to jeopardize the Rome agreements and permit the Danubian question to unravel. An Italian withdrawal from the League would threaten the League's survival, whereas it had lived down shocks outside Europe before. Clerk attributed Léger's volte-face to the growing support for Italy amongst public opinion in France and the paucity of sympathy for Ethiopia.[14] On 17 June, after a rather arid conversation with Laval, Clerk concluded that the French government was 'unable or unwilling to take any definite line in the Italo-Abyssinian imbroglio'.[15]

In May 1935, French public opinion, especially on the extreme Right, but also on the more moderate Right and Centre, viewed Mussolini as an essential bulwark against Nazi Germany. These forces were committed to an anti-German policy and were even prepared to accept the Franco-Soviet alliance as a guarantee against pan-Germanism. These right-wing forces now began to evince a growing sympathy for Mussolini's African aspirations, a deep antipathy to the League of Nations and to adopt a far more neo-pacifist attitude towards Italian aggression.[16] The origins of this transformation are difficult to trace, but there can be no doubt that a real catalyst was the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. The impact of this agreement can be clearly seen in the more positive attitude adopted by French permanent officials towards the Rome Accords, as shown by Clerk's interview with Léger above. This made the task of hammering out a common Anglo-French policy towards the Ethiopian crisis all the more difficult.

At the Foreign Office, Sir Robert Vansittart became more and more convinced that the growing crisis between Italy and Ethiopia could have catastrophic repercussions for any

attempt to forge a common front against Germany. In a minute of 8 June, he stated: 'The position is as plain as a pikestaff. Italy will have to be bought off—let us use and face ugly words—in some form or other, or Abyssinia will eventually perish,' There were long discussions between Eden, Vansittart and the new Foreign Secretary, Hoare.[17] Their outcome was the Zeila proposal, which Eden carried with him to Italy on 23 June, after his difficult meetings with Laval in Paris in the aftermath of the signing of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement.

In Rome, on 24 June, Eden outlined the proposal to Mussolini. It was proposed to cede the port of Zeila to Ethiopia with a corridor through British Somaliland in return for the cession by Ethiopia of the Ogaden to Italy. Mussolini rejected the offer. It was clearly understood in the Rome Accords that Italy was to have 'a free hand' in Ethiopia; France had 'disinterested' herself. When Eden emphasized his own understanding of the conversations, given to him in Geneva by Laval, that the 'free hand' applied only to economic matters, 'Signer Mussolini flung himself back in his chair with a gesture of incredulous astonishment.' Eden's Rome conversations confirmed the view that the Duce was fixed on war with Ethiopia, unless the Emperor could be induced to make major territorial concessions to Italy.[18]

Eden returned via Paris. He had not informed Laval of the Zeila proposal at the earlier meetings. Accompanied by William Strang, he met Laval and Léger at the Quai d'Orsay on 27 June. No representative from the Paris embassy was present at this meeting. The French Prime Minister and his Secretary General were deeply troubled. They had not been consulted on the Zeila proposal. Laval raised the prospect of an Italian protectorate over Ethiopia on the Moroccan model. In his memoirs Eden was left 'deeply uneasy' by Laval's lack of conviction over Ethiopia. He suspected that 'more had passed between the Duce and himself than Laval would admit'. He became convinced that Laval 'was playing both the British and Italian Governments along'.[19] He raised the issue of an air pact. Laval insisted that any air pact should be accompanied by an agreement on land armaments and reinforced by bilateral pacts of immediate assistance. Perhaps his memoirs are less than reliable on this point. His telegram to Hoare observed: 'Monsieur Laval's position here is undoubtedly very difficult. He has gone to the furthest lengths he can, even to the extent of endangering his position in order to meet us.' Further progress seemed impossible unless some concession was made towards his position.[20]

Clerk was now instructed to discover whether Laval had any proposals of his own to present to Rome. It was unlikely, Clerk averred, that Laval would support 'anything like pressure on Signor Mussolini'. He was not optimistic. It seemed clear that 'such faint hopes as he may have of a successful issue are based, like those of Mr. Micawber, on something turning up'. In a separate despatch, Clerk commented on the attitude of the French press, which contrasted the leniency with that Great Britain viewed German breaches of international treaties with their 'stiffness' towards Italy over Ethiopia.[21]

Throughout the early weeks of July, Sir George Clerk had the unenviable task of steering Laval away from his policy of 'neutralism'.[22] Laval was elusive and evasive. Attempts to secure his support for the convocation of a meeting at Rome under the Tripartite Agreement of 1906 bore little fruit. On 11 July, Sir Austen Chamberlain had advocated the need for strong British support for the Covenant of the League, which had silenced even the most right-wing Tories in the House of Commons. When finally, on 13 July, agreement was secured that a three-power meeting should be held, Laval observed

that such a meeting would be ‘useless’ unless the Great Powers went to it ‘prepared to help Italy to obtain legitimate satisfaction’, and to influence Addis Ababa accordingly.[23] The task was exacerbated by the lack of unanimity between Laval and his permanent officials. On 23 July, Léger told Clerk that the French government was still unequivocally committed to the League of Nations and would leave Mussolini under no misapprehension on that point. Clerk naïvely observed: ‘Above would seem to dispose of the belief that Monsieur Laval has given Signor Mussolini a complete free hand to wreak his will on Abyssinia.’[24] By the end of July, Laval appeared to view war between Italy and Ethiopia as almost inevitable. But on 31 July, Léger informed Eden that financial difficulties, Italian public opinion, the growth of Islamic feeling and international opinion would, in a month’s time, erase any prospect of war from Mussolini’s mind.[25]

In London, the British Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, fell back on the twin pillars of the League of Nations and negotiations with Italy.[26] The success of the former depended upon the degree to which the entente with France could be restored. The success of the latter depended on how big Mussolini’s appetite really was. When Hoare sent Clerk a memorandum answering criticisms of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, which was to be shown to the French government, Clerk appealed to Vansittart. The French ‘ont fait leur deuil’ of the naval agreement, said Clerk. In his view, ‘the wisest course was to let it rest at that’. Vansittart concurred that the issues embodied in the memorandum should be dealt with as they cropped up in subsequent discussions.[27]

At a meeting of the Council of the League on 2 August, Anglo-French pressure forced Italian assent to a three-power meeting under the Tripartite Agreement of 1906.[28] Clerk, Eden and Vansittart had a preliminary meeting with Laval in Paris on 14 August. There were only two alternatives, he was bluntly informed: a peaceful settlement within the Covenant or the application of the Covenant. Laval ‘clearly did not like these alternatives’. On 16 August a joint Anglo-French draft, which would have created a disguised Italian protectorate over Ethiopia under the auspices of the League, was presented for discussion. On 18 August, it was rejected by the Italian government.[29] Eden was staying at the British embassy with Clerk. Vansittart was at the Ritz. Eden and Clerk were deeply disturbed by the Italian rejection of the Anglo-French plan. When Geoffrey Thompson, a member of the Egyptian department, who evidently had little confidence in the proposals or the diplomats sent to convey them, came over to the embassy, he found Eden and Clerk ‘ensconced in arm-chairs, each with a cigar and a drink’. Thompson viewed the conference as a failure. It was clear that Mussolini dreamt of a war of conquest and a new Roman Empire. ‘Mussolini may be a fool, but he’s not a bloody fool,’ retorted Clerk, clearly irritated.[30]

If Mussolini was committed to conquest, the British government would have to consider whether to evoke article XVI of the Covenant against him. This was even more unenviable for Laval. Clerk attempted to bridge the British and French positions. In an important despatch of 22 August, he reminded the British government of the value of the Rome Accords for France ‘for which His Majesty’s Government by their steady pressure on both sides were largely responsible’. The rapprochement had been ‘extremely satisfactory’: Mussolini had moved into the anti-Nazi camp and had adopted ‘a most satisfactory attitude’ with regard to Austrian independence; he had begun to make serious efforts to reach agreement with the Little Entente *vis-à-vis* the Danubian Pact; the accords

had great military value, freeing fifteen divisions from the Franco-Italian frontier for the Franco-German frontier, 'a most valuable factor in the Années creuses'.

However, Clerk was convinced that if it came to a parting of the ways, France would stick by Great Britain. In his view, the Franco-Italian friendship was 'largely artificial' and '*au fond*, the two peoples dislike each other as much as ever'. The French position would of course be governed by national interests not international morality, and Laval would try to maintain his position 'until the last possible moment', but in the end his natural inclination for compromise would reconcile the Anglo-French-Italian viewpoints. But, Clerk observed, if Laval was coerced into supporting the implementation of the Covenant over Ethiopia, the British government ought to consider the prospect of applying economic sanctions against Germany, for example in the event of German aggression against Memel. There were press allegations in France of a double standard in British policy. British leniency towards Nazi Germany contrasted sharply with British wrath against Italy. Coercion might work, but only if Laval received 'satisfactory assurances that he will have the support of His Majesty's Government in resisting German encroachments on the territorial system established in Europe by the treaties such as will compensate him for the loss of Italian friendship'.[31] A further series of telegrams emphasized the opposition of French public opinion to economic sanctions.[32]

This did not play well with Hoare in London. On 22 August, the British Cabinet accepted the principle of implementing economic sanctions against Italy, but only if other powers did so. They resolved to keep in step with the French government, but should avoid 'any commitment which France was not equally prepared to assume'. Hoare explained the Cabinet's position to Clerk in a private and personal despatch of 24 August. He had held meetings with party leaders and prominent political figures including Lloyd George and Churchill. Clerk had been sent reports of these meetings as well as the conclusions of the Cabinet on 22 August. The general feeling of the country reflected through the Cabinet was one of 'determination to stick to the Covenant and of anxiety to keep out of war'. Hoare continued:

> You will say that these feelings are self-contradictory. At present at least the country believes that they can be reconciled. Most people are still convinced that if we stick to the Covenant and apply collective sanctions, Italy must give in… You and I know that the position is not as simple as this and that the presumptions that, firstly, there will be collective action including full collective action by the French, and, secondly, that economic sanctions will be effective are, to say the least, very bold and sanguine.

The government believed it essential to 'play out the League hand in September'. There would have to be public support for sanctions. If there were no collective basis for sanctions, because of a lack of French co-operation or the hostility of non-member states such as the United States, Germany and Japan, then sanctions would have to be abandoned. It was essential, however, that this should be seen to be a League decision and not the product of British pusillanimity. Clerk was 'to treat this letter as entirely between you and me'. He was being reined in. He was thanked for remaining in Paris, especially at a time when the embassy was undergoing construction work. Hoare was all

consideration: ‘All that I can say is that it is equally tiresome for Eric Drummond in Rome and for my poor self here.’[33]

The consensus of opinion contained in the despatches was overwhelming. Clerk would have to get at Laval at once. In his reply to Hoare, the ambassador abandoned the prescriptions he had put forward in his earlier despatch. He could not conceive of any British government at that time ‘being able to give such a blank cheque to France’. Therefore, Clerk added, ‘I consider that we must work on the lines laid down in your letter.’ He added ‘a personal note’. He was touched by Hoare’s reference to his enforced stay at Paris. ‘Please do not give it a thought, for I am perfectly happy if I can help you at all in this most difficult time by my presence here.’[34]

Clerk saw Laval on 27 August. He had just returned from the Auvergne and had not as yet framed a policy for the League Council meeting at Geneva. Clerk affirmed the British commitment to the Covenant of the League and British public opinion’s belief that if the League showed ‘a firm and united front, the Italian bluff would be called and war averted’. It was imperative, Laval was told, that both Britain and France accept the principle of collective responsibility at Geneva. The following day, Clerk reported that both Herriot and Paul-Boncour had added their support for the British position. Nevertheless, Clerk continued to maintain his doubts that Laval would live up to his obligations unless assured of the British government’s commitment to the collective application of sanctions, and definite assurance of support to France in the event of German aggression.[35]

On 2 September, Clerk, Eden and Vansittart had further negotiations at Paris with Laval and Léger. Could Eden give an assurance that Great Britain would show the same commitment to upholding the Covenant in Europe as she did in Africa, Laval asked. Eden could only go so far.

> If the Covenant was upheld in this instance and peace were in consequence preserved the authority of the League would be immensely strengthened and our own moral obligation to assist in supporting and enforcing the Covenant in the future would be correspondingly increased.

Laval was not reassured. Sanctions might lead inexorably to war and he doubted their efficacy against Italy. If they failed to work against Italy, Eden replied, they would never work against another country. Laval ‘received this expression of opinion gloomily but expressed no view on it’.[36] On the eve of Hoare’s great speech at Geneva, Corbin formally asked the British government whether, in the event of a German attack on Austria, they would adopt the same attitude towards sanctions as they were doing over Ethiopia.[37]

On 11 September, Sir Samuel Hoare addressed the Assembly of the League in Geneva. The speech, much to Hoare’s surprise, had a messianic effect on his audience. Its content had been influenced by the views of Neville Chamberlain and Vansittart. Hoare hoped to tempt Mussolini away from military aggression by the inclusion of predominantly economic proposals, which would allow some kind of free access to raw materials. But he also hoped to make ‘a revivalist appeal’ to the Assembly, which would put ‘new life into its crippled body’ and deter Mussolini ‘by a display of League fervour’. Hoare was ‘amazed’ at the reaction to his speech, but this was not because of the

passages about free access to raw materials, but because of its references to the need for 'the collective maintenance of the Covenant' and 'collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression'.[38]

The strategy pursued by Hoare and Eden was to place the emphasis on the deterrent effect of sanctions. Ethiopia was 'a test case of the efficacy of the Covenant'. If the League failed against Italy, it would most certainly fail against Germany.[39] Laval was sceptical. He feared Italo-German rapprochement. He refused to accept Eden's argument that 'if Mussolini could be shown that lawlessness did not pay, Hitler would take note'.[40]

Hoare's Geneva speech had a marked effect in France, where Herriot threatened resignation from Laval's coalition. But its real impact was on public opinion and especially right-wing public opinion, which now began to fragment into 'extreme', 'moderate' or even 'minority' positions over the crisis. This was clearly evident in the French press. Extreme right-wing newspapers swung behind Italy, emphasizing her value as a military ally, evincing contempt for the League of Nations and its 'unrealistic' principles, and rejecting moral condemnation of Italian imperialism as hypocrisy. In a despatch of 16 September, Clerk suspected corruption and Italian money behind the growing neo-pacifism and Anglophobia of French conservatism.[41] But there was clearly more to it than that, when even Pertinax in *L'Echo de Paris* was advised to water down his judgements.[42] Bribery there may have been, but as Clerk noted in his earlier despatch, it was erroneous to suppose 'that the Right and Centre would anyway be much more favourable to the British point of view'.

On 26 September, the British government finally answered the question posed by Corbin on 10 September. They referred the French government to Hoare's speech at Geneva and his particular reference to 'collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression'. The great question was whether this precluded assistance in the event of German military action in the Rhineland. On 24 September, the British Cabinet posed its own question to the French. What would France do in the event of an Italian attack upon Great Britain in the Mediterranean before article XVI of the Covenant came into effect? The French replied evasively on 5 October.[43] On 3 October, the Italian government had launched its attack on Ethiopia. On 7 October, article XVI of the Covenant was invoked against Italy. On 10 October, the Assembly of the League agreed to apply sanctions.

In Paris the security of the embassy was quickly reinforced. Police patrols were increased; plain-clothes detectives conducted surveillance. In *Gringoire* Henri Béraud's article: 'L'Angleterre doit—elle être réduite a l'esclavage?' plumbed new depths of Anglophobia.[44] On 14 October, Clerk was stunned by Laval's response to a British request for an assurance of French support in the event of an Italian attack on the British fleet in the Mediterranean, which was given with the 'reservation' that the increase in British forces in the Mediterranean went beyond the application of article XVI. Clerk requested the presence of Léger to avoid any misunderstanding. He could barely contain himself. The effect of this 'reservation' on the government and public opinion in Great Britain would be 'deplorable, indeed catastrophic'. When Laval raised an earlier proposal of an Italian mandate over Ethiopia, Clerk shot back. He could not see the League of Nations 'rewarding Italy for the act which the unanimous vote of the Council and the opinion of 53 nations had condemned'. Léger gave him strong support. He was 'even more vehement than I was myself, Clerk observed later.[45] On 16 October, Clerk returned to the charge. He read Laval a long telegram demanding an unqualified assurance of

military support in return for a British withdrawal of two battle cruisers from Gibraltar, consonant with a reduction of Italian forces in Libya. Failure to fulfil this condition, Clerk intimated would 'imperil Locarno itself. Laval 'took his head-washing extraordinarily well', Clerk later told Vansittart, and had been 'deeply moved that we should think he had been double crossing us'.[46] Nevertheless, Laval's vacillation had had effect. The British Cabinet ordered Eden to slow down the implementation of economic sanctions at Geneva and avoid the appearance of taking the lead. On 18 October, the French government finally gave the assurance of military support demanded four days earlier.[47]

Proposals for a territorial settlement now began to emanate from Italy. Maurice Peterson was despatched to Paris to assist Clerk in co-ordinating with the French.[48] Clerk had known Peterson from his days in Prague. He was now head of the newly formed Abyssinian Department at the Foreign Office, although he had never actually visited Ethiopia.[49] His arrival gave Clerk new hope. The atmosphere offered 'a real hope of solution'; a window existed to transfer the dispute 'from the field of battle to the green table'.[50] But time was short. A general election was due to take place in Britain on 14 November. On 2 November, the Co-ordinating Committee of the League of Nations had fixed 18 November as the date for the entry into force of economic and commercial sanctions. The election was a convincing victory for the Baldwin government. On 18 November, sanctions were imposed, although iron, steel, coal and oil were excluded. On 22 November, it was agreed that the League would consider the oil sanction on 29 November.[51]

Between late October and mid-December, Clerk became firmly convinced of two things: France would not fight against Italian aggression in Ethiopia on behalf of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and this was due less to the 'idiosyncrasies' or 'perverseness' of the egregious Laval, but more to 'the peculiar difficulties of the internal situation' in France; second, Mussolini would relish the opportunity to be extricated from the deep hole he had dug for himself by invading Ethiopia. This made the British ambassador a convinced proponent of the 'appeasement' of Mussolini and a strong advocate of what has become known as the Hoare-Laval pact.

The evolution of his views can be clearly seen. In an important despatch of 24 October, Clerk attributed the Anglophobia, which had emerged in the previous month, largely to the polarization of French politics between the extreme Right and the 'Front Commun'. The greater the embrace of the League of Nations by the Left and their leaders such as Herriot and Paul-Boncour, the greater the regard for fascist Italy and antipathy for the champion of the League, Great Britain, on the Right. This was exacerbated by another factor: the peasantry, the backbone of the Third Republic, could not be relied upon.

> Deputies from country constituencies are returning to Paris with the same story, that the peasants are determined never to fight again unless their country is directly attacked. The difficulties of the foreign situation make no appeal to them; all they ask is a market for their goods. France may be compared to a sick man, unable himself to diagnose his disease, but who is beginning to lose faith in the physicians who have so far prescribed for him.[52]

Clerk was convinced that France suffered from a deep-seated political paralysis. A Left cartel of radical socialists and socialists had dominated France between 1932 and 1934. This was in essence a radical government, since it was a canon of socialist doctrine not to accept office in a bourgeois government. In the aftermath of the Stavisky scandal of 1934, this cartel had been replaced by a coalition of parties of the National Union and the radical socialists, led by centre politicians such as Flandin and Laval, radical socialists being stampeded into coalition because of their fear of Colonel de La Rocque and the Croix de Feu. This was, in many ways, Clerk observed, an 'unnatural' majority and realizing the error of their ways, the radical socialists had conspired to overthrow both the Doumergue and Flandin ministries in November 1934 and May 1935. Instability in France was, therefore, attributable to the existence of this 'false majority', and the belief that 'the real majority is being kept from power'. Radicals and socialists were natural allies 'in opposition to the priest and the château'. This was the paralysis, but it was unlikely to be cured until the general election of 1936.[53]

Doubts about French reliability were reinforced by the deep sense of unease that was enveloping Sir Robert Vansittart, as he watched the crisis unfold from the Foreign Office in London. In Rome, Drummond warned that any rise in the cost of living attributable to sanctions would provoke a 'mad dog' act by the Italian dictator. Piétri, the French Minister of Marine, was convinced that France would stand aside, Italian sources alleged. Pironneau, the managing director of *L'Echo de Paris* and Clerk's old acquaintance Henry Wickham Steed, gave confirmation of this to Vansittart personally. Vansittart was beside himself. In a letter to Clerk of 18 November, he pronounced himself at the end of his tether on France. Fearing that London would 'write off France for keeps', 'Van' urged Clerk to make 'renewed efforts with the wiser and more solid remnants of our French friends' to avert the grim scenario that was fast overtaking both nations. This letter should be shown to the entire embassy staff; they should work as a team to repair the entente. In a letter to Hankey of 19 November, Vansittart was even more vehement. If the French government and its people lacked the nerve to face up to war with Italy, 'she would let us down even more heavily if this country were attacked by Germany alone'. This was a real possibility, Vansittart believed, 'unless there is some kind of settlement with Germany'.[54]

When the French ambassador in Berlin, André François-Poncet, offered his own assessment of Anglo-French relations and Laval's intentions to the Foreign Office on 19 November,[55] Sir George Clerk responded with his bleakest analysis yet of the state of public opinion in France. Whilst agreeing that Hoare's speech in September may have been perceived in France as 'an entirely new departure' towards collective security, standing in sharp contrast to 'our almost negative response during the period of the Disarmament Conference to any suggestion of automatic sanctions in connexion with a general convention', and acknowledging that the Anglo-German Naval Agreement had 'always been a mill-stone round our necks when we attempt to upbraid the French for their lack of solidarity', nonetheless Clerk unequivocally rejected the contention that there was a commitment to the Covenant and to close co-operation with Great Britain in France. The only 'sensible' Frenchmen to hold such views, Clerk observed, were 'the officials of the Quai d'Orsay, a certain number of prominent Left politicians such as Monsieur Herriot and Monsieur Léon Blum and a few journalists'. There was confusion about the purpose of the League, the French conception of which saw it as an instrument

‘devised primarily, if not uniquely, for the control of Germany’. There was a clear dichotomy between sanctions leading to war and the League’s mediatory function. He added:

> France is at present profoundly pacifist and will consent to nothing likely to endanger peace unless French interests are directly attacked. What it is almost impossible to get Frenchmen to understand is that they may lose British co-operation if France is only prepared to allow the League to work in this halting fashion. They cannot see that Italy as a treaty breaker is as heinous as Germany and they cannot understand why Great Britain and France should not continue to co-operate at Geneva and apply one standard to Germany and another to Italy. For against Germany alone would France now agree to 100% sanctions and that perhaps only if France herself were first attacked.

Nor was he convinced that the answer was to be found in alternative leadership. As he had told Vansittart in a letter of 3 October, Herriot would be ‘unable to do much more for us than Monsieur Laval’. He could not command a majority in the Chamber of Deputies, whereas Laval could, and he would oppose any direct approach to Germany.

> On the other hand, he would be loyal to us at Geneva; his policy would not be ‘the reverse of that policy of collective security and collaboration’; indeed he would seek…to reestablish that policy on the lines of your speech at Geneva which he regards as the belated response of Great Britain to his own attitude in 1924 when he and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald sponsored the Protocol of Geneva.

Clerk reiterated the view he had expressed earlier to Vansittart in a letter of 14 November, that Laval sincerely desired Franco-German rapprochement. Laval disliked ‘the atmosphere of Geneva’, and would prefer an agreement reached in Berlin.

> But he has never really forgiven us for the Anglo-German naval agreement and I would not put it past him…to embark on a secret separate negotiation which he would disclose to us afterwards, confident that we would accept it and consent to weave it into some more general arrangement. It would not mean deliberate treachery, but Monsieur Laval would not be able to resist the chance of what he would feel was simply getting a bit of his own back.

This despatch was greeted despondently in the Foreign Office. Sargent was incredulous that there was no public support for the League in France. He trusted that Clerk’s analysis was overdrawn. Vansittart disagreed; the despatch confirmed his worst fears; it made lamentable reading’. Eden was only slightly less pessimistic.

> France is clearly unreliable—to put it mildly—in part because she has not been led. In the hour of need, should it arise, she may fail us badly, or she may thus appreciate better the issues for her own ultimate security than she does to-day. Her history gives us some hope of the latter.[56]

The fate of Ethiopia now began to hinge on oil sanctions. Eden hoped that the oil weapon would force Mussolini to compromise. Vansittart was convinced that oil sanctions would lead to war between Great Britain and Italy. His view was shared by Hoare.[57] Laval summoned Clerk to see him on 23 November. He wanted British support for a postponement of oil sanctions by the League committee at their meeting on 29 November. Laval feared that an oil embargo would drive Mussolini into open war. The Duce would realize, as Clerk put it, that 'his Abyssinian adventure is doomed…and he may therefore choose to rouse the country against the archenemy, that is ourselves and to perish gloriously rather than submit'.[58] In Rome, it was still believed that an Italian attack upon Great Britain would provoke 'no material help of any kind' from France, and that any attempt to do so would provoke civil war.[59] Vansittart was adamant; Great Britain must not go it alone; he begged Eden to modify the 'oil paper' that he and Hoare were in the process of preparing for the Cabinet to discuss on 27 November.[60]

Clerk tried to cajole Laval away from benevolent neutrality. On 26 November, he was due to broadcast to the French nation. Clerk attempted to influence its content. Laval should include 'an unequivocal reminder of loyalty of France to her friendship and collaboration with Great Britain'. Clerk made headings for him, and Laval '*said* that he would work them up into his speech'.

He saw Laval again on 27 November. He was disappointed by the broadcast. The combination of 'warm sympathy' for Italy and 'tepid reminders' of the need for Anglo-French collaboration would increase British distrust of France. Clerk dismissed Laval's protestations. Mussolini's admission that oil sanctions would 'sterilise' his forces in Ethiopia was a clear indication of the deterrent effect of the oil sanction. Laval's 'kind words' to Italy would embolden the Italians, for the impression had been given that France could not be counted on. But Great Britain would respond, in the event of a 'mad dog' act, Clerk asserted, '*not* as Great Britain, but as a member of the League of Nations, against whom Mussolini would have declared war'. Did Mussolini understand that if he bombed a British ship, he would be going to war with 'the whole of the League of Nations, *including France*? Laval must banish the perception of benevolent neutrality in Rome, and state categorically that an Italian attack on Great Britain was 'an attack on the whole League, and therewith on France'. Laval was taken aback by the ambassador's onslaught. Laconically Clerk reported: 'M.Laval at once said that that he would see that this was done.' There were no illusions about what this meant. There would be 'sugared language' from Laval in Rome. Laval had asked to meet Hoare. Clerk had sent a private telegram on the subject to Vansittart.[61] This meeting with Laval on 27 November initiated the train of events that led to the Hoare—Laval pact.

Laval had succeeded in securing British support for postponing any consideration of the oil sanction until 12 December. Hoare was a sick man. It had been decided he should go to Switzerland for a holiday. *En route* he could call into Paris and speak to Laval. It was arranged that Vansittart should accompany him, and the British Cabinet approved this on 2 December. Hoare was meant to discover whether peace talks were feasible, and

whether there was any real prospect for a settlement, as well as the extension of military contacts with France. Hoare and Vansittart met Laval, Léger, St Quentin and Massigli at the Quai d'Orsay on 7 December. Clerk and Peterson were also present. The following day, Hoare and Laval drew up the recommendations that have become known as the Hoare—Laval pact. The terms of the agreement were that Ethiopia would cede Tigré in the north as well as territory in the east and southeast to Italy. She would also cede a large zone in the south and southwest to Italian economic development under the auspices of the League. In return, Ethiopia would receive either Assab or Zeila together with a corridor connecting the port to Ethiopian territory. On 9 December, both *L'Oeuvre* and *L'Echo de Paris* published the proposals. The source of the leak has focused on French permanent officials, such as Alexis Léger and Pierre Comert, the head of the press department of the Quai d' Orsay.[62] By October 1938, this was certainly Sir George Clerk's conclusion. He told the Conservative MP Sir Cuthbert Headlam that it was the officials of the Quai d'Orsay 'dying to get rid of Laval' who had 'let the cat out of the bag'.[63]

Political crisis now ensued. On 18 December, in the midst of a political storm of unprecedented magnitude, Hoare was asked to resign. British public opinion was incensed by his proposals. Nigel Law, a former Foreign Office official, commented on the response in the City of London. Businessmen were up in arms; the proposals were 'the most miserable document that has ever disgraced the signature of a British statesman'.[64] The Conservative government was now reaping the whirlwind. Hoare had raised expectations in his speech at the League, and Mussolini had violated the Covenant. The general election campaign in November echoed with the rhetoric of collective security and the inviolability of the Covenant. Now, instead of punishment for his violation, the aggressor was to be given his reward. In Paris, Laval too was on the rack. His government survived temporarily. But, in January 1936, the radical socialists withdrew from the government, and Laval resigned to be replaced not by Herriot but by Sarraut, who formed an interim government, provisional until a general election in the spring.[65] The great beneficiaries of the crisis, which emanated from the Hoare-Laval agreement, were Eden and Hitler. Eden benefited, as R.A.C.Parker has observed, 'simply through not being Hoare'.[66] On 22 December, he finally became the new British Foreign Secretary. Hitler benefited from the bifurcation in Anglo-French relations and the destruction of the Stresa front, which created new possibilities for Berlin.

The Hoare—Laval plan had imploded, but Clerk remained convinced of the merits of the negotiations. There are two private accounts of his views. In January 1936, he discussed the negotiations with the journalist, A.L. Kennedy, in Paris. Kennedy's diary recorded Clerk's remarks:

> 'They were too hurried' he said emphatically—one secy drawing up one part of the agreement with a French opposite number in one room, Peterson & another Frenchman in another room, & Peterson having to catch the 8.30 train. Hoare, moreover, tired to the point of exhaustion, & longing to get off to Switzerland.
>
> Moreover, the agreement was only for a *tentative basis* of negotiation. The whole thing was spoilt by a premature leak in Paris, & the equally premature endorsement by the Brit: Cabinet. The whole thing was a big

> argument against perambulatory diplomacy by Foreign Secretaries—esp: by tired For: Secretaries!…
>
> There were, however, (Sir George said) points that never came out & which *wd* have made the proposed agreement much more palatable to Haile Selassie—for instance, the famous 'Corridor for Camels' was written (by GD) without the knowledge that it was intended to link up the port of Zeila with the Djibuti railway, at least with a lorry service, but preferably with a branch railway line. To have allowed Abyssinia to build a parallel railway *wd* have bn contrary to the 1906 Anglo-Franco-Italian Agrt—betw those Agreements of pre-war diplomacy & the post-war ideas was all the difference between Saul of Tarsus & Paul the Apostle: & they *sd* have to be reconciled somehow. But Sir George thinks Mussolini *wd* be glad to be helped out. He seemed v. positive about this.[67]

In October 1938, Clerk apparently perceived the agreement as far more than 'tentative'. He was convinced the agreement had secured Italy's consent. In a conversation with Sir Cuthbert Headlam, he ruefully recollected how the proposal to partition Ethiopia had been approved first by Cerruti, then by Ciano and Mussolini, who gave their assent by telephone. Had Hoare not gone to Switzerland but returned to London, and had the agreement not been leaked, Clerk observed, 'the Ethiopian gent might still be an Emperor, Mussolini might not have been Germany's friend and all our troubles might have [been] spared us'.[68]

As the parliamentary debate in the House of Commons on the proposals approached, Clerk thought it imperative that the archives of the Foreign Office should contain a record of those factors that had influenced their emergence. The Hoare—Laval agreement was dictated, Clerk affirmed, by Great Britain's air and naval position in the Mediterranean and Egypt, and the political situation in France. Laval 'knew for certain' that Mussolini would fight if the oil embargo was implemented, and this message had been reinforced by 'many other reliable informants' and by the 'sober and reasoned reports' of Drummond in Rome. Clerk reaffirmed the significance of his own reports concerning the unreliability of France. He was convinced that 'France as a whole was determined not to go to war with Italy'. To force France to do otherwise would have been to destroy the Entente, thus risking the end of the League of Nations and even European civilization itself. Nevertheless, British pressure had induced the French government to military conversations, and French opinion, influenced by the Italian bombardment at Dessie early in December, had begun to turn towards the League. But this needed time to ferment. In the meanwhile, French military preparedness lacked conviction, and the French air force could not be deployed on the south coast before April. It was in these circumstances that the proposals had been formulated. Failure to draw the lines of a settlement would have meant 'a drifting apart of the French and ourselves, with ultimate consequences of the utmost gravity to Europe and civilisation, and with the immediate result of splitting the League of Nations and encouraging Signor Mussolini'.[69]

Robert J.Young has concluded that Clerk's analysis of French political and social conditions at this time might have invoked greater understanding in the Foreign Office of the French dilemma over Ethiopia.[70] This is a wise and generous observation. Clerk had never been the advocate for France in London that he had been for Czechoslovakia. But

he had always attempted to convey the interests and anxieties of France and the impact on the French psyche of British policy. In the course of the Ethiopian crisis, Clerk became convinced that France would never fight for the Covenant. This conclusion was based not on hysterical assessments of Laval's character emanating from the Foreign Office in London, or the almost pathological Francophobia emanating from Sir Robert Vansittart, but on a clear analysis of political conditions in France. But this should not pass without criticism. The Paris embassy was circumscribed in the depth of its knowledge of French society, and its political contacts were drawn from the Right and Centre and not from the Left.[71] Clerk lacked a sufficiently broad acquaintance with the different perspectives in French society to make the observations he offered in 1935. The Hoare—Laval pact was nothing like the panacea Clerk's dilettantish observations made it out to be; in fact, it was a diplomatic disaster of the first magnitude, which thrust no credit on any of its participants including Clerk. Eden for one never forgot the humiliation or the incompetence that led to it.[72]

In December 1935, Eden succeeded the discredited Hoare as Foreign Secretary. He was 38 years of age, tense, shy, and a prodigious worker, a tendency accentuated by the increasing breakdown at this time of his marriage. He was a vigorous and ambitious Foreign Secretary, the youngest incumbent since the eighteenth century. The Paris embassy had always favoured his candidacy over both Simon and Hoare. Clerk had his own connections with Eden. He was a very close friend of his sister, Elfrida Marjorie, Lady Brooke, a widow since the death of her husband, Guy Brooke, in 1928. Clerk's acquaintance with her extended from at least 1919. Eden's diary records Clerk's presence at her villa at Cap Ferrat in the south of France within weeks of his arrival in Paris. According to Eden's memoirs, it was due to Clerk's influence that Eden himself had decided to study Oriental Languages at Oxford at the end of the Great War.[73] Clerk was evidently on close terms with Eden, who often stayed at the embassy when he was in Paris. The fruits of this connection were quickly evident when Harvey became Eden's private secretary in January 1936, presumably with Clerk's blessing. However, Eden's own attitude towards his ambassador was not one of unreserved admiration. He had a 'long talk' with Clerk at the embassy in May 1934. He confided to his diary:

> He is no doubt a hard worker but I fear lacks subtlety & shrewdness of W.T. I found him often wrong on points of detail & his mind struck me as somewhat stiff. Nevertheless, he was very kind. Lady Clerk hardly a suitable Paris Embassy hostess.[74]

As Foreign Secretary, Eden succeeded, in his own words, to a 'wretchedly disordered heritage', characterized by international disunity at the League and Anglo-French crisis, the inevitable corollary of the Ethiopian imbroglio. His long-term aim was the restoration of a rapport between Great Britain, France and the United States. He was quick to show his mettle. When Warren Fisher informed him that all Foreign Office appointments had to be submitted to him for approval as head of the Civil Service, he went to Baldwin and refused to bend. He quickly reassured Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia of British naval support in the event of a violation of the Covenant by Mussolini in the Balkans. He saw the restoration of Anglo-French relations as an essential priority.[75] There was clear consensus between Eden and Clerk about Laval's successor. Clerk viewed the 'dark

horse' Georges Mandel as the most likely candidate, despite the 'disadvantages' of relative newness to high office and his Jewish background. Eden wanted a Mandel—Weygand combination, and was adamant in his rejection of Herriot.[76]

With the Great Powers in disarray over Ethiopia, opportunity existed for Hitler. Clerk was convinced that any ratification of the Franco-Soviet pact by the French government would occasion a German military reoccupation of the Rhineland. He informed Eden of his views as early as 3 January 1936. Clerk was also convinced that France would call upon Great Britain to implement the Treaty of Locarno. The Central Department of the Foreign Office was becoming uneasy about Hitler's intentions, but neither they nor Eden regarded reoccupation as 'imminent'.[77]

On 20 January, George V passed away at Sandringham. On 22 January, Laval fell from power in Paris to be replaced as Foreign Minister by Flandin. Eden saw him in London five days later. Flandin suspected some German action in the demilitarized zone. The existence of the zone was incompatible with any German aggressive action in Central Europe, for example Czechoslovakia. Eden reacted defensively. Any attitude that the French government adopted was a matter for them. What did Eden think might be the impact of the impending ratification of the Franco-Soviet pact on the German government? Would it have a bad effect? Eden refused to be drawn on issues that would have to be decided by France herself.[78] On 7 February, Clerk asked Flandin about the likely reaction of France to a German attack on Austrian independence and a German 'infringement' of the demilitarized zone. This was a 'personal' question between Clerk and Flandin; first, Italy had to be rescued from the 'Abyssinian muddle', Clerk was informed; second, France would regard any violation of the demilitarized zone as a *'casus foederis'*, and it was essential to know where the British government stood.[79]

On 13 February, Eden warned Clerk against raising this issue again, and reminded him of his statement to Flandin at the time of the Royal Funeral. The zone was primarily a matter of security for Belgium and France, and it was for them to decide what their attitude was to be to it.

> You, I feel sure, approached the matter in like manner when you put your question to M.Flandin. But even so, I consider that the initiative ought to come from the French side, and not from ours, and I hope you will therefore avoid raising this question, even unofficially, with M. Flandin—or the Quai d'Orsay.

Eden wondered what was meant by Flandin's reference to *'casus foederis'*. If the meaning was unclear, the matter should be left alone.[80] On 14 February, Eden issued a memorandum on the demilitarized zone to guide a Cabinet committee on Germany headed by the Prime Minister. Three days later, Clerk wrote to Sargent at the Foreign Office. He feared the form of the telegram sent to Eden had given it 'an importance which it did not deserve'. It was 'merely a record of two casual and expressedly private questions which I put to Flandin as I was leaving'. Clerk did not press him for a more precise definition of his expression of the phrase *'casus foederis'*. He took it to mean Flandin's statement to the commission of Foreign Affairs, when asked how the French government would respond in the event of the German construction of fortifications in the zone. Flandin had said: 'La France ferait connaître sa these: "La remilitarisation de la

zone du Rhin, interdite par les traités, ne peut être admise sous aucun prétexte et elle consulterait immédiatement les autres puissances du traité de Locarno."' Clerk was in agreement that the matter 'should be left as it is'.[81]

This episode further shook Eden's confidence in his ambassador. Clerk had acted injudiciously. Eden was in the process of assessing the effectiveness of his permanent officials. He had big fish to fry. Vansittart's future as permanent under-secretary was under serious discussion after the debacle of the Hoare-Laval agreement, and although Eden apparently acquiesced in his retention in January 1936, he made a further attempt to remove him with Baldwin's support late in 1936 and early in 1937. The Paris embassy was a suitable consolation prize.[82]

At the end of February, Clerk sent Eden a record of an interview given by Hitler in Berlin to Bertrand Jouvenel of the *Paris-Midi* in which the German Führer stressed the pacifism that animated his relationship towards France.[83] Just over a week later, on 7 March 1936, German forces re-entered the Rhineland demilitarized zone thus effectively overthrowing the Versailles treaty system in the west.

Hitler's reoccupation of the Rhineland was also a flagrant violation of the Locarno agreement, which had been freely negotiated by Germany in 1925. Clerk got to see Flandin in the late afternoon of 7 March. The French government was not going to take up an isolated position, but act in concert with the Locarno Powers in Paris before bringing the matter before the Council of the League in Geneva. It was thinking of asking the Council of the League to condemn German actions in terms used in April 1935 to condemn German rearmament. France had asked Belgium to join her in communicating the violation to the Council of the League. Eden's telegram outlining new German proposals accompanying the violation arrived in the course of the interview. The French government was not opposed to negotiation with Germany, but they had little confidence in her word and could not negotiate under the denunciation of Locarno and the loss of French security.[84] In his memoirs, Eden described the French response as 'temperate'. Clerk's report guided Eden's views, which he drew up in a memorandum of Sunday, 8 March. It was approved by Vansittart and circulated to the Cabinet, the following morning. After representations by Corbin, Eden agreed to attend a meeting of the Locarno Powers in Paris on Tuesday, 10 March. Eden and Halifax arrived in Paris on the Monday evening.[85] Clerk's relationship with Eden had already been shaken by the injudiciousness of his earlier interview with Flandin on 7 February. It was now further shaken. Robert Bruce Lockhart heard the story from Rex Leeper. His diary recorded the incident:

> His time will be up in April. He will not be prolonged. Eden is angry with him—in spite of George's relationship with his sister. When he came to Paris after March 7th, saw George, asked him what French were going to say. George turned to one of his secretaries: 'Peake, I believe there was something in the *Echo de Paris* wasn't there?' Eden was furious. General view is that G.R.C. has become lazy and doesn't care.[86]

The exact nature of the relationship between Sir George Clerk and Marjorie, Eden's sister, is difficult to gauge. Nor is it perhaps the historian's prerogative to pursue the nature of this intimacy. However, the relationship may not have been comfortable for

Eden. There can be no doubt that Clerk's marriage, like Eden's, was under some strain at this time. The Clerks continued to live separate lives in the embassy in Paris as they had in Turkey. Lady Clerk was deeply interested in painting and sculpture. Valentine Lawford, who maintained a friendship that was 'close and enduring' with her, despite only taking up his position as third secretary in the early months of 1937, described her as *'sui generis'*.

> She was reliably reported to paint strange pictures of theatres and circuses and still stranger portraits. She was admitted (though with an understanding look) to be an accomplished sculptress of savages and reptiles. She sometimes wrote music and poetry and plays; and one had no difficulty in imagining her at work on her manuscript, in a converted servant's bedroom dark with oriental draperies, heavy with incense and stiff with bronzes. Her gift of healing was recognised by some of the best-known doctors in France. Often it was said, she would return to the Embassy in the evening from the bedside of a concierge who was suffering from hallucinations…. On such occasions she would appear to be physically exhausted by her own supernatural efforts; but early the following morning, before the domestic staff were up, she would be far off in her studio on the Left Bank, hacking away at a great piece of stone, *en taille directe*.

The second floor of the embassy was turned into her studio. Chagall was a frequent visitor, much to the consternation of Sir George. John Mallet, who had been Lord Tyrrell's private secretary, acted as a go-between between the couple. Clerk's appointment to Paris was a fortuitous one, since Marjorie Eden had a villa at Cap Ferrat. Neither Cynthia Gladwyn's humorous caricature of the Paris embassy or Valentine Lawford's self-indulgent memoir sheds any light on their relationship. Sir George was said to inhabit 'a dashing world of lovely women in lovely clothes', and love affairs never deeply passionate'.[87]

The French reaction to the Rhineland crisis was far from clear. At the Paris meeting of the Locarno Powers on 10 March, Flandin was far less temperate. Eden was quite taken aback at the gravity of the economic, financial and military sanctions that he proposed. The British reaction to the crisis was to negotiate. British public opinion showed no appetite for a conflict with Germany and was animated by a Francophobia, moulded in part by the Ethiopian crisis.[88] In a Cabinet meeting on 11 March, Baldwin deprecated the French attitude. It would unleash a war against Germany, which would redound only to the advantage of the Soviets.[89] The Locarno Powers repaired to London on 12 March. Flandin was more flexible but enigmatic. He now proposed a German withdrawal of military forces from the Rhineland pending negotiations, which would recognize German military reoccupation over the zone. But this offer or 'quasi-promise' had to be accompanied by immediate Anglo-French military conversations. The Sarraut government's failure to speak with one voice clearly unnerved the British.[90] In Paris Clerk warned Eden that economic and military sanctions were still being considered. Petibon, General Gamelin's aide, had assured him that Hitler 'would not get away with it'. British intelligence believed that France held a marked superiority over Germany in

frontier forces.[91] Gamelin raised the implications for British security in the event that reoccupation of the Rhineland was followed by refortification. A German thrust into Holland and Belgium would leave Great Britain exposed to direct air and submarine attack. But the greatest danger from the British perspective was that France might yet gamble on a military response to German aggression.[92] On 15 March, the French government rejected the Belgian draft proposal. Flandin would prepare a 'personal document' of a more pragmatic nature to meet British concerns. The Council of the League met in London on 16 March. In Paris, the Quai d'Orsay was intransigent. Léger insisted that the Locarno Powers embrace a financial sanction as evidence of their will to resist aggression. He ended his conversation with Clerk with the words he had already used to Massigli: 'C'est l'heure de Joffre, où on ne peut plus reculer.'[93]

On 17 March, Flandin, deeply depressed, pronounced his mission to London to be a failure. The London meeting had been a disaster for the League of Nations and Anglo-French relations. Laval and Daladier would reach a Franco-German agreement without Great Britain. Joseph Caillaux, the powerful President of the Finance Committee of the Senate, had telephoned him that morning to abandon any further reliance on the British. Eden requested a comprehensive report from Clerk 'stating specifically—and quoting the sources on which you rely—how far you consider this appreciation to be warranted'.[94] Clerk replied the following day. The policy of the Sarraut government had outrun public opinion. Despite a stiffening of public opinion in the previous two days, Clerk had been struck by the moderation of the press and the absence of violent polemic. Nevertheless, there was a clear perception of a British 'wriggle out' of its obligations under the Locarno treaties. The French people had no desire for war with Germany, and would even make the concession of further negotiations, if this was offset by 'some guarantee of security, in the shape of a formal re-affirmation of the Locarno guarantees, a reconstruction of the Stresa front, or of course a defensive alliance between the Western Powers'. The return of Laval to power would exacerbate Anglo-French relations. 'If we have been unable to offer France any substitute for Locarno, the effect on Anglo-French relations may then be disastrous.'[95]

On 19 March, Clerk saw Sarraut. The French Prime Minister addressed Clerk as 'a loyal friend' before launching into 'a long, sad, and impassioned discourse' on the British retreat from its Locarno obligations towards a position of mediation between France and Germany. Sarraut had been depressed by Flandin's account of the negotiations of the previous days in London. He could create a sense of public euphoria simply by pronouncing that 'Italy is our friend, and with her we will talk directly with the Führer.' He prayed to God that he would not have to do so, 'but 'events were moving in that direction'. Clerk was panicked by the Prime Minister's words, which were 'a reflection of the feeling in France, which is intensifying with every hour that passes'. His despatch reiterated the warning he had conveyed the previous day.

Flandin proceeded to see Baldwin on 19 March to make a final request for at least British moral support for a 'police operation' in the Rhineland. He was encouraged to do so by Ralph Wigram, the head of the Central Department, and Winston Churchill. Baldwin was intransigent. Nevertheless, Flandin did not return to Paris empty handed that evening. On that same day, the British committed themselves to tripartite military conversations with their French and Belgian allies for the first time since 1919. Flandin had played his hand well. The French government lacked the political will to confront

Hitler militarily over the Rhineland. But by threatening to do so, they had embarrassed their British ally sufficiently to gain the promise of immediate military assistance from the British government to France and Belgium. A continental commitment had been secured. It was the British who on this occasion had been forced to 'pay the price'.

Clerk's despatches were evoking mixed reviews in the Foreign Office. Eden, who was less of a friend to France than his memoirs suggest, deprecated Clerk's failure to react to Sarraut's soliloquy. Clerk's analysis of public opinion in France was displaying an alarming inconsistency, not lost on Central Department officials.[96] Clerk hoped to be renewed at Paris, as his retirement approached. The Anglo-French *détente* of March 1936 was a tangible symbol of his efforts. But as the glimmer of a new spring entered Anglo-French relations in the aftermath of the Rhineland crisis, his position at Paris was becoming more tenuous than ever. The skies outside remained unrelentingly dark. The reoccupation of the Rhineland was a *fait accompli*. In Ethiopia, resistance to Italian aggression was collapsing, and Addis Ababa was taken on 5 May. Two days before had seen the victory of the Popular Front in the French general election. Sarraut left office on 1 June to be replaced by a ministry led by the socialist leader, Léon Blum.

The advent of a Popular Front government in Paris posed new challenges for the British government in London. The election had seen a marked increase in both the communist and socialist representation in the Chamber of Deputies. The victory of 1936, as Clerk noted on 8 May, was a victory for the extreme Left. It has been alleged that Clerk was a 'blatantly right wing figure,' incapable of establishing a rapport with an intellectual socialist he did not even know. But as he surveyed the approaching general election in April 1936, Clerk perceived parliamentary government to be more firmly established in France than at any time since May 1932. Fascism had had an opportunity for power in the early months of 1934, but the fundamental good sense of the French had 'once more asserted itself.' Popular Front victory reflected political polarization, but 'the profound attachment which the great mass of Frenchmen feel for the Republic and for liberty constitutes a most formidable obstacle in any attempt to upset the existing regime in this country'. A Left victory could be greeted, Clerk believed, 'without trepidation'. While its foreign policy was 'generally sound and often far-seeing', its great challenge was how to provide firm government and financial stability at home.[97]

Eden met Blum informally in Paris at the home of the Sir Charles Mendl, the Press Attaché at the embassy, on 15 May. Blum struck him as sincere in his commitment to Anglo-French co-operation, and an improvement on his predecessors 'for he clearly has no love for dictatorships wherever they may be'. But he was also 'doctrinaire' in his outlook, a perception doubtless shaped in Eden's mind by his views on international disarmament. Blum perceived an inevitable convergence in the policies of Hitler and Mussolini.[98] He seemed to view the dictators from an ideological perspective. This might mean less reliance on Italy than had been the case under Laval, and Flandin. It might also mean a more anti-fascist foreign policy. But this was not the impression the Popular Front conveyed in its early weeks of power. On 11 July, Clerk told Hoare that 'for the time being France is the sleeping partner in international affairs'.[99]

The murder of the Monarchist leader Calvo Sotelo in Madrid, and the subsequent flight of General Franco from the Canary Islands to Spanish Morocco in July 1936, launched Spain into the terrible events of the Spanish Civil War. On 20 July, the Spanish government appealed to the French government for arms, munitions and bombers. On 25

July, the French government turned down the Spanish request for military aid. Blum and Yvon Delbos, the new Foreign Secretary, were in London on 23 July for a meeting of the Locarno Powers. The British government strongly supported this French policy of non-intervention. On 1 August, the French government decided to promote an international non-intervention agreement. But it was clear to the Quai d'Orsay that the Italian government was already supporting the Spanish rebellion with munitions and supplies. Consequently, the French government decided, the following day, to reserve their liberty of judgement in the application of their decision not to supply military aid.[100]

Clerk was aware of the divisions that existed in the French government over this issue. His Minister Hugh Lloyd Thomas saw St Quentin on the morning of 25 July. There had been a 'sharp clash of opinions in the Cabinet', and the Quai d'Orsay had had to 'exert all their influence to prevent the contrary decision being taken'. Blum and the Air Ministry, Clerk believed, were much more sympathetic to intervention. The forced landing of Italian planes in French Morocco on 30 July only made things more difficult for those in the Cabinet intent on stopping those elements from supplying military aid. He was also concerned about the refugee problem in southwestern France. There was no doubt that 'desperadoes and undesirables of every class and nationality' had availed themselves of the opportunity to cross the border. Clerk feared the destabilizing effect of the influx of 'anarchists and extremists of the most violent sort'. They were 'an untimely reinforcement of the elements of disorder and revolution' in Marseilles and other southern seaports. On 2 August, Clerk reported that the policy of the government was 'shifting away from… official neutrality'.[101]

On 7 August, Clerk went to see Delbos. The French government was about to allow the delivery of five Dewoitine aircraft to Spain ordered before the outbreak of hostilities. The despatch of Italian and subsequently German aeroplanes from Hamburg had convinced the government it was not possible to maintain the embargo. Clerk understood the French position, but he was disturbed about a double standard, citing the case of British planes held in France destined for Portugal. But what particularly incensed Clerk was the reported murder in Madrid of the two sons of the Conde de Casa Valencia, a former Spanish ambassador to London. How could the French government know, asked Clerk, whether 'the Government in Madrid was the real Government and not the screen behind which the most extreme anarchist elements in Spain were directing events?' Was this the law and order Delbos believed reigned in Madrid? Clerk was speaking personally, without instructions and on his own responsibility. He asked Delbos to retard as much as he could any private commercial transactions with Spain. Clerk felt it his duty to put before him 'the danger of any action which might definitely commit the French Government to one side of the conflict and make more difficult the close co-operation between our two countries which was called for by this crisis'. He had spoken frankly because he feared that 'the extremists in the Government were putting increasing pressure on M.Blum', and he hoped to 'strengthen the hands of the moderate and sober elements'. The French archives contain a less detailed account of this meeting, stressing the similarity of Clerk's views on non-intervention with those of the Belgian ambassador. Both were said to view the Fascist cause with sympathy, as the only force capable of defeating the forces of anarchy and Soviet influence.[102]

On 8 August, the French Cabinet announced its adherence to a policy of the strictest non-intervention in Spanish affairs. The decision was not an easy one. Blum was said,

some days later, to be 'in torture' over the imposition of the embargo. On 11 August, he was 'extremely depressed', and 'the whole thing was having such an effect upon his nerves that he could neither sleep nor digest properly'. There had been a sharp division in the Cabinet and the position of 'moderates' such as Delbos and Camille Chautemps was described as Very shaky'. In these circumstances, Lloyd Thomas told Cadogan, the Clerk conversation had been decisive. This was also the view of Pierre Viénot, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who had been present at the meeting, as well as other well-informed members of the diplomatic corps. Clerk had been unaware that Delbos had been about to attend a Cabinet meeting, when the interview took place. In retrospect, the interview struck him as 'timely'.[103]

Great controversy has surrounded the decision of the French government to impose an embargo on 8 August. It has been alleged that British diplomats in Paris waged a veritable crusade against intervention in France. The embassy was asked 'to unleash the French Rightist press' whose 'howls rose to high heaven'. Clerk 'did not mince his words', and his staff 'terrified drawing rooms and editorial offices'. The initiative for this was said to come from Juan de Cardenas, the Spanish ambassador in Paris.[104] This allegation is difficult to substantiate. The British and French documents of the Clerk—Delbos meeting clearly eliminate the charge that Clerk coerced the French into non-intervention with threats to dissolve the agreement of 19 March and the Locarno Accords. Nor do the British documents support the assertion that threats issued by the British government coerced the Popular Front into submission on non-intervention.

Eden always maintained that non-intervention was a policy initiated by the Blum government in Paris. It was a French decision of policy. He was unequivocal about this, as his statement to a Labour Party deputation led by Arthur Greenwood, on the afternoon of 19 August, clearly showed.[105] What the British government did, was to offer the policy of intervention no encouragement. On 5 August, the Darlan mission to the Admiralty in London was offered no encouragement for any joint Anglo-French naval presence to be stationed off the Spanish coast. It was left to the iniquitous Hoare, inexplicably recalled by Baldwin as the First Lord of the Admiralty, to note that British policy should do nothing to bolster up communism in Spain.[106] What Clerk did on 7 August was to point towards the dangers of intervention. Whether this should be interpreted as 'strong negative pressure' as opposed to 'strong positive pressure' is a moot point. Hugh Lloyd Thomas later observed that allegations of British pressure might have been a useful tool for members of the Blum Cabinet to appease more extreme elements in France such as the Confédération General du Travail, who wished to embrace a more aggressive stance in Spain.[107]

Certainly, Clerk intervened with energy on 7 August. This was a risky foray by the ambassador. But his *démarche* was approved in London. Clerk wished to be prolonged at Paris. His energetic response to events in Spain, and the *post hoc* assessment of the effectiveness of his *démarche,* both by himself and his loyal Minister, Lloyd Thomas, were timely reminders, if Eden needed them, of the ambassador's continuing effectiveness in the representation of British interests. The French government had its own reasons to avoid intervention in Spain. Internationalization of the conflict risked the prospect of unleashing European war and severely weakening France internally by provoking civil war at home. This was clearly understood by Blum and Delbos by 8 August. Four days later, it was a French initiative that suggested the establishment of a

committee of control, which became the basis of the Non-intervention Committee. On the same day, it was Delbos in Paris who appealed to Clerk for a speedy conclusion of the agreement, and, on 24 August, it was the French ambassador in London who requested that London be the venue for the meetings of the Non-intervention Committee, comprising the representatives of twenty-six nations, including the Soviet Union, Germany and Italy, which began on 9 September.[108]

The Non-intervention Committee became the catalyst for the continuing renaissance of Anglo-French rapport, which had emanated from the Rhineland crisis. This was ironic in view of the ideological differences that divided a predominantly Conservative government in London from the Popular Front of socialists and communists in Paris. Blum lunched with Eden and Clerk on 9 October. In response to Eden's question, he was unequivocal that non-intervention was the correct policy, and that the absence of such a policy would have damaged the Spanish government far more than the rebels. In Geneva, on 22 September, Eden had responded positively to the French suggestion of a Mediterranean Pact to preserve a balance of power in the region, although his enthusiasm was not entirely shared in the Foreign Office by Vansittart or Cadogan. In the Cabinet meeting of 22 November, Eden maintained his rapport with the French government by defeating Hoare's attempt to afford belligerent rights to Franco's insurgents. In his memoirs, Eden noted that Anglo-French relations were 'now at their most cordial'.[109]

This cordiality was reinforced by the improving internal situation in France. On 8 September Clerk transmitted to the Foreign Office a Chancery memorandum, which concluded that 'it would be premature at the present juncture to speak of the "Sovietisation" of France'. In his covering despatch, Clerk refused to be alarmist. There was a clear dichotomy between the social and economic reforms of the Popular Front and the growing influence in France of the French Communist Party. Consequently, the 'Blum experiment' of shorter hours, higher wages, nationalization of the armaments industry and the Bank of France, the establishment of a National Wheat Office, owed less to Sovietization than to the 'State socialism' of Sydney Webb and the Fabians. In short, the 'Blum experiment' would not reduce France to 'an outpost of Moscow'.

Nevertheless, Clerk believed, it would be an error to underestimate the Communist Party who were working, in his view, to secure 'the mastery of this country', and he shared Winston Churchill's fears that 'the preliminary to Communist victory is the establishment of what is called the Popular Front'. But the Blum government did not move closer to the Soviet Union on the Franco-Soviet pact. In September, the British Military Attaché Beaumont-Nesbitt, accompanying Churchill and Lord Lloyd to Verdun and Metz, perceived a marked hostility towards the Franco-Soviet pact among French high military circles. By the middle of October, Clerk perceived 'a change for the better' in France, and although he could not predict with any certainty the survival of Blum as Prime Minister, 'the tone of the whole country', he sensed, 'is healthier and better than it was a month ago'.[110] If Clerk hoped that this upturn in Anglo-French relations would make Eden reconsider his future, he was mistaken. Eden was adamant. Paris was the plum diplomatic mission. He could offer it to Vansittart, whom he disliked and whose judgement over the Ethiopian crisis and indifference to Italian aggression, he believed, had been so suspect. Eden enlisted Baldwin's help, but 'Van' refused to go. Eden had few political friends. His position in a Baldwin Cabinet containing three former foreign secretaries was not a strong one, and 'Van' was Foreign Secretary in all but name.[111]

Eden distanced himself from his retiring ambassador, who was held in contempt by Foreign Office officials like Gladwyn Jebb and junior colleagues such as Lawford.[112] This embittered Clerk. Bruce Lockhart lunched with him at the Savoy in December 1937, eight months after his retirement:

> Sore with Eden and with Oliver Harvey, Eden's Private Secretary whom George recommended. Sore at being removed under age rule from Paris at age of 63 and being replaced by Phipps who is only eleven months younger. Sorest of all at Foreign Office behaviour. When King Leopold of Belgium came over recently, George who was ambassador in Brussels before Paris was asked to the Buckingham Palace show, and also to the Belgian ambassador's small show. Eden gave dinner-party at Foreign Office. George not asked, although Granville, who had been ambassador twelve years before, was![113]

Clerk's final months in Paris were clearly a time of personal trial. In December, the abdication crisis cut across the tragedies that had been evolving across the Pyrenees. The Paris embassy was a veritable bastion of the 'King's friends'. Hugh Lloyd Thomas had been an assistant private secretary to Edward Prince of Wales; Sir Charles Mendl and Lady Mendl, the celebrated American interior designer Elsie de Wolfe, were on close terms with Wallis Simpson. Lady Mendl saw her role as Wallis's mentor in the rules of Paris fashion, acting as her tutor of taste. Clerk was the King's 'good friend'. When Edward VIII had opened negotiations to rent Maxine Elliot's *Chateau de l'Horizon* near Cannes in August 1936, in order to escape the tedium of Balmoral and avoid exposing Mrs Simpson to the publicity her attendance in Scotland was likely to create, it was Clerk who had allayed any apprehensions that the election of a Popular Front government might result in the King being made unwelcome in France. But when the King arrived in Calais to unveil the Vimy Ridge war memorial on 26 July, Clerk 'sheepishly' advised against the holiday. The Côte d'Azur was ablaze with red flags, but if the King remained insistent on coming, Blum would station a battalion of infantry at the villa. The King heeded Clerk's advice. He chartered *The Nahlin* from Lady Yule and proceeded on his Mediterranean cruise, thus initiating that train of events that led inexorably to the abdication of the King-Emperor on 10 December. The Mendls remained on the closest terms with the Windsors after the abdication. Hugh Lloyd Thomas was the only representative, albeit an unofficial one, at their wedding at Candé in June 1937.[114]

Clerk may have continued to hold out hope that his relationship with Eden remained in good standing. Beneath the veneer of bonhomie, there was an air of desperation about his efforts to seek out Eden in the south of France at the end of January.[115] Early in February 1937, the appointment of Sir Eric Phipps as the new ambassador to Paris was announced.[116] Clerk now began to suffer the petty indignities that sometimes befall those accustomed to travel in the company of the great and the good. In March 1937, Valentine Lawford was appointed to the Paris embassy as a third secretary. The mere suggestion that a junior diplomat not known to the ambassador should replace Fitzroy Maclean, the existing third secretary, was greeted by Clerk as 'an added and unjustifiable insult' at Eden's hands.[117]

On the evening following Phipps's appointment, Clerk attended the premier performance of *Fire over England*. At a farewell luncheon given by the Amitiés Internationales Association, French officials expressed their deep appreciation of the goodwill shown by the British government for the existing political 'experiment' in France, which they attributed directly to Clerk's influence. Blum hoped that Clerk would remain 'an unofficial ambassador for France in London'. On 18 March, President Lebrun invested him with the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour. On the eve of his departure from France, at a function at the Quai d'Orsay, Clerk described the Paris embassy as 'the crowning point of his career'. A large crowd attended his departure at the Gare du Nord on 5 April. Lawford was among them. He noted the 'unenthusiastic' faces of the Clerks, 'he because he was so loathe to go, she because she could hardly wait for the end of this last, supremely enervating ceremonial'. The crowd emitted a 'modest radiance' as 'the poor man, his formal clothing already packed away, his great moment over, balanced himself on the edge of our glowing world before he toppled for ever out of sight'. On 9 April, the Clerks arrived at Windsor to be presented to George VI and Queen Elizabeth. They remained at court until 12 April. On 15 February, there had been an exhibition of Lady Clerk's portraits and landscapes at the Jeu de Paume in Paris. On 8 April, there was a private viewing of Janet Clerk paintings at the Lefevre Galleries in St James in London. The exhibition was to last until 1 May. Eden attended that day.[118]

In the obituary of Sir George Clerk written on 20 June 1951, *The Times*, echoing sentiments expressed by *Le Temps* in April 1937, noted that, during his term in Paris, international events had enabled Clerk:

> to show the measure of his ability and tact and to reveal not only the depth of his affection for France and all she stands for in Western civilization, but also his conviction that the closest ties of friendship between this country and France were as necessary then as they are now.[119]

This may well have been the case. But in reality what his embassy illustrated was the mutual misconceptions that governed the policies and attitudes of the Allied powers.

Clerk's appointment as ambassador in 1934 had been hailed by commentators such as Pertinax in *L'Echo de Paris* as a victory for realism in Anglo-French relations.[120] Throughout the first year of his embassy, Clerk and his staff had clearly and uncompromisingly conveyed the thrust of French security policy towards Nazi Germany and German rearmament to the Foreign Office in London. It is clear that Clerk, Harvey and possibly Campbell had grave reservations about the direction of British diplomacy at this time, and preferred Eden before Simon. Clerk tried to dispel the image of a vindictive France, fostered in the minds of many British diplomats including himself, and that the French policy of European hegemony through the creation of satellite states and military alliances, prevalent in the 1920s, had given way after 1932 to a new framework based on collective security through Geneva. The catalyst of this transformation was the rise of Hitler in Germany. French support for Soviet membership of the League of Nations in 1934 was fully consistent with this policy, which valued an alliance with the Soviet Union less for its military value than to preclude a new Rapallo.

Clerk was under no illusions that the great challenge of his embassy was to convince the French government of the need to come to a 'general settlement' with Nazi Germany.

For the Paris embassy, this was an almost insuperable hurdle to overcome. In London, Simon, Hoare and Vansittart were adamant that the French toe the line. Intransigence made them deaf to French security concerns. A clear bifurcation existed in Anglo-French relations. The Lavalian Machiavellianism of the Rome Accords was paralleled on the British side by the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. The latter undermined attempts to secure French co-operation over Ethiopia. Clerk rightly described it as 'a mill-stone round our necks'.

Clerk played a much more significant role in shaping Anglo-French relations during the Ethiopian crisis than has hitherto been recognized. He was a staunch defender of the Hoare-Laval proposals, which had emanated in part from his own conviction that France was determined not go to war with Italy at any price. For Clerk, the Hoare-Laval proposals were a panacea, and he remained convinced of their rightness at least until October 1938. This was unfortunate. It revealed an increasing short sightedness on his part, which was presumably not lost on the new Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden. The relationship between Clerk and Eden is difficult to fathom, and it was complicated by personal factors. Ironically, it was Eden's watch that proffered the best chance for a closer resumption of Anglo-French relations, which was a major aim of the ambassador. However, the relationship was also caught up in the growing crossfire that engulfed Eden and Vansittart in the aftermath of the Hoare—Laval debacle. Clerk was a frequent visitor to Vansittart's home at Denham in Buckinghamshire, where he passed the time chopping wood! He was evidently close to 'Van' and had urged him in no uncertain terms not to resign and to 'stick to the Foreign Office' at the end of 1935.[121] A series of episodes undermined Eden's faith in Clerk's abilities early in 1936, strengthening the case for a change of personnel, which was constantly being urged upon Eden by the pro-Phipps lobby led by Hankey and Fisher.[122] Clerk's aggressive intervention on behalf of the policy of non-intervention in the early stages of the Spanish Civil War was doubtless in part conditioned by allegations of dereliction of duty, which emanated out of the Rhineland crisis.

Clerk viewed the advent of the Popular Front government with his customary discernment. He did not underestimate the threat of international communism to the French state and its society. But he made clear distinctions between social reform and revolution, between socialist reform and Sovietization. He remained sympathetic to the 'Blum experiment' and optimistic that the varied richness of republican liberty could accommodate a government of the Left without a destabilization of the body politic. This boded well for Anglo-French relations. But Clerk had clearly lost the confidence of Eden during the Rhineland crisis, and there was a strong sentiment among Foreign Office officials including Vansittart that the ambassador was simply failing to deliver. Far more reliable was the press attaché Sir Charles Mendl whose luncheon parties at his Avenue Montaigne apartment were a much better and more informed barometer of French opinion. This was an unfortunate preference. By 1938, Mendl was to become deeply influenced by the views of Charles Lindbergh, and believed that the temper of French public opinion was for peace at any price. He firmly imposed his views on Sir Eric Phipps, Clerk's successor in Paris. Lady Mendl's influence may have been equally insidious. In 1933, she had posed for snapshots in Rome while offering the fascist salute, and admired fascism's anti-communist credentials and the strong leadership men such as Hitler and Mussolini could provide.[123] When Pertinax hurled the accusation that, at the

time of the Ethiopian crisis, ‘subordinates’ of the British embassy ‘plotted with Parisian smart sets against those who wanted to see the Western Powers once more hold their heads high’, it was presumably the Mendls he had in mind.[124]

Conclusion

Clerk's retirement from Paris in April 1937 was followed by a plethora of diplomatic and political changes with momentous consequences for British foreign policy. Eden had vigorously attempted to persuade Vansittart to accept the Paris embassy. Vansittart vigorously resisted. He told Eden it was 'a step down and not up'. In his view, 'the day of really influential Ambassadors is over'. They were nothing more than 'mouthpieces'.[1] This was not entirely true, as Vansittart to his cost was soon to discover. In Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson was about to succeed Sir Eric Phipps as ambassador. Vansittart gave the appointment his fullest backing.[2] In May, Neville Chamberlain replaced Baldwin as Prime Minister, thus ushering in a period of renewed commitment to appeasement. Henderson's appointment was believed by the German embassy in London to signify the beginning of the end of the pro-French generation of officials in the Foreign Office.[3]

Clerk's advocacy of the Hoare—Laval agreement locates him clearly within the prehistory of appeasement, a term, which a prominent historian once suggested, should be added to the list of words no scholar uses.[4] However, Clerk's diplomatic career clearly reflected the synthesis of different strains in British foreign policy formulation: the 'Edwardian' tendency, which placed great emphasis on the creation of international security in Continental Europe as a *sine qua non* of the survival of the British Empire, and a newer diplomacy,[5] which favoured the liberation of 'oppressed nationalities' in Central Europe and establishment of new national and democratic states in place of dynastic empires. This more 'Wilsonian' tendency saw its apotheosis in 1919, when the British Empire appeared to assume a new zenith of influence in the power vacuum that accompanied the collapse of the great supra-national empires in Central Europe and the Middle East. Following Clerk's mission to Hungary in 1919, the Foreign Office adopted an active rather than a passive policy in Central Europe at least until 1925. Clerk's strong advocacy of Czechoslovakia as a viable democratic state in London during the 1920s contrasted sharply with subsequent diplomatic assessments of its worth throughout the 1930s, which culminated in the Munich crisis of 1938. Clerk was careful to couch his idealism for the new successor states within the framework of British national interests, but his sympathies were unmistakably clear. In Turkey, Clerk succeeded in diminishing the bitter prejudice and inveterate hatred that had animated the relationship between Great Britain and Turkey since 1914, and which clearly manifested itself, for example, in the brooding hostility between Curzon and Ismet Inönü at Lausanne in 1923. The great tragedy of British diplomacy post-Locarno was its failure to build on the foundations in Central Europe established by diplomats like Clerk and its apparent disinterest in the Balkans. The dynamic thrust of Hitler's foreign policy in Central Europe in 1938 and 1939 forced the British government into a new and urgent assessment of its strategic priorities in Central and Southeastern Europe in circumstances that militated against the establishment of an effective deterrent against German expansionism.

Sir George Clerk was at his best when his objectives could be realized through the cultivation of personal relationships with key decision-makers within the existing

political élite, such as Masaryk and Beneš in Czechoslovakia or Atatürk and Inönü in Turkey. France represented a far more formidable challenge, given the volatility of French politics in the 1930s and the complexity of those forces, which affected the process of foreign policy formulation. The Achilles' heel of Clerk's embassy in Paris was its inability to evaluate and assess in an authoritative way the nature of public opinion in France, and how it affected the policy of the French government. It was the reliability of this analysis that did most to undermine the embassy's credibility in the eyes of the Foreign Office, during the Ethiopian and to a lesser extent the Rhineland crises of 1935 and 1936.[6]

Clerk seemed never to recover from the lost legacy of his Paris embassy. He had evidently lost favour with the Foreign Office. As the dark clouds gathered over Czechoslovakia in September 1938, the Foreign Office established a standby list of potential diplomatic reservists on whom they might call to deal with the increased volume of work in the event that world war broke out. In November 1939, to his evident surprise, Clerk was called up by the Advisory Committee under Regulation 18B of Defence General Regulations 1939. Clerk served until May 1941, but found the work less than stimulating. In his letter of resignation, he complained that he could not pretend that 'an hour or so's session once a week to hear the appeal of a casual "pick up" of MI5 or the Security Services is really a full time or even a plausible war job'. He could not face the thought of 'idling through the remaining hours and days of the week, changing books at the library in the morning, and criticising the conduct of the war with 4 or 5 other senescent members of my club for the rest of the time', and was going to leave London for local country work.[7]

In October 1938, despite his historic involvement with the destiny of Czechoslovakia, Clerk seems to have become a staunch supporter of Neville Chamberlain and the Munich Agreement. Bruce Lockhart had dinner with him at the Savoy on 27 October. Clerk had been to a committee meeting at Chatham House where Arnold Toynbee had read a 'most pessimistic paper' against Hitler and Mussolini. 'He, G.R.C., had protested. He is proChamberlain,' he noted.[8]

Clerk spent the years of the Second World War commuting between Yester in East Lothian, Scotland, where he was in the service of the Home Guard, a residence at South Audley Street in London, and the Dorchester Hotel.[9] From 1941 to 1945, he was president of the Royal Geographical Society. At his first meeting as president, he observed memorably:

> It is, I think, no small thing that here, in the third year of the war…we meet as usual, in our own house, for the normal annual opening of our regular session. As regards the proceedings of the Society itself, the shadow of the provisional hovers over all that we may propose, and we have to adapt ourselves to the difficult conditions of our day to day existence.

The Royal Geographical Society was indebted to Sir George for his work during these difficult years. Its official journal records: It was largely through Sir George's wide experience of men and affairs, and to his clear thinking, that the adjustment to difficult war conditions was accomplished with the minimum of dislocation.'[10]

Born in the tradition of imperial service, Sir George Clerk had moved in the gracious houses of Edwardian England. The new egalitarianism of the post-1945 era, where ambassadors were in his view 'three a penny', did not sit easily with him.[11] He died on 18 June 1951. *The Times'* obituary graciously hailed him 'An Outstanding Diplomat'.[12] The funeral service was at Golders Green in North London, and a memorial service was held at St Margaret's Church, Westminster.[13] Pursuant to his instructions, his private papers were destroyed by his solicitors.[14] In the *Geographical Journal*, a friend wrote:

> He was a just and upright man. He had a quick penetrating judgement of human character. He retained a capacity for anger in a world where sly compliance has become fashionable…. He might have said with Tennyson's Ulysses:
>
> I am become a name;
> For always roaming with a hungry heart
> Much have I seen and known; cities of men
> And manners, climates, councils, governments,
> Myself not least, but honoured of them all.[15]

Notes

Introduction

1 R.H.B.Lockhart, *My Europe,* London: Putnam, 1952, p. 98.

I
Empire, world war and a New Europe 1898–1919

1 *Who Was Who,* 10 vols, London: A&C Black, 1920–2001, s.v. 'Sir Godfrey Clerk, 1835–1908', vol. 1 1897–1915, p. 103.
2 E.Walford, *Men of the Time,* London: Routledge, Warne & Routledge, 1862, s.v. 'Sir George Russell Clerk, 1800–1889', p. 164.
3 E.Walford, *The County Families of the United Kingdom,* London: R.Hardwicke, 1865, s.v. 'Sir George Russell Clerk, 1800–1889', p. 209.
4 L.Oliphant, 'Sir George Russell Clerk, 1874–1951', *D{ictionary of) N{ational} B{iography} 1951–1960,* London: Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. 229–30.
5 L.Dudley Stamp, 'Siam before the War', 16 Mar. 1942, *Geographical Journal,* London: Royal Geographical Society, vol. 99 Jan.–June 1942, pp. 209–24.
6 Ibid., obituary: Arthur Duke of Connaught, Feb. 1942, p. 49.
7 Z.Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898–1914,* London: Cambridge University Press, 1969, pp. 19, 30.
8 Ibid., pp. 70–1. On the 'Edwardian' tendency in British foreign policy, see K.Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar: British Policy and Russia, 1894–1917,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 48–50; B.J.C.McKercher, 'Old Diplomacy and New, the Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1919–1939', in M.L.Dockrill and B.J.C.McKercher (eds), *Diplomacy and World Power: Studies in British Foreign Policy, 1890–1950,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 79–114.
9 Sir V.Corbett, *Reminiscences: Autobiographical and Diplomatic of Sir Vincent Corbett,* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927, p. 42.
10 Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy,* pp. 79, 210, 21–22.
11 *Foreign Office List and Diplomatic and Consular Year Book,* vols 1898–1937.
12 Sir T.Hohler, *Diplomatic Petrel,* London: John Murray, 1942, p. 120.
13 H.G.Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik H: Ethiopia 1844–1913,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, pp. 177–90, 201–4, 3; C.Prouty, *Empress Taytu and Menilek II: Ethiopia 1883–1910,* London: Ravens Educational and Development Services, 1986, p. 266.
14 W.E.D.Allen, 'Ethiopian Highlands', 18 Jan. 1943, *Geographical Journal,* vol. 101, Jan.–June 1943, pp. 14–15.
15 Marcus, *Life and Times of Menelik,* p. 189.
16 Hohler, *Diplomatic Petrel,* p. 123.
17 W.E.D.Allen, 'Ethiopian Highlands', 18 Jan. 1943, *Geographical Journal,* vol. 101, Jan–June 1943, pp. 14–15.

18 R.P.Skinner, *Abyssinia of To-day: An Account of the First Mission Sent by the Americans to the Court of the King of Kings 1903–1904*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co, 1906, pp. 95–6.
19 Prouty, *Taytu and Menilek*, pp. 285, 290–1.
20 H.A.C.Darley, *Slaves and Ivory in Abyssinia: A Record of Adventure and Exploration among the Ethiopian Slave-Raiders*, New York: Robert McBride, 1935, pp. 14–19.
21 Marcus, *Life and Times of Menelik*, pp. 204–13.
22 Hohler, *Diplomatic Petrel*, pp. 115–47.
23 Sir M.Watson, 'The Geographical Aspects of Malaria', 9 Feb. 1942, *Geographical Journal*, vol. 99, Jan.–June 1942, pp. 161–72.
24 Sir G.R.Clerk, 'Memories of Istanbul', in *The Times, The New Turkey*, London: The Times Publishing Company Ltd, 1938, p. 48.
25 J.Heller, *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1914*, London: Frank Cass, 1983, pp. 1–40; D.Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, New York: Avon Books, 1989, pp. 26–44.
26 Clerk, 'Memories of Istanbul', pp. 48–9.
27 Heller, *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 37–116, 124–31.
28 *Foreign Office List and Diplomatic and Consular Year Book*, vols 1898–1937.
29 Clerk to Curzon 4 May 1921, FO 404/3/68.
30 *DNB 1951–1960*, pp. 229–30.
31 L.Einstein, *A Diplomat Looks Back*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968, p. 187.
32 *B{ritish} D{ocuments on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914}*, G.P.Gooch and H.W.V. Temperley (eds), London: HM Stationery Off, 1926–38, vol. 11, nos. 171, 249, 476.
33 Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, p. 165; S.Crowe and E.Corp, *Our Ablest Public Servant: Sir Eyre Crowe 1864–1925*, Devon: Merlin Books, 1993, pp. 274–8. Crowe and Corp disagree with Steiner's interpretation of the memorandum establishing the War Department. See p. 295.
34 Vansittart to Simon 9 Jan. 1934, private office 'individual' papers: *Sir Eric Phipps*, FO 794/16.
35 C. à C.Repington, *The First World War, 1914–1918*, 2 vols, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921, vol. 2, p. 26.
36 Sir J.Tilley and S.Gaselee, *The Foreign Office*, London: G.P.Putnam, 1933, pp. 174–5.
37 Oxford and Asquith, *Speeches by the Earl of Oxford and Asquith*, New York: George H. Doran Company, 1927, p. 224.
38 H.Nelson, *Land and Power*, London: Routledge & Paul, 1963, pp. 8–10.
39 D.Lloyd George, *War Memoirs of David Lloyd George*, 6 vols, London: Nicholson & Watson, 1933–1936, vol. 4, pp. 1983–2035.
40 Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 2459–81.
41 Ibid., vol. 6, pp. 2515–27.
42 H.W.Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, 2 vols, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1924, vol. 1, pp. 227–81, 294–5, 306–14, 324–5.
43 H. and C.Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, London: Methuen, 1981, pp. 40, 101, 108.
44 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1923*, FO 371/9678 C 4053/4053/12.
45 Clerk minute 31 Aug. 1914, FO 371/2095 C 46074 cited in K.J.Calder, *Britain and the Origins of the New Europe, 1914–1918*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 23–4.
46 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, pp. 108–9.
47 Clerk minute 31 Dec. 1914, FO 371/1900 C 88470 cited in ibid., p. 119.
48 R.W.Seton-Watson, *Masaryk in England*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1943, pp. 38–9.
49 FO 371/1905 C 55136 cited in Calder, *Britain and the New Europe*, pp. 25–6.
50 R.W.Seton-Watson, *Masaryk in England*, 'The Future of Bohemia', pp. 40–9.

51 Clerk minute 7 Dec. 1914, FO 371/1900 C 67456 cited in C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe,* p. 119.
52 R.W.Seton-Watson, *Masaryk in England,* 'Confidential Memorandum', pp. 116–34, 63.
53 Clerk minute, FO 371/2241 C 53297 W 3 cited in C and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe,* p. 125.
54 Oxford and Asquith, *H.H.Asquith, Letters to Venetia Stanley,* M. and E.Brock (eds)., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982, p. 266.
55 Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace,* pp. 69–73.
56 *The History of The Times,* 6 vols, London: 1935, vol. 4, part I Wickham Steed to Bourchier 12 Mar. 1915.
57 *British Desiderata in Turkey in Asia,* CAB 27/1.
58 M.P.A.Hankey, *The Supreme Command, 1914–1918,* 2 vols, London: Allen & Unwin, 1961, vol. 1, pp. 244–52.
59 E.Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The MacMahon-Husayn Correspondence and Its Interpretations, 1914–1939,* London: Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 3–21.
60 Kedourie, *Anglo-Arab Labyrinth,* pp. 30–1, 28–9, 26–7. On India and Mesopotamia, see also: B.C.Busch, *Britain, India, and the Arabs, 1914–1921,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971, pp. 3–23.
61 *British Desiderata in Turkey in Asia,* CAB 27/1. The members of the de Bunsen committee were: Sir Maurice de Bunsen, chairman, G.R.Clerk, Foreign Office, Sir T.W.Holderness, India Office, Sir H.B.Jackson, Admiralty, C.E.Callwell, War Office, Sir Mark Sykes MP, Sir H.Llewellyn Smith, Board of Trade, M.P.A.Hankey, Secretary, Committee of Imperial Defence.
62 G.S.Symes, 'The Sherif of Mecca'; Clerk minute 23 Aug. 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/112369.
63 Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace,* p. 147.
64 *British Desiderata in Turkey in Asia,* CAB 27/1; Kedourie, *Anglo-Arab Labyrinth,* pp. 58–61.
65 McMahon to FO 30 June 1915; Clerk minute 1 July 1915, Nicolson minute 1 July 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/87023.
66 McMahon to FO 22 Aug. 1915, Hirtzel to FO 24 Aug. 1915, Clerk minute 25 Aug. 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/117236, 118580.
67 Clerk minute 29 Sept. 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/138500.
68 Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace,* pp. 176–8; Kedourie, *Anglo-Arab Labyrinth,* pp. 88–92.
69 Maxwell to Kitchener, 16 Oct. 1915, Clerk minute, Nicolson minute 19 Oct. 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/15279, 152901.
70 Clerk minute 25 Aug. 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/118580.
71 Kedourie, *Anglo-Arab Labyrinth,* pp. 91–112; Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace,* pp. 179–87.
72 Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace,* p. 185.
73 Clerk minute 25 July 1916, FO 371/2774 14405/42233, cited in Kedourie, *Anglo-Arab Labyrinth,* p. 112.
74 Clerk minute 5 Nov. 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/164659.
75 Clerk minutes 1 and 11 Dec. 1915, FO 371/2486 34982/181716, 189073.
76 O.Bin Laden, 'The Sword Fell', *The New York Times,* 8 Oct. 2001.
77 A.L.Tibawi, *Anglo-Arab Relations and the Question of Palestine, 1914–1921,* London: Luzac and Company, 1978, pp. 82–3.
78 Kedourie, *Anglo-Arab Labyrinth,* p. 185.
79 Clerk minute 8 Dec. 1914, FO 371/1906 C 81051 cited in C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe,* p. 119.
80 Calder, *Britain and the New Europe,* p. 27.

81 M.G.Ekstein, 'Russia, Constantinople and the Straits, 1914–1915', in F.H.Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 433.
82 F.S.Cocks, *The Secret Treaties and Understandings*, London: Union of Democratic Control, 1918, appendix A, pp. 79–80.
83 Hankey, *Supreme Command*, vol. 1, pp. 267, 279.
84 Clerk minute 6 Mar. 1915, FO 371/2507 C 28275 cited in C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 143.
85 Clerk minute 12 Mar. 1915, FO 371/2507 C 28769 ibid., pp. 143–4.
86 Clerk minute 31 Mar. 1915, FO 371/2376 C 37639 ibid.
87 Clerk minute 9 Apr. 1915, FO 371/2241 C 41098 ibid.
88 Cocks, *Secret Treaties and Understandings;* appendix A, pp. 79–80.
89 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 124.
90 R.W.Seton-Watson, 'Italy and the Southern Slavs', *The Times*, 23 Apr. 1915.
91 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 125.
92 Sir A.Evans, 'Italy and Dalmatia', *The Times*, 27 Apr. 1915.
93 Undated note, *R.W.Seton-Watson papers*, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London, SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.
94 Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, vol. 2, p. 66.
95 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 144.
96 G.M.Trevelyan, *Grey of Fallodon*, New York: Longmans Green, 1937, pp. 338–9.
97 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, pp. 130, 136.
98 Clerk minute 16 Aug. 1915, FO 371/2265 C 112986 ibid., p. 138.
99 FO 371/2258 C 123158 ibid., p. 139.
100 Ibid., p. 138.
101 Hankey, *Supreme Command*, vol. 1, pp. 413–23.
102 Rodd to Drummond 17 Dec. 1916, Clerk to Drummond, Note 22 Dec. 1916, private collections, ministers and officials: *Cecil of Chelwood*, FO 800/197.
103 Z.Steiner, 'The Foreign Office and the War', in F.H.Hinsley (ed.), *British foreign Policy under Grey*, pp. 518–19.
104 Hankey, *Supreme Command*, vol. 1, diary entry, 5, 6 July 1915, pp. 348–51.
105 Ibid., vol. 2, diary entry, 16 Nov. 1915, p. 450.
106 Ibid., p. 452.
107 R.W.Seton-Watson, *Masaryk in England*, pp. 60–1, 74.
108 Clerk minute 14 Mar. 1917, FO 371/2863 C 32566 cited in C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 194.
109 R.W.Seton-Watson, 'The Failure of Sir Edward Grey', *Europe in the Melting-Pot*, London: Macmillan, 1919, pp. 86–120.
110 Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, *All the Way*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1949, p. 141.
111 *The New Europe*, 19 Oct. 1916, 17 vols, London: Constable & Co. 1916–1920, vol. I, no. 1.
112 Clerk to Seton-Watson 5 Nov. 1920, *Seton-Watson papers*, SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.
113 Hankey, *Supreme Command*, vol. 2, diary entry, 14 Nov. 1916, p. 556, 558–9.
114 S.Roskill, *Hankey, Man of Secrets*, 2 vols, London: Collins, 1970–4, vol. 1, pp. 348–9.
115 V.H.Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy, 1914–1918*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971, p. 42–4.
116 Committee of Imperial Defence: Committee on Territorial Changes: Note by the General Staff as to the Policy to be pursued in regard to the German Colonies, 7 Sept. 1916; Louis Mallet, William Tyrrell, George Clerk, 'Views of the Foreign Office Representatives on the Question of the Retention of the German Colonies' 21 Jan. 1917, CAB 16/36.
117 Steiner, *Foreign Office and foreign Policy*, pp. 104–6, 118–20 for Mallet and Tyrrell's antipathy to Germany under Grey.

118 Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, vol. 2, pp. 129–30; C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 187.
119 Clerk to Jovanovic 4 Dec. 1916, *Seton-Watson papers*, SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.
120 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 209.
121 R.M.Warman, 'The Erosion of Foreign Office Influence in the Making of Foreign Policy, 1916–1918', *The Historical Journal* 15, 1972, pp. 133–59.
122 Rothwell, *British War Aims*, p. 9.
123 Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, vol. 3, pp. 1563, 1568.
124 R.H.B.Lockhart, *Memoirs of a British Agent*, London: Putnam, 1932, p. 162.
125 M.Paléologue, *An Ambassador's Memoirs*, 3 vols, London: Hutchinson & Co., 1923–5, vol. 3, p. 181.
126 Sir C.E.Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, His Life and Diaries*, 2 vols, London: Cassell, 1927, vol. 1, pp. 311–21.
127 Allied Conference at Petrograd, January—February 1917, Clerk to Milner 1 Mar. 1917, CAB/2/IC-16g.
128 Sir G.Buchanan, *My Mission to Russia and other Diplomatic memories*, 2 vols, London: Cassell, 1923, vol. 2, p. 155.
129 Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, vol. 3, pp. 1563–99.
130 FO 371/2864 C 207244, 137257 cited in C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 238.
131 Warman, 'Erosion', pp. 142–6, 151–5.
132 E.Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British Diplomatic Strategy, Peace Planning, and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916–1920*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991, pp. 23–6, 57–9.
133 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 209.
134 Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, pp. 60–4.
135 Ibid., pp. 79, 90–8, 110–16, 130–3.
136 S.D.Kertész, 'The Consequences of World War I: The Effects on East Central Europe', K.Vigh, 'Causes and Consequences of Trianon: A Re-Examination', T.L.Sakmyster, 'Great Britain and the Making of the Treaty of Trianon', in B.Király, P.Pastor and I. Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I; Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon*, New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 39–40, 64, 112.
137 Sakmyster, 'Great Britain and the Making of Trianon', ibid., pp. 113–18.
138 S.Borsody, 'Hungary's Road to Trianon: Peacemaking and Propaganda', ibid., pp. 23–38.
139 Sakmyster, 'Great Britain and the Making of Trianon', ibid., pp. 119–25.
140 Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, pp. 242–62.
141 H.Seton-Watson, 'R.W.Seton-Watson and the Trianon Settlement', in Király, Pastor and Sanders, *Total War and Peacemaking*, pp. 6–12.
142 Personal Communication: Christopher Seton-Watson, letter to author, 31 Mar. 1988.
143 Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, pp. 191–224.
144 Dodd to Chamberlain 2 Nov. 1926 enclosure: *Prager Presse*, 31 Oct. 1926, FO 371/11233 C 11756/11756/12.
145 *DNB 1951–1960*, pp. 229–30.
146 'New Diplomatic Appointments', *The New Europe*, 11 Sept. 1919, vol. 12, no. 152.

2
Nation-building in the New Europe: Hungary 1919

1 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, London: Methuen, 1981, p. 193.
2 H.Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, 1919, London: Constable, 1933, pp. 31–3.

3 I [st Series], *D{ocuments on} B{ritish} F{oreign} P{olicy, 1919–39},* E.L.Woodward and R. Butler (eds), London: HM Stationery Off., 1946–, vol. 1, no. 1, preface p. 8.
4 P.Cambon, *Correspondance, 1870–1924,* H.Cambon (ed.), 3 vols, Paris: Grasset, 1940–6, vol. 3, p. 353.
5 E.J.Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference,* New York: Harper & Bros., 1920, p. 233.
6 I, DBFP, vol. 1, no. 13.
7 Ibid., no. 26 note 3.
8 Ibid., no. 13 note 6.
9 Ibid., no. 3.
10 Ibid., no. 30.
11 Ibid., no. 36.
12 Ibid., no. 34.
13 Ibid., no. 49.
14 E.S.Balogh, 'Istvan Friedrich and the Hungarian Coup d'État of 1919: A Reevaluation', *Slavic Review* 35, 1976, pp. 269–76 for a different view of Friedrich.
15 R.W.Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians,* Cambridge: The University Press, 1934, p. 503.
16 Ibid., pp. 539–47.
17 Nicolson, *Peacemaking,* diary entry, 31 Jan. 1919, pp. 253–4.
18 Seton-Watson, *History of the Roumanians,* pp. 543–4.
19 R.W.Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War,* London: Constable, 1915, p. 97.
20 R.W.Seton-Watson, 'The Question of the Bánát', *The New Europe,* 13 Feb. 1919, 17 vols, London Constable & Co. 1916–1920, vol. 10, no. 122.
21 R.W.Seton-Watson, 'The Treaty with Austria', ibid., 18 Sept. 1919, vol. 12, no. 153.
22 I, *DBFP,* vol. 1, no. 63 appendix A.
23 Ibid., no. 71 note 8.
24 I, DBFP, vol. 6, no. 179 note 2.
25 Ibid., vol. 6, no. 155.
26 Ibid., no. 178
27 Ibid., no. 179.
28 Ibid., vol. 1, no. 63 appendix C.
29 Ibid., no. 71 appendix G3.
30 F.Deák, *Hungary at the Paris Peace Conference,* New York: Columbia University Press, 1942, pp. 419–20.
31 I, *DBFP,* vol. 6, no. 201.
32 Ibid., vol. 1, No. 71 appendix G.
33 H.H.Bandholtz, *An Undiplomatic Diary,* F.Krüger (ed.), New York: Columbia University Press, 1933, diary entry, 1 Oct. 1919, pp. 123–4.
34 I, *DBFP,* vol 1, no. 71 appendix G doc. 2.
35 Bandholtz, *Undiplomatic Diary,* diary entries, 2, 3, 5 Oct. 1919, pp. 125–32, 135–6.
36 I, *DBFP,* vol. 1, no. 71 appendix G.
37 Ibid., vol. 6, no. 200.
38 Ibid., no. 203.
39 Ibid., no. 211.
40 Ibid., vol. 1, no. 71.
41 Clerk to Seton-Watson 13 Oct. 1919, R.W. *Seton-Watson papers,* School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London, SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.
42 R.W.Seton-Watson, 'The Fall of Bela Kun', *The New Europe,* 14 Aug. 1919, vol. 12, no. 148.
43 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe,* p. 391.
44 Clerk to Seton-Watson 15 Oct. 1919, *Seton-Watson papers,* SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.

45 ‘Behind the Scenes in Hungary’, *The New Europe*, 16 Oct. 1919, vol. 13, no. 157.
46 G.Waterfield, *Professional Diplomat: Sir Percy Loraine of Kirkharle, Bt., 1880–1961*, London: Murray, 1973, p. 39.
47 I, *DBFP*, vol. 6, no. 220.
48 Ibid., nos. 221, 222.
49 Bandholtz, *Undiplomatic Diary*, appendix pp. 383–5.
50 I, *DBFP*, vol. 6, no. 231.
51 Ibid., 232.
52 Ibid., 235.
53 O.Jászi, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*, London: P.S.King, 1924, pp. 154–5.
54 I, *DBFP*, vol. 2, no. 13 appendix B.
55 T.L.Sakmyster, ‘From Habsburg Admiral to Hungarian Regent: The Political Metamorphosis of Miklós Horthy, 1918–1921’, *East European Quarterly* 17, 1983, pp. 129–48.
56 T.L.Sakmyster, *Hungary’s Admiral on Horseback. Miklós Horthy, 1918–1944*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, pp. 1–28.
57 I, *DBFP*, vol. 2, no. 12.
58 Ibid., appendix C.
59 Ibid., no. 13.
60 Ibid., no. 14 appendix B.
61 Ibid., no. 15 appendix B.
62 Ibid., vol. 6, no. 261.
63 Ibid., no. 262.
64 N.Horthy, *Memoirs*, New York: Robert Speller, 1957, p. 103.
65 I, *DBFP*, vol. 6, no. 244.
66 Deák, *Hungary at the Peace Conference*, p. 160.
67 I, *DBFP*, vol. 6, no. 259.
68 Horthy, *Memoirs*, p. 108.
69 I, *DBFP*, vol. 2, no. 20 appendix F.
70 Bandholtz, *Undiplomatic Diary*, diary entries, 7, 10 Nov. 1919, pp. 209–13, 215–18.
71 I, *DBFP*, vol. 2, no. 23 appendix B.
72 Ibid., no. 33 appendix A, Report of Sir George Clerk.
73 Bandholtz, *Undiplomatic Diary*, diary entry, 17 Nov. 1919, pp. 230–1.
74 I, *DBFP*, vol. 6, nos. 284, 310. Gyula Rubinek, Minister of Agriculture 1919–20.
75 Ibid., no. 291 note 2.
76 Ibid., no. 291.
77 Ibid., no. 299.
78 Ibid., vol. 2, No. 33 appendix A, Report of Sir George Clerk.
79 Deák, *Hungary at the Peace Conference*, p. 166.
80 I, *DBFP*, vol. 6, no. 331.
81 Ibid., vol. 2, no. 33 appendix A, Report of Sir George Clerk.
82 Ibid., vol. 6, no. 300.
83 Ibid., no. 331 note 3.
84 Count Albert Apponyi to the Supreme Council 15 Jan. 1920, ‘Address of the President of the Hungarian Peace Delegation’, in Deák, *Hungary at the Peace Conference*, doc. 44, pp. 539–49.
85 Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, p. 187.
86 O.Jászi, ‘The Two Paths in Hungary’, *The New Europe*, 20 Nov. 1919, vol. 13, no. 162.
87 R.W.Seton-Watson, ‘Hungary in the Grip of Reaction’, ibid., 27 Nov. 1919, Ibid., no. 163.
88 British White Paper, Command 673, 1920.

89 *The White Terror in Hungary, Report of the British Joint Labour Delegation to Hungary, May 1920,* London: St Clements Press, Ltd, 1920, pp. 1–24. The actions of Iván Héjjas, Pál Prónay and István Bibó were discussed in the report.
90 Jászi, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary,* preface pp. vii–xvii; pp. 153–5.
91 Ibid., preface, p. xxi.
92 Clerk to Seton-Watson 6 Dec. 1924, *Seton-Watson papers,* SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.
93 I, *DBFP,* voI.6, no. 112.
94 G.Ránki, *Economy and Foreign Policy: the Struggle of the Great Powers for Hegemony in the Danube Valley, 1919–1939,* New York: Columbia University Press, 1983, pp. 11–23; A. Teichova, *An Economic Background to Munich: International Business and Czechoslovakia, 1918–1938,* London: Cambridge University Press, 1974, pp. 14–15.
95 W.Roger Louis, 'The Great Middle East Game and Still No Winner', *The New York Times,* Book Review 27 Aug. 1989, pp. 3, 23.
96 Deák, *Hungary at the Peace Conference,* p. 143.
97 Sakmyster, *Admiral on Horseback,* pp. 46–57.
98 T.L.Sakmyster, 'Great Britain and the Establishment of the Horthy Regime', in John Morison (ed.), *Eastern Europe and the West,* New York: St Martin's Press, 1992, pp. 74–9.
99 I, *DSFP,* vol. 6, no. 412.
100 I.Romsics, *The Dismantling of Historic Hungary: The Peace Treaty of Trianon, 1920,* New York: Columbia University Press, 2002, pp. 114–15.
101 M.Lojko, 'Missions Impossible: General Smuts, Sir George Clerk and British Diplomacy in Central Europe in 1919', in M.L.Dockrill and J.Fisher (eds), *The Paris Peace Conference, 1919: Peace without Victory?* New York: Palgrave, 2001, pp. 125–35 on British failure to support Clerk's recommendations and democratizing initiative.

3
Nation-building in the New Europe: Czechoslovakia 1920–6

1 Clerk to Rumbold 30 Aug. 1918, *Sir Horace Rumbold papers,* Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS.Rumbold dep. 25, fols. 68 and 77.
2 Clerk to Seton-Watson 2 Feb. 1920, R.W.Seton-Watson papers, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London, SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.
3 I[st Series], *D{ocuments on} B{ritish} F{oreign} P{olicy, 1919–39},* E.L.Woodward and R. Butler (eds), London: HM Stationery Off, 1946–, vol. 6, no. 406; C.Gosling, *Travel and Adventure in Many Lands,* New York: E.P.Dutton & Company, 1926. This contains his experiences in Latin America. It ends at 1913.
4 *B{ritish} D{ocuments on} F{oreign} A{ffairs}: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print,* K.Bourne and D.Cameron Watt (eds), Bethesda, Maryland: University Publications of America, 1985–, Part II: Series I, *The Paris Peace Conference of 1919,* vol. 10, no. 22.
5 Harry Hanak, 'British Attitudes to Masaryk', in S.B.Winter, R.B.Pynsent and H. Hanak (eds), *T.G.Masaryk (1850–1937),* 3 vols, London: Macmillan, 1989–90, vol. 3, pp. 129–30.
6 I, *DBFP,* vol. 6, no. 1, 36.
7 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe,* London: Methuen, 1981, pp. 365–77.
8 I, *DBFP,* vol.6, no. 36.
9 Ibid., nos. 225, 257.
10 Ibid., no. 400 enclosures 1, 2, 3, 4.
11 Ibid., no. 402.
12 R.H.B.Lockhart, *Retreat from Glory,* New York: G.P.Putnam's Sons, 1934, p. 49–50.
13 I, *DBFP,* vol.6, no. 274.

14 C. and H.Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, p. 401.
15 'Sir George Clerk in Prague', *The New Europe*, 5 Feb. 1920, 17 vols, London: Constable & Co. 1916–1920, vol. 14, no. 173.
16 Clerk to Seton-Watson 2 Feb. 1920, *Seton-Watson papers*, SEW/17/4/2 folder Clerk.
17 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1920*, FO 371/5830 C 14612/14612/12.
18 R.H.B.Lockhart, *Memoirs of a British Agent*, London: Putnam, 1932, pp. 162–5, 208, 236, 240–1, 251–2, 290.
19 R.H.B.Lockhart, *My Rod My Comfort*, London: G.P.Putnam, 1957, p. 44.
20 Lockhart, *Retreat from Glory*, pp. 62–3; R.H.B.Lockhart, *Jan Masaryk: A Personal Memoir*, London: Dropmore Press, 1951, p. 11.
21 Clerk to Curzon 10 Feb. 1920, FO 404/1/41.
22 Clerk to Curzon 22 Mar. 1920, FO 404/1/55.
23 Clerk to Curzon 2 Aug. 1920, FO 371/4722 C 3194/2565/12.
24 See Director of Military Intelligence, Political Reports, Prague in FO 371/4722 for July, August and September 1920.
25 Clerk to Phipps (secret) 1 Sept. 1920, FO 371/4720 C 5942/1914/12.
26 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1920*, FO 371/5830 C 14612/14612/12.
27 Clerk to Curzon 19 Nov. 1920, FO 404/2/92; Clerk to Curzon 26 Nov. 1920, FO 404/2/97.
28 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1920*, FO 371/5830 C 14612/14612/12.
29 Prince Clary, *A European Past: memories*, London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1978, pp. 214–23.
30 Lockhart, *Retreat from Glory*, pp. 5 6–7, 50.
31 Lockhart, *Retreat from Glory*, pp. 66–9; A.Marès, 'Formation et développement du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères Tchécoslovaque, 1918–1932', *Relations Internationales* 31, 1982, pp. 309–10.
32 Portland to Curzon 8 Aug. 1920, FO 371/4720 C 4206/1914/12.
33 Clerk to Curzon 17 Aug. 1920; undated minute by Lord Curzon on this despatch states, 'No the Clarys'. Clerk to Phipps, private, 18 Aug. 1920, FO 371/4720 C 4207/1914/12. Francis Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, 1903–35.
34 Phipps to Clerk 25 Aug. 1920, Ibid.
35 War Office to FO 24 Sept. 1920, FO 371/4723 C 7266/7266/12.
36 Storr to FO 29 Nov. 1920, Storr to Cunningham 29 Nov. 1920 enclosure: J.G.Vance, 'A Brief Statement concerning the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia'; Cadogan minute 24 Nov. 1920, Oliphant to Clerk 9 Dec. 1920, FO 371/4721 C 12923/1968/12; Clerk to Curzon 17 Dec. 1920, Cadogan undated minute, C 14280/1968/12.
37 Lockhart, *Retreat From Glory*, p. 54.
38 Director of Military Intelligence to FO 25 June 1920, FO 371/4720 C 1905/1905/12.
39 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1920*, FO 371/5830 C 14612/14612/12.
40 C. a C.Repington, *After the War: A Diary*, London: Constable, 1922, diary entries, 26, 29, 30 Mar., 1, 2, 4 Apr. 1921, pp. 108, 115, 118, 124–8, 131.
41 J.Kooker, 'French Financial Diplomacy: The Interwar Years', in B.Rowland (ed.), *Balance of Power or Hegemony: The Interwar Monetary System*, New York: New York University Press 1976, pp. 93–8. See also A.Lentin, *Lloyd George, Woodrow Wilson and the Guilt of Germany*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984.
42 R.H.Ullman, *Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917–1921*, 3 vols, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, vol. 2, pp. 90–2, 96–8, 105, 136–40.
43 I, *DBFP*, vol. 2, no. 56 minute 2.
44 G.Ránki, *Economy and foreign Policy: the Struggle of the Great Powers for Hegemony in the Danube Valley, 1919–1939*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1983, pp. 11–23.
45 A.Teichova, *An Economic Background to Munich: International Business and Czechoslovakia, 1918–1938*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1974, pp. 24–30, 92–109.

46 M.Adam, *The Little Entente and Europe (1920–1929)*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993, pp. 89–94.
47 M.J.Carley, 'Anti-Bolshevism in French Foreign Policy: the Crisis in Poland 1920', *International History Review* 2, 1980, pp. 414–15.
48 M.Adam, 'France and Hungary at the Beginning of the 1920s', in B.Király, P.Pastor and I.Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I; Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon*, New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 145–82; Adam, *The Little Entente*, pp. 84–8.
49 P.S.Wandycz, 'The Little Entente: Sixty Years Later', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 59, 1981, p. 551 a contemptuous reference in *Pesti Hírlap* 21 Feb. 1920.
50 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1920*, FO 371/5830 C 14612/14612/12.
51 A.Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1920–1923*, London: Oxford University Press, 1925, pp. 287–303.
52 A.Orde, 'France and Hungary in 1920: Revisionism and Railways', *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, 1980, pp. 483–4.
53 P.S.Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919–1925*, Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 1962, pp. 186–95.
54 Piltz to Minister of Foreign Affairs 30 Aug 1920, cited in Wandycz, ibid., p. 197.
55 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1920*, FO 371/5830 C 14612/14612/12.
56 S.Roskill, *Hankey, Man of Secrets*, 2 vols, London: Collins, vol. 2, 1970–4, diary entry, 20 July 1920, pp. 180–1, 183–4.
57 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1920*, FO 371/5830 C 14612/14612/12.
58 I, *DBFP*, vol. 22, no. 54.
59 Toynbee, *Survey, 1920–1923*, pp. 292–7.
60 I, *DBFP*, vol. 22, no. 467.
61 Adam, *The Little Entente*, pp. 122–5, 147–8, 161–4.
62 Ibid., pp. 114–5, 130–2, 165.
63 I, *DBFP*, vol. 22, no. 479.
64 Ibid., nos. 504, 507, 516, 517.
65 Ibid., no. 488.
66 Ibid., no. 518.
67 Hohler to Curzon 1 Nov. 1921, private office 'individual' papers: *Sir George Clerk*, FO 794/8.
68 Ibid., Hohler to Curzon 10 Nov. 1921.
69 Ibid., Curzon to Clerk 12 Nov. 1921.
70 Ibid., Clerk to Curzon 14 Nov. 1921.
71 Ibid., Crowe to Hardinge 16 Nov. 1921, Crowe to Hohler 18 Nov. 1921, Crowe to Clerk 18 Nov. 1921.
72 Ibid., Tufton minute 15 Nov. 1921, Tyrrell minute 15 Nov. 1921.
73 Ibid., Curzon to Hardinge 1 Nov. 1921.
74 Ibid., Crowe to Clerk 18 Nov. 1921, Hardinge to Curzon 29 Oct. 1921.
75 Ibid., Clerk to Crowe 29 Nov. 1921, Hardinge to Crowe 18 Nov. 1921.
76 Clerk to Curzon Mar. 1922 'Report on Heads of Missions': Couget, FO 404/5/36.
77 A.Orde, *British Policy and European Reconstruction after the First World War*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 110–12.
78 Z.P.Pryor, 'Czechoslovak Economic Development in the Interwar Period', in V.S. Mamatey and R.Luža (eds), *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, pp. 192–7.
79 Clerk to Curzon 14 Oct. 1921, enclosure: Robert Bruce Lockhart, 'Memorandum on the Draft Agreement concluded between the Czecho-Slovak Government and the Bank of England', FO 371/5786 C 19833/13400/3.
80 I, *DBFP*, vol. 22, no. 392.

81 A.Orde, ‘Baring Brothers, the Bank of England, the British Government and the Czechoslovak State Loan of 1922’, *English Historical Review* 106, 1991, p. 30.
82 Clerk to Crowe, private and confidential, 29 Nov. 1921, Cadogan minute 5 Dec. 1921, FO 371/5829 C 23034/12572/12.
83 I, *DBFP*, vol. 22, no. 562.
84 Clerk to Crowe 16 Dec. 1921, FO 371/5829 C 23552/12572/12.
85 Clerk minute 11 Jan. 1922, FO 371/7384 C 922/388/12.
86 Spencer Smith to Bruce Lockhart 25 Jan. 1922, FO 371/7384 C 1220/388/12.
87 Bruce Lockhart to Clerk 26 Jan. 1922, ibid., C 1289/388/12.
88 Masaryk to Curzon 31 Jan. 1922, Cadogan minute 1 Feb. 1922, Crowe minute 1 Feb. 1922, FO 371/7390 C 1489/1489/12.
89 Clerk to Revelstoke 8 Feb. 1922, FO 371/7384 C 1799/388/12.
90 Orde, ‘Baring Brothers’, pp. 32–3.
91 Clerk to Curzon 14 Apr. 1922 enclosure: Memorandum His Majesty’s Commercial Secretary on the Czechoslovak State Loan and the Anglo-Czech Bank, FO 404/5/63.
92 Orde, ‘Baring Brothers’, p. 28.
93 Lampson minute 20 Apr. 1922, FO 371/7386 C 5635/390/12.
94 Jan Masaryk to Curzon 8 Apr. 1922, Cadogan minute 12 Apr. 1922, FO 371/7385 C 5438/387/12.
95 I, DBFP, vol. 24, no. 69.
96 Ibid., no. 163. Clerk to Curzon (secret) 30 Aug. 1922, FO 371/7390 C12462/1670/12; A.Snejdarek, ‘La Politique Étrangère de la Tchécoslovaquie de 1918 a 1923’, *Relations Internationales* 31, 1982, p. 292 attributes initiative to Beneš.
97 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, no. 178.
98 Ibid., no. 260.
99 Ibid., no. 296.
100 R.D.Challener, ‘The French Foreign Office: the Era of Philippe Berthelot’, in G.A. Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 52–3; P.Guinn, ‘On Throwing Ballast in Foreign Policy: Poincaré, the Entente and the Ruhr Occupation’, *European History Quarterly* 18, 1988, pp. 427–37.
101 F.G.Campbell, *Confrontation in Central Europe: Weimar Germany and Czechoslovakia*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1975, p. 122.
102 Wandycz, *Eastern Allies*, p. 276.
103 Ibid., pp. 280–1.
104 Clerk to Curzon 17 May 1923, FO 371/8574 C 8950/437/12.
105 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, no. 391.
106 Clerk to Crowe 28 May 1923, FO 371/8574 C 9739/437/12; FO to Clerk 8 June 1923, Curzon to Clerk 11 June 1923, Butler minute 6 June 1923, Lampson minute 6 June 1923, C 9697/437/12.
107 Wandycz, *Eastern Allies*, p. 281.
108 Orde, *Policy and Reconstruction*, pp. 116–4 5
109 R.H.B.Lockhart, *A Son of Scotland*, New York: G.P.Putnam, 1938, pp. 102–6; D.B. Kunz, ‘American Bankers and Britain’s Fall from Gold’, in H.James, H.Lindgren and A.Teichova (eds), *The Role of Banks in the Interwar Economy*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 36.
110 Orde, ‘Baring Brothers’, pp. 35–6.
111 R.Machray, *The Little Entente*, New York: H.Fertig, 1970, pp. 205–7, 215–17; I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, no. 362.
112 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, preface viii–ix.
113 Orde, ‘Baring Brothers’, p. 37.
114 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, no. 452.
115 See Adam, *The Little Entente*.

116 E.Beneš, *Memoirs of Dr. Eduard Beneš*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1954, p. 9.
117 Lampson minute 4 July 1923, enclosure: draft FO to Niemeyer 4 July 1923, including extracts from Clerk letter undated but probably 20 June 1923, FO 371/8574 C 11634/437/12.
118 Clerk to Lampson 3 July 1923, FO 371/8572 C 11955/56/12.
119 Cadogan to Treasury 4 July 1923, FO 371/8572 C 11732/56/12, Niemeyer to Foreign Office 7 July 1923, C 11816/56/12 Niemeyer to Lampson 7 July 1923.
120 J.Laroche, *Au Quai D'Orsay avec Briand et Poincaré, 1913–1926*, Paris: Hachette, 1957, pp. 185–6.
121 Adam, *The Little Entente*, p. 260.
122 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, no. 484.
123 Adam, *The Little Entente*, p. 261.
124 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, nos. 497, 502.
125 Ibid., nos. 478, 505.
126 Ibid., nos. 495, 501, 509, 510.
127 Clerk to Lampson 1 Aug. 1923, FO 371/8864 C 13636/942/21.
128 Clerk to Curzon 14 Aug. 1923, Butler minute 22 Aug. 1923, Lampson minute 21 Aug. 1923, Tyrrell minute 21 Aug. 1923, Nicolson to Clerk 29 Aug. 1923, Nicolson to Norman 29 Aug. 1923, FO 371/8572 C 14274/56/12.
129 Sir William Goode, former president of the Austrian Reparation Commission and unofficial adviser to the Hungarian government.
130 Clerk to Lampson 5 Sept. 1923, Butler minute 12 Sept. 1923, Cadogan to Norman 14 Sept. 1923, Cadogan to Clerk 14 Sept. 1923, FO 371/8572 C 15698/56/ 12.
131 Butler minute 7 July 1923 'M.Beneš visit to London', FO 371/8575 C 12228/437/ 12.
132 Clerk to Curzon 12 July 1923, FO 371/8575 C 12303/437/12.
133 *President Masaryk in Paris, Brussels and London in October 1923*, Prague: Prümyslová Tiskárna, 1924, pp. 9–10.
134 Campbell, *Confrontation in Central Europe*, p. 122.
135 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, no. 563.
136 Campbell, *Confrontation in Central Europe*, p. 125.
137 Clerk to Crowe 8 Nov. 1923, FO 800/387.
138 Wandycz, *Eastern Allies*, appendix VI, p. 300.
139 I, *DBFP*, vol. 24, No.609 note 1, note 5; Butler minute 29 Dec. 1923, FO 371/8583 C 22322/2597/12, Butler minute 2 Jan. 1924, C 22432/2597/12.
140 *The Times*, 1 Jan. 1924.
141 I, *DBFP*, vol. 26, no. 8.
142 Ibid., no. 23.
143 Adam, *The Little Entente*, pp. 195–204.
144 Wandycz, *Eastern Allies*, p. 303.
145 Lord D'Abernon, *An Ambassador of Peace*, 3 vols, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1929, vol. 3, diary entry, 14 Jan. 1924, p. 35.
146 Clerk to Curzon 10 Jan. 1924, FO 404/9/6.
147 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1923*, FO 371/9678 C 4053/4053/12.
148 Clerk to MacDonald 30 Jan. 1924, FO 371/9676 C 1993/909/12.
149 E.Beneš and R.W.Seton-Watson, 'President Masaryk in Exile', *The Slavonic Review* 3, June 1924–Mar. 1925, p. 610.
150 Clerk to MacDonald 10 Mar. 1924, FO 404/9/26.
151 Lampson minute 31 Mar. 1924, FO 371/9676 C 5075/909/12.
152 *Foreign Office List*, s.v. Robert Townsend Smallbones.
153 See FO 404/7/62 and FO 371/8582.
154 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1924*, FO 371/10679 C 12875/2287/12; Clerk to Chamberlain 4 Dec. 1924, FO 371/9677 C 18532/918/12.

155 Treasury to FO 19 Mar. 1924, FO 371/9674 C 4731/119/12; Clerk to MacDonald 10 Oct. 1924 C 15889/119/12.
156 Lampson minute 30 Dec. 1924, Chamberlain minute 30 Dec. 1924, ibid., C 19243/119/12.
157 C.Howard Smith minute 'Czechoslovak War Debts', 16 June 1925, Nicolson minute 17 June 1925, Lampson minute 17 June 1925, Chamberlain minute 19 June 1925, FO 371/10678 C 7312/2005/12.
158 J.Jacobson, *Locarno Diplomacy: Germany and the West, 1925–1929*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972, pp. 13–14.
159 D'Abernon, *Ambassador of Peace*, vol. 3, diary entry, 11 Aug. 1925, p. 183.
160 Wandycz, *Eastern Allies*, pp. 337.
161 E.Beneš, *The Diplomatic Struggle for European Security and the Stabilisation of Peace*, Prague: Orbis, 1925, pp. 20–3.
162 Clerk to Chamberlain 8 Apr. 1925, FO 371 10674 C 5120/256/12.
163 Z.J.Gasiorowski, 'Beneš and Locarno: Some Unpublished Documents', *Review of Politics* 20, 1958, pp. 215–17.
164 Wandycz, *Eastern Allies*, pp. 334–47.
165 Ibid., *Eastern Allies*, p. 362.
166 Clerk to Chamberlain 4 Nov. 1925 enclosure: *Prager Presse* 3 Nov. 1925, FO 371/10678 C 14249/1688/12.
167 Annual Report, *Czechoslovakia 1925*, FO 371/11232 C 14606/14606/12.
168 Clerk to Chamberlain 23 Nov. 1925, private collections: ministers and officials: *Austen Chamberlain*, FO 800/258 folios 757–759; Selby to Clerk 1 Dec. 1925, folio 805.
169 V.S.Mamatey, 'The Development of Czechoslovak Democracy, 1920–1938', in Mamatey and Luža, *History of the Czechoslovak Republic*, 1973, pp. 126–9.
170 Clerk to Chamberlain 4 May 1926, FO 371/11227 C 5487/83/12.
171 Clerk to Chamberlain 26 Apr. 1926, Ibid., C 5324/83/12.
172 Clerk to Chamberlain 4 May 1926, Ibid., C 5487/83/12.
173 Clerk to Chamberlain 24 June 1926, Ibid., C 7267/83/12.
174 Clerk to Chamberlain 19 May 1926, Ibid., C 6212/83/12, Clerk to Chamberlain 8 June 1926 enclosure: Dick to Clerk 2 June 1926, Dowden memorandum, C 6737/83/12.
175 J.Zorach, 'The Enigma of the Gajda Affair in Czechoslovak Politics in 1926', *The Slavic Review* 35, 1976, p. 683.
176 Clerk to Chamberlain 12 July 1926, FO 371/11227 C 8048/83/12, Dodd to Chamberlain 4 Aug. 1926, C 8857/83/12.
177 Zorach, 'Enigma of the Gajda Affair', p. 689.
178 Clerk to Chamberlain 18 Aug. 1926, enclosure: R.W.Oldfield to Clerk 18 Aug. 1926, FO 371/11227 C 9345/83/12; Clerk to Chamberlain 6 Oct. 1926, C 10842/83/ 12.
179 Zorach, 'Enigma of the Gajda Affair', pp. 689–98.
180 Clerk to Chamberlain 18 Aug. 1926, FO 371/11227 C 9346/83/12.
181 Dodd to Chamberlain 27 July 1926, Aveling minute 4 Aug. 1926, ibid., C 8579/83/12.
182 Dodd to Chamberlain 13 Oct. 1926, Aveling minute 14 Oct. 1926, ibid., C 10926/83/12.
183 Clerk to Chamberlain 28 Oct. 1926, FO 371/11228 C 11755/83/12.
184 Dodd to Chamberlain 16 Nov. 1926, ibid., C 12215/83/12.
185 Dodd to Chamberlain 2 Nov. 1926 enclosures: Beneš to Clerk; Clerk to Beneš 30 Oct. 1926; *Prager Presse* 31 Oct. 1926, FO 371/11233 C 11756/11756/12.
186 M.Cornwall, 'A Fluctuating Barometer: British Diplomatic Views of the Czech-German Relationship in Czechoslovakia, 1918–1938', in Bad Wiesseer Tagungen des Collegium Carolinum, *Great Britain, the United States, and Bohemian lands 1848–1938*, 16, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991, pp. 321–2.
187 Dodd to Chamberlain 2 Nov. 1926, enclosure: *Ceskoslovenská Republika* 30 Oct. 1926, FO 371/11233 C 11756/11756/12.

4
Repairing relationships: the New Turkey 1926–33

1 Sir G.R.Clerk, 'Memories of Istanbul', in *The Times, The New Turkey*, London: The Times Publishing Company Ltd, 1938, p. 1.
2 IA[Series], *D{ocuments on} B{ritish} F{oreign} P{olicy, 1919–39}*, E.L.Woodward and R. Butler (eds), London: HM Stationery Off., 1946–, vol. 2, nos. 451, 453.
3 Lindsay to Chamberlain 21 July 1926, FO 424/265/8.
4 Clerk to Chamberlain 24 Nov. 1926, enclosure: speech by Sir G.Clerk, FO 424/265/45.
5 Clerk to Chamberlain 30 Nov. 1926, FO 424/265/47.
6 Knox to Oliphant 2 Dec. 1926, FO 371/11557 E 6855/6855/44.
7 1A, *DBFP*, vol. 2, no. 466.
8 Clerk to Chamberlain 29 Dec. 1926, FO 424/266/1.
9 Oliphant minute 3 Jan. 1927, FO 371/12308 E 17/17/44.
10 Clerk to Chamberlain 4 Jan. 1927, enclosure: Clerk to Oliphant 15 Dec. 1926, FO 424/266/2.
11 H.Nicolson, *Peacemaking, 1919*, London: Constable, 1933, pp. 34–5.
12 S.F.Evans, *The Slow Rapprochement: Britain and Turkey in the Age of Kemal Atatürk, 1919–1938*, Beverley, N.Humber: The Eothen Press, 1982, p. 37.
13 Evans, *Slow Rapprochement*, pp. 5–80; R.H.Davison, 'Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne', in G.A.Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 172–209.
14 A.Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1928*, London: Oxford University Press, 1925–, p. 188.
15 Ibid., *Survey of International Affairs 1925*, vol. 1, pp. 67–80.
16 Ibid., *Survey of International Affairs 1928*, pp. 206–34.
17 Ibid., appendix.
18 Lindsay to Chamberlain 21 July 1926, FO 424/265/8.
19 Hoare to Chamberlain 18 Aug. 1926, enclosure: Helm memorandum, FO 424/265/15; Hoare to Chamberlain 30 Aug. 1926, enclosure: Helm memorandum 28 Aug. 1926, FO 424/265/16.
20 Clerk to Chamberlain 9 June 1927, enclosure: Knox memorandum 20 May 1927, FO 424/266/45.
21 Clerk to Chamberlain 29 June 1927, FO 424/267/1.
22 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 3, no.512; Hoare to Oliphant 16. Mar. 1927, FO 371/12315 E 720/128/44.
23 Clerk to Chamberlain 5 Mar. 1927, FO 424/266/22.
24 Clerk to Chamberlain 3 May 1927, FO 424/266/37.
25 Clerk to Chamberlain 9 June 1927, enclosure: Knox memorandum 20 May 1927, FO 424/266/45.
26 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 3, no. 522.
27 Oliphant memorandum 9 June 1927, FO 371/12320 E 2601/255/44.
28 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 3, no. 524.
29 Clerk to Chamberlain 10 Aug. 1927, enclosure: Hadow memorandum 10 Aug. 1927, FO 424/267/28.
30 Clerk to Chamberlain 15 Aug. 1927, enclosures: Knight to Clerk 19 May; Knight to Clerk 30 June; Chafy to Clerk 14 May; 'Fiscal Administration' 28 June 1927, FO 424/267/30.
31 Hoare to Chamberlain 28 Dec. 1927, enclosure: 'Difficulties of British Interests in Turkey', FO 371/13080 E 16/16/44.
32 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 7, no. 328.
33 Ibid., no. 332.
34 Oliphant to Clerk 23 Jan. 1928, FO 371/13080 E 253/16/44; Oliphant to Clerk personal 14 Jan. 1928, FO 371/13080 E 16/16/44.
35 Clerk to Oliphant, 25 Jan. 1928, ibid.

36 Clerk to Chamberlain 1 Feb. 1928, FO 371/13080 E 570/16/44.
37 1A, *DBFP*, vol. 7, no. 340.
38 Ibid., no. 351.
39 Knight minute 24 Feb. 1928, FO 371/13080 E 813/16/44.
40 Knox to Oliphant, personal, 11 Mar. 1928, FO 371/13080 E 1476/16/44.
41 Oliphant minute, 12 Mar. ibid., E 813/16/44.
42 Seymour minute 13 Apr. 1928, FO 371/13081 E 1853/16/44.
43 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 7, nos. 354, 361.
44 Ibid., 355.
45 Ibid., 376.
46 Ibid., 394.
47 Clerk to Cushenden 24 Oct. 1928, FO 424/268/29a.
48 Annual Report, *Turkey 1927*, FO 371/13096 E 1149/1149/44.
49 Clerk to Chamberlain 12 July 1927, enclosure: Helm note, FO 424/267/7.
50 Clerk to Chamberlain 20 July 1927, enclosures: report by Watkinson, undated; Knight to Clerk 12 June 1927; Chafy to Clerk 27 May 1927; report by consular office, Adrianople 25 May 1927, FO 424/267/11; Clerk to Chamberlain 27 July 1927, enclosures: memorandum by consular officer at Smyrna, undated; Chafy to Clerk 21 June 1927; Knight to Clerk 31 May 1927; Dawkins to Clerk 11 Apr. 1927, FO 424/267/15. See also Clerk to Chamberlain 27 July 1927, FO 424/267/16.
51 Annual Report, *Turkey 1927*, FO 371/13096 E 1149/1149/44.
52 Clerk to Chamberlain 25 Jan. 1928, FO 424/268/14.
53 Knox to Chamberlain 28 Mar. 1928, FO 424/268/29.
54 Clerk to Chamberlain 22 May 1928, FO 424/268/67.
55 Annual Report, *Turkey 1928*, FO 371/13824 E 906/906/14.
56 Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1928*, pp. 158.
57 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 7, no. 395.
58 Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1928*, pp. 147–52.
59 Clerk to Chamberlain 6 July 1928, FO 424/269/6.
60 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 7, no. 409
61 Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs* 1928, pp. 332–6.
62 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 7, no.44l.
63 Ibid., no. 434.
64 Ibid., no. 438.
65 Clerk to Chamberlain 7 Jan. 1929, enclosure: Notes on a Tour in Anatolia November 1928, FO 424/270/5.
66 Clerk to Chamberlain 13 Jan. 1929, FO 424/270/10.
67 Clerk to Chamberlain 30 Apr. 1929, FO 424/270/46.
68 Clerk to Chamberlain 29 May 1929, FO 424/270/62.
69 Clerk to Chamberlain 10 Feb. 1929, FO 424/270/26.
70 Clerk Chamberlain, 14 June 1929, FO 424/270/66.
71 Clerk to Henderson 23 Oct. 1929, FO 424/271/66.
72 IA, *DBFP*, vol. 7, no. 482.
73 Ibid., no. 496.
74 Ibid., appendix.
75 Annual Report, *Turkey 1930*, FO 371/15376 E 913/913/44.
76 Clerk to Henderson 12 Feb. 1930, FO 424/272/21; D.Barlas, *Étatism and Diplomacy in Turkey: Economic and Foreign Policy Strategies in an Uncertain World, 1929–1939*, Leiden: Brill, 1998, pp. 124–5.
77 Clerk to Henderson 25 Feb. 1930 FO 371/14568 E 1137/282/44.
78 Edmonds to Henderson 26 Mar. 1930, FO 371/14568 E 1661/282/44.
79 Waley to Rendel 3 Apr. 1930, FO 371/14568 E 1753/282/44.

80 Edmonds to Henderson 1 Apr. 1930, FO 371/14568 E 1790/282/44.
81 Rendel memorandum, 'Turkish Financial Situation', 3 Apr. 1930, FO 371/14568 E 1741/282/44.
82 Waley to FO 7 Apr. 1930, FO 371/14568 E 1810/282/44.
83 FO memorandum, 'Turkish Financial Situation', 16 Apr. 1930, FO 371/14569 E 2077/282/44; ibid., E 2078/282/44.
84 Oliphant minute 29 Apr. 1930, FO 371/14569 E2204/282/44.
85 Clerk to Oliphant 30 April & 1 May 1930, FO 371/14569 E 2309/282/44. In his letter of 30 April, Sir George Clerk included no dates only days of his meetings in Paris and Angora. The Foreign Office entered the dates apparently incorrectly on the text of the letter. Clerk must have arrived in Constantinople on Monday 21 April 1930 not 28 April and his meeting with Ismet Inönü and Tewfik Rüstü on Wednesday 23 April not 28 April. See Monteagle minute 25 April 1930 which seems to confirm this interpretation: E 2151/282/44.
86 Clerk to Oliphant 7 May 1930, FO 371/14569 E 2367/282/44; Annual Report, *Turkey* 1930, FO 371/15376 E 913/913/44.
87 Clerk to Henderson 1 July 1930, FO 424/273/8.
88 *The Times*, 24 Nov. 1930; *Financial Times*, 25 Nov. 1930.
89 Helm to Knight 20 Aug. 1930, FO 371/14570 E 4603/282/44.
90 Clerk to Henderson 4 Sept. 1930, FO 424/273/76.
91 Rendel minute 18 Sept. 1930, FO 371/14585 E 4975/3476/44.
92 Annual Report, *Turkey 1930*, FO 371/15376 E 913/913/44.
93 Clerk to FO 24 Nov. 1930, FO 371/14571 E 6347/282/44.
94 Clerk to Oliphant, private and confidential, 27 Nov. 1930, FO 371/14572 E 6533/282/44; Barlas, *Étatism and Diplomacy*, pp. 84–6.
95 Annual Report, *Turkey 1930*, FO 371/15376 E 913/913/44; Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs* 1930, pp. 174–7.
96 Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1930*, pp. 145–68.
97 Clerk to Henderson 8 Dec. 1930, FO 424/273/143.
98 Annual Report, *Turkey 1931*, FO 371/16091 E 222/222/44.
99 Vansittart note 6 Feb. 1931, FO 424/274/9.
100 Clerk to Henderson 14 July 1931, FO 424/275/4.
101 Toy nbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1931*, pp. 325–41.
102 Annual Report, *Turkey 1931*, FO 371/16091 E 222/222/44.
103 Clerk to Reading 2 Nov. 1931, FO 424/276/35.
104 Clerk to Simon 11 Apr. 1932, FO 371/16089 E 1966/70/44.
105 Annual Report, *Turkey 1932*, FO 371/16983 E 529/529/44.
106 Morgan to Simon 31 Mar. 1933 FO 424/278/28; Barlas, *Étatism and Diplomacy*, p. 129.
107 Annual Report, *Turkey 1933*, FO 371/17959 E 596/596/44.
108 Annual Report, *Turkey 1932*, FO 371/16983 E 529/529/44.
109 D.Cameron Watt, *How War Came*, New York: Pantheon, 1989, p. 271.
110 Clerk to Gaselee 17 Aug. 1933, FO 371/16987 E 4977/4977/44.
111 Helm minute 22 Sept. 1933, FO 371/16986 E 5596/1506/44.
112 Greig to FO 18 Nov. 1933; Rendel minute 3 Dec. 1933, FO 371/16984 E 7202/533/44.
113 Annual Report, *Turkey 1931*, FO 371/16091 E 222/222/44.
114 Clerk to Simon 6 Jan. 1932; Oliphant to Simon 25 Jan. 1932; Simon to Clerk 26 Jan. 1932, private collections: ministers and officials: *Sir John Simon*, FO 800/286 fols. 44–9, 42–3, 180–1.
115 Annual Report, *Turkey 1932*, FO 371/16983 E 529/529/44.
116 Oliphant minute 15 Sept. 1933; Oliphant to Clerk 15 Sept 1933, FO 371/16987 E4977/4977/44.
117 Clerk to Oliphant 4 Nov. 1932, private and personal, FO 371/16089 E 6033/34/44.

118 Clerk to Chamberlain 24 Nov. 1926, enclosure: Dobbs memorandum 22 Nov. 1926, FO 424/265/46; Clerk to Oliphant 20 Dec. 1926, enclosure: Dobbs Note on conversation with Tewfik Rushdi Bey at dinner at Angora 23 Nov. 1926, 29 Nov. 1926, FO 371/11557 E 7086/6677/44.
119 Morgan to Simon 2 Oct. 1933, FO 424/279/26.
120 Rendel minute 24 Oct. 1933; Simon to Clerk 26 Oct. 1933, FO 371/16978 E 6264/86/44.
121 Waterlow to Oliphant 11 Oct. 1933; Clerk to Oliphant 22 Oct. 1933; Morgan to Waterlow 28 Oct. 1933, FO 371/16984 E 6663/533/44.
122 Clerk, 'Memories of Istanbul', in *The Times, The New Turkey*, p. 51.
123 Clerk to Chamberlain 21 Feb. 1928, FO 424/268/20.
124 Clerk to Colefax, 1 Oct. 1928; Clerk to Colefax 1 May 1929, *Sybil Colefax papers*, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms.Eng. c. 3160, fols. 111–14.
125 C.Gladwyn, *The Paris Embassy*, London: Collins, 1976, p. 214.
126 Clerk to Colefax, undated letter, *Colefax papers*, Ms.Eng. c. 3160, fols. 115–16.
127 *New York Times*, 26 Feb. 1934; *The Times*, 26 Feb. 1934.
128 Rumbold to Clerk 6 June 1933, *Sir Horace Rumbold papers*, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rumbold dep. 40, fols. 237–8.
129 *British Documents on Foreign Affairs:* Reports and papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, K.Browne and D.Cameron Watt (eds), Bethsda, Maryland: University Publications of America, 1985 Part II: Series F, *Europe, 1919–1939*, vol. 30 no. 40.
130 Clerk to Simon 3 Feb. 1932, *Simon papers*, FO 800/286 fols. 202–4.

5
'Ripe for a mighty enterprise': France 1934–5

1 Sir R.Vansittart, *The Mist Procession*, London: Hutchinson, 1958, p. 216.
2 L.Oliphant, 'Sir George Russell Clerk, 1874–1951', *D{ictionary of} N{ational} B{iography} 1951–1960*, London: Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. 229–30.
3 *The Times*, 20 Apr. 1934.
4 Vansittart to Simon 9 Jan. 1934, Phipps to Simon 4 Jan. 1934, private office individual papers: *Sir Eric Phipps* FO 794/16.
5 Fisher to Vansittart 8 Jan. 1934, FO private office 'individual' papers: *Sir George Clerk*, 794/8.
6 Vansittart to Simon private and personal 13 Jan. 1934, Ronald to Clive Wigram 30 Jan. 1934, ibid.
7 *The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart*, K.Young (ed.), 2 vols, London: Macmillan, 1973, 1980, vol. 1, diary entry, 16 Aug. 1936, pp. 351–2.
8 Phipps to Sargent 20 Mar. 1934, private collections: ministers and officials: *Sir Orme Sargent*, FO 800/275 Ge 34/11.
9 C.Gladwyn, *The Paris Embassy*, London: Collins, 1976, pp. 212–17; V.Lawford, *Bound for Diplomacy*, London: J.Murray, 1963, pp. 299–301.
10 *The Times*, 21 June 1934; F.G.Stambrook, "'Das Kind"—Lord D'Abernon and the Origins of the Locarno Pact', *Central European History* 1, 1968, pp. 237–9.
11 G.Martel (ed.), *The Times and Appeasement: the Journals of A.L.Kennedy, 1932–1939*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 137
12 J.B.Duroselle, *La Decadence 1932–1939*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1979, pp. 92–9.
13 C.Cook, *Sources in British Political History, 1900–1951*, 5 vols, London: Macmillan, 1975–81, vol. 2. p. 48.
14 Clerk to Vansittart 28 June 1934, FO 371/17747 C 4439/247/18.
15 *Bruce Lockhart Diaries*, vol. 1, diary entry, 25 Oct. 1934, p. 305.

16 E.R.Cameron, *Prologue to Appeasement: A Study in French Foreign Policy*, Washington: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942, pp. 70–5.
17 II[nd Series], *D{ocuments on} B{ritish} F{oreign} P{olicy, 1919–39}*, E.L.Woodward and R. Butler (eds), London: HM Stationery Off., 1946–, vol. 6, no. 454.
18 Ibid., no. 463.
19 Ibid., nos. 488, 489.
20 K.Middlemas and J.Barnes, *Baldwin: A Biography*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969, p. 775.
21 II, *DBFP*, vol. 6, no. 547.
22 Ibid., vol. 12, nos. 155, 156.
23 Clerk to Sargent, 5 Dec. 1934, FO 371/17659 C8161/291/17.
24 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 299.
25 Ibid., no. 136.
26 Ibid., no. 235.
27 Ibid., no. 155.
28 R.Rhodes James, *Anthony Eden*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986, pp. 114–41.
29 A.Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, London: Cassell, 1962, pp. 102–7.
30 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, nos. 263, 278.
31 Campbell to Eden 7 Dec. 1934, *Sir Anthony Eden papers*, Birmingham University, AP14/1/270.
32 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 200; Baron *Aloisi, Journal*, Paris: Plon, 1957, entries 9 and 10 December 1934, pp. 235–7; Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 117–19.
33 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, No. 287.
34 Ibid., no. 288.
35 Ibid., no. 291.
36 Ibid., no. 299, note 3.
37 Harvey to Sargent 16 Dec. 1934, private collections: ministers and officals: *Sir Orme Sargent papers*, FO 800/274 Fr/34/5.
38 Ibid., Fr/34/6.
39 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 299.
40 Sargent minute 14 Dec. 1934, FO 371/17670 C8563/3434/17.
41 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 306.
42 Ibid., no. 308.
43 Ibid., no.311.
44 1e *Série D{ocuments} D{iplomatiques} F{rançais, 1932–9}*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1965–, vol. 8, No. 420; D.Cameron Watt, 'The Secret Laval-Mussolini Agreement of 1935 on Ethiopia', in E.M.Robertson (ed.), *The Origins of the Second World War*, London: Macmillan, 1971, 225–42; II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, nos.157, 160; E.R.Cameron, 'Alexis Saint-Léger Léger', in G.A.Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 382–6.
45 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 335.
46 Ibid, no. 359.
47 Ibid., nos. 369, 368.
48 Ibid., nos. 374, 375.
49 Ibid., no. 376.
50 Ibid., no. 382.
51 Ibid., no. 384.
52 Ibid., nos. 381, 386.
53 Ibid., nos. 397, 398, 399, 400.
54 *D{ocuments} on G{erman} F{oreign} P{olicy, 1918–45}*, London: HM Stationery Office, 1949–, Series C 1933–1937, vol. 3, no. 490.
55 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 546.

56 Vansittart, *Mist Procession*, pp. 507–8.
57 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 533.
58 Ibid., nos. 581, 587, 588, 590.
59 Ibid., no. 608.
60 Ibid., no. 617.
61 N.Rostow, *Anglo-French Relations, 1934–1936*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1984, pp. 138–42; Rhodes James, *Eden*, pp. 142–5.
62 II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, nos. 682, 686.
63 Ibid., no. 663.
64 Ibid., no. 697.
65 Ibid., no. 703.
66 Ibid., no. 678 and note 5.
67 Ibid., no. 722.
68 Cameron, *Prologue*, pp. 113–4; II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 722, Fourth Meeting 12 April.
69 Rostow, *Anglo-French Relations*, pp. 150–1; II, *DBFP*, vol. 12, no. 728.
70 Rhodes James, Eden, pp. 147–8.
71 Clerk to Eden 8 June 1935 private & personal, *Eden papers*, AP14/1/403.
72 D.Cameron Watt, 'The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935: an Interim Judgment', *Journal of Modern History* 28, 1956, pp. 155–75.
73 II, *DBFP*, vol. 13, no. 319.
74 N.Rose, *Vansittart: A Study of a Diplomat*, London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1978, pp. 118–19.
75 II, *DBFP*, vol. 13, nos. 230, 327.
76 Ibid., nos. 335, 336.
77 Ibid., no. 338.
78 Ibid., no. 343.
79 Ibid., no. 353.
80 Ibid., nos. 362, 363.
81 Ibid., no. 357.
82 Rostow, *Anglo-French Relations*, p. 172.
83 Derby to Clerk 2 July 1935. *Earl of Derby papers*, Public Record Office, Liverpool, 920/DER/17 35/14.

6
The crisis of security: France 1935–7

1 II[nd Series], *D{ocuments on) B{ritish} F{oreign} P{olicy, 1919–39}*, E.L.Woodward and R. Butler (eds), London: HM Stationery Off., 1946–, vol. 14, no. 29.
2 A.Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, London: Cassell, 1962, p. 193.
3 Murray to Phillips 17 Dec. 1934, memorandum by Breckinbridge Long, 19 Sept. 1934, *F{oreign} R{elations of the} U{nited} S{tates}*, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1951–, 1934, vol. 2. pp. 755–6, 768–9.
4 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 163.
5 Ibid., no. 175.
6 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 179–80.
7 L.Noël, *Les Illusions de Stresa*, Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1975, pp. 85, 59.
8 N.Rose, *Vansittart: A Study of a Diplomat*, London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1978, pp. 157–62.
9 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, nos. 230, 231, 232, note 4.
10 Ibid., no. 250.

11 Ibid., no. 255.
12 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, p. 209; II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 282.
13 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 290.
14 Ibid., no. 307.
15 Ibid., no. 310.
16 C.A.Micaud, *The French Right and Nazi Germany, 1933–1939: A Study of Public Opinion*, New York: Octagon, 1964, pp. 48–61; F.D.Laurens, *France and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis, 1935–1936*, Paris: Mouton, 1967, pp. 53–8.
17 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 301.
18 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 220–9; II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, nos. 320, 325.
19 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 232–5; II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 327.
20 II, *DBFP*, vol. 13, nos. 383, 384.
21 Ibid., vol. 14, nos. 338, 342, 343.
22 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 237–8.
23 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, nos. 348, 354, 360, 361.
24 Ibid., no. 384.
25 Ibid., nos. 403, 407; Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 245–6.
26 K.Middlemas, J.Barnes, *Baldwin: A Biography*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969, p. 840.
27 II, *DBFP*, vol. 13, nos. 419, 428.
28 Eden, Facing the Dictators, p. 247.
29 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, nos. 442, 458, 465.
30 Sir G.Thompson, *Front-line Diplomat*, London: Hutchinson 1959, pp. 106–7.
31 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 487.
32 Ibid., no. 485.
33 R.A.C.Parker, 'Great Britain, France and the Ethiopian Crisis 1935–1936', *English Historical Review* 89, 1974, pp. 305–6; II *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 493.
34 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, nos. 491, 494.
35 Ibid., nos. 498, 505, 506.
36 Ibid., no. 520.
37 Ibid., no. 547.
38 Lord Templewood, *Nine Troubled Years*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1976, pp. 163–71.
39 II, *DBFP*, vol. 14, no. 553.
40 Ibid., No. 554; Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, p. 260.
41 Micaud, *French Right*, pp. 54–61; II, DBFP, vol. 14. no. 572.
42 Pertinax, *The Gravediggers of France*, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company 1944, pp. 417, 430.
43 Parker, 'Ethiopian Crisis', pp. 306–8.
44 II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, no. 74.
45 Ibid., nos. 81, 82.
46 Ibid., nos. 87, 91, 95.
47 Eden *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 282–3.
48 II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, nos. 88, 108, 134.
49 M.Peterson, *Both Sides of the Curtain*, London: Constable, 1950, p. 33.
50 II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, no. 150.
51 J.C.Robertson, 'The Hoare—Laval Plan', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 10, 1975, pp. 437–8. II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, no. 178; Parker, pp. 311–15.
52 Clerk to Hoare 24 Oct. 1935, FO 371/18793 C 7226/33/17.
53 Clerk to Hoare 25 Nov. 1935, FO 371/18794 C 7861/33/17.
54 II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, no. 229 and note 6.
55 Ibid., No.235.

56 Clerk to Hoare 25 Nov. 1935; Sargent minute 26 Nov. 1935, Vansittart minute 25 Nov. 1935; Eden minute 27 Nov. 1935, FO 371/18794 C 7853/33/17.
57 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 291–4. II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, no. 251.
58 II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, nos. 247, 248.
59 Ibid., no. 245.
60 Ibid., nos. 251, 270.
61 Ibid., nos. 262, 269
62 Parker, 'Ethiopian Crisis', pp. 317–321; II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, nos. 329, 330, 335, 336 and note 3, 337, 338; J.B.Duroselle, *La Decadence 1932–1939*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1979, pp. 151–2.
63 S.Ball (ed.), *Parliament and Politics in the Age of Churchill and Attlee: The Headlam Diaries, 1935–1951*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1999, diary entry, 13 Oct. 1938, pp. 139–40.
64 Parker, 'Ethiopian Crisis', pp. 322–3.
65 E.R.Cameron, *Prologue to Appeasement: A Study in French Foreign Policy*, Washington: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942, pp. 172–9.
66 Parker, 'Ethiopian Crisis', p. 324.
67 G.Martel (ed.), *The Times and Appeasement: The Journals of A.L.Kennedy, 1932–1939*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, diary entry, 31 Jan. 1936, pp. 189–90.
68 Ball, *Headlam Diaries*, pp. 139–40.
69 Clerk to Hoare 15 Dec. 1935, FO 371/19170 J 9439/1/1.
70 R.J.Young, *In Command of France: French Foreign Policy and Military Planning, 1933–1940*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978, pp. 106–7.
71 *B{ritish} D{ocuments on) F{oreign} A{ffairs}: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print*, K.Bourne and D.Cameron Watt (eds), Bethesda, Maryland: University Publications of America, 1985–, Part II, Series F, vol. 22, pp. xiii–xiv.
72 R.Rhodes James, *Anthony Eden*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986, pp. 154–6.
73 Diary entry, Wednesday 23 May 1934, *Eden papers*, AP20/1/14; A.Eden, *Full Circle: The Memoirs of Anthony Eden*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960, p. 210.
74 Diary entry, Saturday 12 May 1934, *Eden papers*, AP20/1/14.
75 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 316–21.
76 Clerk to Hoare 25 Nov. 1935, FO 371/18794 C 7861/33/17; II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, no. 418 note 1.
77 II, *DBFP*, vol. 15, nos. 424, 436 note 2.
78 Ibid., no. 484.
79 Ibid., no. 500.
80 Ibid., no. 517.
81 Ibid., nos. 521, 517, note 4.
82 Ibid., no. 437; J.Harvey (ed.), *The Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1937–1940*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1970, diary entry, 7 Mar. 1937, p. 22.
83 II, DBFP, vol. 15, no. 554.
84 Ibid., vol. 16, no. 39.
85 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 344–7.
86 *The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart*, K.Young (ed.), 2 vols, London: Macmillan, 1973, 1980, vol. 1, diary entry, 16 Aug. 1936, pp. 351–2.
87 C.Gladwyn, *The Paris Embassy*, London: Collins, 1976, pp. 214–5; V.Lawford, *Bound for Diplomacy*, London: J.Murray, 1963, pp. 299–301.
88 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 346–54.
89 II, *DBFP*, vol. 16, no. 70 note 1.
90 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 355–6; II, *DBFP*, vol. 16, nos. 88, 91.
91 Young, *In Command of France*, pp. 124–5, 284.
92 II, *DBFP*, vol. 16, no. 112.

93 Ibid., nos. 111, 120.
94 Ibid., no. 119.
95 Ibid., no. 129.
96 Ibid., no. 139 and notes 3 & 4; Lawford, *Bound for Diplomacy*, p. 278.
97 *BDFA*, Part II, Series F, vol. 22, nos. 41, 35, 36; Gladwyn, *Paris Embassy*, p. 217.
98 II, *DBFP*, vol. 16, no. 330.
99 M.D.Gallagher, 'Léon Blum and the Spanish Civil War', *Journal of Contemporary History* 6, 1971, p. 56.
100 D.Carlton, 'Eden, Blum, and the Origins of Non-Intervention', *Journal of Contemporary History* 6, 1971, pp. 40–1. On intervention see also Geoffrey Warner, 'France and Non-intervention in Spain, July-August 1936', *International Affairs* 38, 1962, pp. 203–20.
101 II, *DBFP*, vol. 17, nos. 19, 39, 31, 44.
102 Ibid., no. 67; II, 1e Série *D{ocuments} D{iplomatiques} F{rançais, 1932–9}*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1965–, vol. 3, no. 108.
103 II, *DBFP*, vol. 17, nos. 80, 81, 72.
104 Pertinax, *Gravediggers of France*, p. 433.
105 On the threat of Locarno, see H.Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, New York: Harper, 1961, p. 258; A.Werth, *Which Way France?* London: Harper & Bros., 1937, p. 379; C.G. Bowers, *My Misson to Spain*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1954, pp. 281–2. For Eden's denial, see Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 401, 405; II, *DBFP*, vol. 17, nos. 113, 147.
106 II, *DBFP*, vol. 17, no. 56.
107 Gallagher, 'Léon Blum', p. 62; Carlton, 'Origins of Non-Intervention', p. 52.
108 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 401–7.
109 II, *DBFP*, vol. 17, no. 281, 224 and notes 3 & 4; Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, pp. 407–10, 414–15.
110 BDFA, Part II, Series F, vol. 22, nos. 68, 71, 72, 73, 74.
111 Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, p. 383; Harvey, *Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey*, diary entry, 7 Mar. 1937, p. 22; Rhodes James, *Eden*, pp. 116, 175.
112 Personal Communication: Lord Gladwyn, letter to author 24 Mar. 1988. Lord Gladwyn stated that Clerk seldom read his dispatches, and, when he did, he did not regard them as 'remarkable'. Gladwyn was Vansittart's private secretary from 1937–40.
113 *Bruce Lockhart Diaries*, ed. Young, vol. 1, diary entry, 21 Dec. 1937, p. 383.
114 J.Bryan III, C.J.V.Murphy, *The Windsor Story*, New York: Morrow, 1979, pp. 196–7; D. Wells Hood, *Working for the Windsors*, London: A.Wingate, 1957, pp. 10–11; 52; J. Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe, A Life in the High Style*, New York: Atheneum, 1982, pp. 270.
115 Clerk to Eden 28 Jan. 1937, *Eden papers*, AP14/1/642A.
116 *The Times*, 3 Feb. 1937.
117 Lawford, *B ound for Diplomacy*, p. 287.
118 *The Times*, 5, 16 Feb., 3, 19 March. 5, 6, 9, 10 Apr. 1937; Lawford, *Bound for Diplomacy*, p. 325–7.
119 *The Times*, 20 June 1951.
120 *The Times*, 27 Feb. 1934.
121 Rose, *Vansittart*, p. 80; M.L.Roi, *Alternatives to Appeasement: Sir Robert Vansittart and Alliance Diplomacy, 1934–1937*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1997, p. 102.
122 J.Herman, *The Paris Embassy of Sir Eric Phipps: Anglo-French Relations and the Foreign Office, 1937–1939*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1998, pp. 11–12.
123 Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe*, pp. 259, 277, 287.
124 Pertinax, *Gravediggers of France*, p. 423.

Conclusion

1 Vansittart to Eden 14 September 1936, *Eden papers*, AP14/1/631.
2 N.Rose, *Vansittart: A Study of a Diplomat*, London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1978, p. 203; for Henderson, see G.Protheroe, 'The Shaping of a Mission', MA thesis, London School of Economics, 1984, p. 3.
3 *D{ocuments} on G{erman} F{oreign} P{olicy, 1918–45}*, London: HM Stationery Office, 1949-, Series D 1937–1945, vol. 1, no. 128.
4 D.Cameron Watt, 'Appeasement: the Rise of a Revisionist School?', *Political Quarterly* 36(2), 1965, p. 191.
5 R.Henig, 'New Diplomacy and Old: a Reassessment of British Conceptions of a League of Nations, 1918–1920', in M.L.Dockrill and J.Fisher (eds), *The Paris Peace Conference, 1919: Peace without Victory?* New York: Palgrave, 2001, pp. 157–74.
6 M.L.Dockrill, *British Establishment Perspectives on France, 1936–40*, New York: St Martin's Press, Inc., 1999, pp. 45–9.
7 Maxwell to Clerk 6 Nov. 1939, Clerk to Maxwell 8 Nov. 1939; Clerk to Maxwell 9 May 1941, HO45/25114 863686/5, 2, 19. For interrogation of Sir Oswald Mosley and Lady Diana Mosley, see HO 45/24891; HO 144/21995.
8 *The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart*, K.Young (ed.), 2 vols, London: Macmillan, 1973, 1980, vol. 1, diary entry, 27 Oct. 1938, pp. 405–6.
9 Clerk to Hinks 27 June 1941, Royal Geographical Society private papers, Kensington, London, fol. 1; *Who Was Who*, vol. 5, 1951–60, lists Clerk's address on his death as 5 Egerton Place S.W. 3.
10 *Geographical Journal*, London: Royal Geographical Society, vol. 117, Jan.–Dec. 1951, p. 369.
11 Clerk to Sargent 15 Jan. 1947, private collections: ministers and officials: *Sir Orme Sargent*, FO 800/277 Mis.47/1.
12 *The Times*, 20 June 1951.
13 *The Times*, 23 June; 18 July 1951.
14 C.Cook, *Sources in British Political History, 1900–1951*, 5 vols, London: Macmillan, 1975–81, vol. 2, p. 48.
15 *Geographical Journal*, vol. 117, Jan.–Dec. 1951, p. 488.

Bibliography

Primary sources: government archives, Public Record Office, Kew, London
Cabinet Papers:
CAB 2/1C Allied Conference at Petrograd, Jan.-Feb. 1917.
CAB 16/36 Committee of Imperial Defence: Committee on Territorial Changes.
CAB 27/1 British Desiderata in Turkey in Asia.
Command Paper, 673.
Foreign Office Papers:
Confidential Prints:
FO 404 1919–26.
FO 424 Turkey, 1926–33.
Correspondence:
FO 371 2486.
FO 371 Austria, 1922.
FO 371 Czechoslovakia, 1919–26.
FO 369 Czechoslovakia, 1919–26.
FO 371 France, 1934–7.
FO 371 Germany, 1934.
FO 371 Turkey, 1926–33.
Foreign Office Index to the General Correspondence 1919–26.
Foreign Office List and Diplomatic and Consular Year Book. London 1898–1937.
Individual' Files:
Clerk. FO 794.
Phipps. FO 794.
Home Office papers:
HO 45.
HO 144.

Primary sources: private collections and private papers
Colefax, Sybil. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
Derby, Earl of. Public Record Office, Liverpool.
Eden, Sir Anthony. Birmingham University.
Royal Geographical Society. Kensington, London,
private papers, 4 fols. 1941–5.
Rumbold, Sir Horace. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
Seton-Watson, R.W. School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London.
Foreign Office Papers:
Private Collection—Ministers and Officials:
Cecil. FO 800.
Chamberlain, Austen. FO 800.
Crowe. FO 800.
Curzon. FO 800.

Sargent. FO 800.
Simon. FO 800. Public Record Office, Kew, London.

Primary sources: published documents

Beneš, E., *Five Years of Czechoslovak Foreign Policy*, Prague: Orbis, 1924.
——*The Diplomatic Struggle for European Security and the Stabilisation of Peace*, Prague: Orbis, 1925.
British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, K.Bourne and D.Cameron Watt (eds), Bethesda, Maryland: University Publications of America, 1985–.
——Part II, Series I, *The Paris Peace Conference of 1919*, vol. 10.
——Part II: Series F, *Europe, 1919–1939*, vols 22, 30.
British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914, G.P.Gooch and H.W.V. Temperley (eds), London: HM Stationery Off., 1926–1938, vol. 11.
Cocks, F.S., *The Secret Treaties and Understandings*, London: Union of Democratic Control, 1918.
Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1932–1939, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1965–. 1e Série: vols 3 and 8.
Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939, E.L.Woodward and R.Butler (eds), London: HM Stationery Off., 1946–.
Series I: vols 1, 2, 6, 12, 19, 24, 26.
Series I A: vols 2, 3, 7.
Series II: vols 6, 12, 13 14, 15, 16, 17.
Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918–1945, London: HM Stationery Office, 1949–.
Series C 1933–1937, vol. 3.
Series D 1937–1945, vol. 1.
Foreign Relations of the United States, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1951. 1934, vol. 2.
Papers and Documents relating to the Foreign Relations of Hungary, F.Deák and M.D. Ujváry (eds), Budapest: Royal Hungarian University Press, 1939, vol. 1 1919–1920.
President Masaryk in Paris, Brussels, and London in October 1923, Prague: Prümyslová Tiskárna, 1924.
Royal Geographical Society, Kensington, London.
Geographical Journal, vols 98–104, 117.
Rychlík, J, Marzik, T.D. and Bielik, M. (eds), *R.W.Seton-Watson and His Relations with the Czechs and Slovaks, Documents 1906–1951*, 2 vols, Prague: Matica Slovenská, 1995–6.
Seton-Watson, R.W, *Roumania and the Great War*, London: Constable, 1915.
——*The New Europe*, 17 vols, London: Constable & Co., 1916–20. vols 10, 12, 13, 14.
——*Europe in the Melting-Pot*, London: Macmillan, 1919.
——*The New Slovakia*, Prague: F.Borový, 1924.
The White Terror in Hungary, Report of the British Joint Labour Delegation to Hungary, May 1920, London: St Clements Press, Ltd, 1920.
The History of The Times, 6 vols, London: 1935.
Toynbee, A., *Survey of International History*, London: Oxford University Press, 1925–. vols 1920–3, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1928, 1930, 1931.
Walford, E., *Men of the Time*, London: Routledge, Warne & Routledge, 1862.
——*The County Families of the United Kingdom*, London: R.Hardwicke, 1865.

Secondary sources: memoirs

Aloisi, Baron, *Journal*, Paris: Plon, 1957.
Bandholtz, H.H., *An Undiplomatic Diary*, F.Krüger (ed.), New York: Columbia University Press, 1933.

Ball, S. (ed.), *Parliament and Politics in the Age of Churchill and Attlee: The Headlam Diaries, 1935–1951*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
Beneš, E., *Memoirs of Dr. Eduard Beneš*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1954.
Bowers, C.G., *My Misson to Spain*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1954.
Buchanan, Sir G., *My Mission to Russia and other Diplomatic memories*, 2 vols, London: Cassell, 1923.
Callwell, Sir C.E., *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, His Life and Times*, 2 vols, London: Cassell, 1927.
Cambon, P., *Correspondance, 1870–1924*, H.Cambon (ed.), 3 vols, Paris: Grasset, 1940–6.
Cecil of Chelwood, Viscount, *All the Way*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1949.
Clary, Prince, *A European Past*, memoirs, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1978.
Clerk, Sir G.R., *'Memories of Istanbul,' The Times, The New Turkey*, London: The Times Publishing Company Ltd., 1938.
Corbett, Sir V., *Reminiscences: Autobiographical and Diplomatic of Sir Vincent Corbett*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927.
D'Abernon, Lord, *An Ambassador of Peace*, 3 vols, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1929.
Darley, H.A.C., *Slaves and Ivory in Abyssinia: A Record of Adventure and Exploration among the Ethiopian Slave-Raiders*, New York: Robert McBride, 1935.
Deák, F, *Hungary at the Paris Peace Conference*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1942.
Dillon, E.J., *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, New York: Harper & Bros, 1920.
Eden, A., *Full Circle: The Memoirs of Anthony Eden*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960.
——*Facing the Dictators*, London: Cassell, 1962.
Einstein, L., *A Diplomat Looks Back*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.
Gosling, C., *Travel and Adventures in Many Lands*, New York: E.P.Dutton & Company, 1926.
Hankey, M.P.A., *The Supreme Command 1914–1918*, 2 vols, London: Allen & Unwin, 1961.
Harvey, J. (ed.), *The Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1937–1940*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1970.
Headlam-Morley, J., *A Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, A.Headlam-Morley *et al*. (eds), London: Methuen, 1972.
Hohler, Sir T, *Diplomatic Petrel*, London: John Murray, 1942.
Horthy, N., *Memoirs*, London: Robert Speller, 1957.
Jászi, O., *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*, London: P.S.King, 1924.
Larochz, J., *Au Quai D'Orsay avec Briand et Poincaré, 1913–1926*, Paris: Hachette, 1957.
Lawford, V., *Bound for Diplomacy*, London: J.Murray, 1963.
Lloyd George, D., *War Memoirs of David Lloyd George*, 6 vols, London: Nicholson & Watson, 1933–6.
Lockhart, R.B.H., *Memoirs of a British Agent*, London: Putnam, 1932.
——*Retreat from Glory*, New York: G.P.Putnam's Sons, 1934.
——*A Son of Scotland*, New York; G.P.Putnam, 1938.
——*Jan Masaryk: a Personal Memoir*, London: Dropmore Press, 1951.
——*My Europe*, London: Putnam, 1952.
——*What Happened to the Czechs?* London: Batchworth Press, 1953.
——*Your England*, London: G.P.Putnam, 1955.
——*My Rod My Comfort*, London: G.P.Putnam, 1957.
——*The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart*, K.Young (ed.), 2 vols, London: Macmillan, 1973, 1980.
Martel, G. (ed.), *The Times and Appeasement: the Journals of A.L Kennedy, 1932–1939*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
Masaryk, T., *The Making of a State*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1927.
Nicolson, H., *Peacemaking, 1919*, London: Constable, 1933.
Noël, L., *Les Illusions de Stresa*, Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1975.

Oxford and Asquith, *Speeches by the Earl of Oxford and Asquith*, New York: George H.Doran Company, 1927.
——*H.H.Asquith, Letters to Venetia Stanley*, M. and E.Brock (eds), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
Paléologue, M., *An Ambassador's Memoirs*, 3 vols, London: Hutchinson & Co., 1923–5.
Pertinax [André Geraud], *The Gravediggers of France*, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1944.
Peterson, M., *Both Sides of the Curtain*, London: Constable, 1950.
Portland, *Men, Women and Things: Memories of the Duke of Portland*, London: Faber & Faber, 1937.
Repington, C à C., *The First World War, 1914–1918*, 2 vols, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921.
——*After the War, a Diary*, London: Constable, 1922.
Saint-Aulaire, Comte de, *La Mythologie de la Paix*, Paris: Éditions Prométhée, 1930.
Seton-Watson, R.W, *Masaryk in England*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1943.
Skinner, R.P., *Abyssinia of To-day: An Account of the First Mission Sent by the Americans to the Court of the King of Kings (1903–1904)*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co, 1906.
Templewood, Lord, *Nine Troubled Years*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1976.
Thompson, Sir G., *Front-line Diplomat*, London: Hutchinson 1959.
Tilley, Sir J. and Gaselee, S., *The Foreign Office*, London: G.P.Putnam, 1933.
Steed, H.W., *Through Thirty Years*, 2 vols, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1924.
Vansittart, Sir R., *The Mist Procession*, London: Hutchinson, 1958.
Wells Hood, D., *Working for the Windsors*, London: A.Wingate, 1957.
Werth, A., *Which Way France?* London: Harper & Bros., 1937.

Secondary sources: biographies

Crowe, S. and Corp, E., *Our Ablest Public Servant: Sir Eyre Crowe 1864–1925*, Devon: Merlin Books, 1993.
Middlemas, K. and Barnes, J., *Baldwin: A Biography*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969.
Rhodes James, R., *Anthony Eden*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986.
Rose, N., *Vansittart: A Study of a Diplomat*, London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1978.
Roskill, S., *Hankey, Man of Secrets*, 2 vols, London: Collins, 1970–4.
Sakmyster, T.L., *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback: Miklós Horthy, 1918–1944*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
Smith, J., *Elsie de Wolfe, a Life in the High Style*, New York: Atheneum, 1982.
Trevelyan, G.M., *Grey of Fallodon*, New York: Longmans Green, 1937.
Waterfield, G., *Professional Diplomat: Sir Percy Loraine of Kirkharle, Bt., 1880–1961*, London: Murray, 1973.

Secondary sources: background studies

Adam, M., *The Little Entente and Europe (1920–1929)*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993.
Barlas, D., *Étatism and Diplomacy in Turkey: Economic and Foreign Policy Strategies in an Uncertain World, 1929–1939*, Leiden: Brill, 1998.
Bennett, G.H., *British Foreign Policy during the Curzon Period, 1919–1924*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1995.
Bryan, J. III and Murphy, C.J.V., *The Windsor Story*, New York: Morrow, 1979.
Busch, B.C., *Britain, India, and the Arabs, 1914–1921*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.
Calder, K.J., *Britain and the Origins of the New Europe, 1914–1918*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Cameron, E.R. *Prologue to Appeasement: A Study in French Foreign Policy*, Washington: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942.
Campbell, F.G., *Confrontation in Central Europe: Weimar Germany and Czechoslovakia,* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1975.
Chester, L, Fay, S. and Young. H., *The Zinoviev Letter,* New York: Heinemann, 1967.
Craig, G.A. and Gilbert, F. (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953.
Dockrill, M.L., *British Establishment Perspectives on France, 1936–40,* New York: St Martin's Press, Inc., 1999.
Dockrill, M.L. and McKercher, B.J.C. (eds), *Diplomacy and World Power: Studies in British Foreign Policy, 1890–1950,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
Duroselle, J.B., *La Decadence 1932–1939,* Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1979.
Evans, S.F., *The Slow Rapprochement: Britain and Turkey in the Age of Kemal Atatürk, 1919–1938,* Beverley, N.Humber: The Eothen Press, 1982.
Fink, C., *The Genoa Conference,* European Diplomacy 1921–1922, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
Fink, C, Frohn, A. and Heideking, J. (eds), *Genoa, Rapallo, and European Reconstruction in 1922,* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
Fromkin, D., *A Peace to End All Peace,* New York: Avon Books, 1989.
Gladwyn, C., *The Paris Embassy,* London: Collins, 1976.
Goldstein, E., *Winning the Peace: British Diplomatic Strategy, Peace Planning, and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916–1920,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
Hanak, H., *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary during the First World War.* London: Oxford University Press, 1962.
Heller, J., *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1914,* London: Frank Cass, 1983.
Herman, J., *The Paris Embassy of Sir Eric Phipps: Anglo-French Relations and the Foreign Office, 1937–1939,* Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1998.
Hinsley, F.H. (ed.), *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
Jacobson, J., *Locarno Diplomacy: Germany and the West, 1925–1929,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.
James, H, Lindgren, H. and Teichova, A. (eds), *The Role of Banks in the Interwar Economy,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
Kedourie, E., *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The MacMahon—Husayn Correspondence and Its Interpretations, 1914–1939,* London: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
Király, B, Pastor, P. and Sanders, I. (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. 6, Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon,* New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982.
Laurens, F.D., *France and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis, 1935–1936*. Paris: Mouton, 1967.
Lentin, A., *Lloyd George, Woodrow Wilson and the Guilt of Germany,* Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984.
Machray, R., *The Little Entente,* New York: H.Fertig, 1970.
Mamatey, V.S. and Luža R. (eds), *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.
Marcus, H.G., *The Life and Times of Menelik H: Ethiopia 1844–1913,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
Marks, S., *The Illusion of Peace,* London: Macmillan, 1976.
Micaud, C.A., *The French Right and Nazi Germany, 1933–1939: A Study of Public Opinion,* New York: Octagon, 1964.
Morison, J. (ed.), *Eastern Europe and the West,* New York: St Martin's Press, 1992.
Neilson, K., *Britain and the Last Tsars: British Policy and Russia, 1894–1917,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Nelson, H., *Land and Power*, London: Routledge & Paul, 1963.
Orde, A., *Great Britain and International Security, 1920–1926*, London: Royal Historical Society, 1978.
——*British Policy and European Reconstruction after the First World War*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
Prouty, C., *Empress Taytu and Menilek II: Ethiopia 1883–1910*, London: Ravens Educational and Development Services, 1986.
Ránki, G., *Economy and Foreign Policy: the Struggle of the Great Powers for Hegemony in the Danube Valley, 1919–1939*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.
Rechcigl, M., Jr. (ed.), *Czechoslovakia, Past and Present*, 2 vols, The Hague: Mouton, 1968.
Robertson, E.M. (ed.), *The Origins of the Second World War*, London: Macmillan, 1971.
Roi, M.L., *Alternatives to Appeasement: Sir Robert Vansittart and Alliance Diplomacy, 1934–1937*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1997.
Romsics, I., *The Dismantling of Historic Hungary: The Peace Treaty of Trianon, 1920*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.
Rostow, N., *Anglo-French Relations, 1934–1936*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1984.
Rothwell, V.H., *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy, 1914–1918*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.
Rowland, B. (ed.), *Balance of Power or Hegemony: The Interwar Monetary System*, New York: New York University Press, 1976.
Seton-Watson, H. and C., *The Making of a New Europe*. London: Methuen, 1981.
Seton-Watson, R.W., *A History of the Roumanians*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1934.
Steiner, Z., *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898–1914*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
Stone, N. and Stouhal, E. (eds), *Czechoslovakia: Crossroads and Crises, 1919–88*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989.
Teichova, A., *An Economic Background to Munich: International Business and Czechoslovakia 1918–1938*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1974.
——*The Czechoslovak Economy, 1918–1980*, London: Routledge, 1988.
Teichova, A. and Cottrell, P.L., *International Business and Central Europe, 1918–1939*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1983.
Temperley, H.W.V., *A History of the Paris Peace Conference*, 6 vols, London: H.Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton, 1920–4.
Thomas, H., *The Spanish Civil War*, New York: Harper, 1961.
Tibawi, A.L., *Anglo-Arab Relations and the Question of Palestine, 1914–1921*, London: Luzac & Company, 1978.
Ullman, R.H., *Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917–1921*, 3 vols, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.
Wandycz, P.S., *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919–1925*, Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 1962.
Watt, D.Cameron., *How War Came*, New York: Pantheon, 1989.
Winter, S.B, Pynsent, R.B. and Hanak, H. (eds), *T.G.Masaryk (1850–1937)*, 3 vols, London: Macmillan, 1989–90.
Young, R.J., *In Command of E ranee: French Foreign Policy and Military Planning, 1933–1940*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Secondary sources: articles

Adam, M., 'France and Hungary at the Beginning of the 1920s', in B.Király, P.Pastor and I. Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon*, New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 145–82.

Balogh, E.S., ‘Istvan Friedrich and the Hungarian Coup d’État of 1919: A Reevaluation’, *The Slavic Review* 35, 1976, pp. 269–86.
Beneš, E. and Seton-Watson, R.W., ‘President Masaryk in Exile’, *The Slavonic Review* 3, June 1924–March 1925, pp. 609–21.
Borsody, S., ‘Hungary’s Road to Trianon: Peacemaking and Propaganda’, in B.Király, P. Pastor and I.Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon*, New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 23–38.
Cairns, J.C., ‘A Nation of Shopkeepers in Search of a Suitable France’, *American Historical Review* 3, 1974, pp. 710–4l.
Cameron, E.R., ‘Alexis Saint-Léger Léger’, in G.A.Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 378–405.
Carley, M.J., ‘Anti-Bolshevism in French Foreign Policy: the Crisis in Poland 1920’, *International History Review* 2, 1980, pp. 410–31.
Carlton, D., ‘Eden, Blum, and the Origins of Non-Intervention’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 6, 1971, pp. 40–55.
Challener, R.D., ‘The French Foreign Office: the Era of Philippe Berthelot’, in G.A.Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 49–85.
Cornwall, M., ‘A Fluctuating Barometer: British Diplomatic Views of the Czech-German Relationship in Czechoslovakia’, in Bad Wiesseer Tagungen des Collegium Carolinum, *Great Britain, the United States, and the Bohemian Lands 1848–1938*, 16, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991, pp. 313–33.
Craig, G.A., ‘The British Foreign Office from Grey to Austen Chamberlain’, in G.A.Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 15–48.
Davison, R.H., ‘Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne’, in G.A.Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 172–209.
Ekstein, M.G., ‘Russia, Constantinople and the Straits, 1914–1915’, in F.H.Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 423–35.
Gallagher, M.D., ‘Léon Blum and the Spanish Civil War’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 6, 1971, pp. 56–64.
Gasiorowski, Z.J., ‘Polish-Czechoslovak Relations, 1918–1922’, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 35, 1956–7, pp. 172–93.
——‘Polish-Czechoslovak Relations, 1922–1926’, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 35, 1956–7, pp. 473–504.
——‘Beneš and Locarno: Some Unpublished Documents’, *Review of Politics* 20, 1958, pp. 209–24.
Guinn, P., ‘On Throwing Ballast in Foreign Policy: Poincaré, the Entente and the Ruhr Occupation’, *European History Quarterly* 18, 1988, pp. 427–37.
Hanak, H., ‘The New Europe’, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 39, 1961, pp. 369–99.
——‘The Government, The Foreign Office and Austria Hungary 1914–1918’, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 47, 1969, pp. 161–97.
——‘British Attitudes to Masaryk’, in S.B.Winter, R.B.Pynsent and H.Hanak (eds), *T.G. Masaryk (1850–1937)*, 3 vols, London: Macmillan, 1989–90, vol. 3, pp. 125–48.
——‘British Views of the Czechoslovaks from 1914–1924’, in Bad Wiesseer Tagungen des Collegium Carolinum, *Great Britain, the United States, and the Bohemian Lands 1848–1938*, 16, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991, pp. 87–105.
Henig, R., ‘New Diplomacy and Old: a Reassessment of British Conceptions of a League of Nations, 1918–1920’, in M.L.Dockrill and J.Fisher (eds), *The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Peace Without Victory?* New York: Palgrave 2001, pp. 157–74.

Jelinek, Y, 'Thomas G.Masaryk and the Foreign Office', in Bad Wiesseer Tagungen des Collegium Carolinum, *Great Britain, the United States, and the Bohemian Lands 1848–1938,* 16, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991, pp. 277–84.

Kertész, S.D., 'The Consequences of World War I: The Effects on East Central Europe', in B. Király, P.Pastor and I.Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon,* New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 39–57.

Kooker, J., 'French Financial Diplomacy: The Interwar Years', in B.Rowland (ed.), *Balance of Power or Hegemony: The Interwar Monetary System,* New York: New York University Press, 1976, pp. 83–145.

Kunz, D.B., 'American Bankers and Britain's Fall from Gold', in H.James, H.Lindgren and A.Teichova (eds), *The Role of the Banks in the Interwar Economy,* London: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 35–48.

Lojko, M., 'Missions Impossible: General Smuts, Sir George Clerk and British Diplomacy in Central Europe in 1919', in M.L.Dockrill and J.Fisher (eds), *The Paris Peace Conference, 1919: Peace without Victory?* New York: Palgrave 2001, pp. 115–39.

Louis, W.Roger, The Great Middle East Game and Still No Winner', *The New York Times,* Book Review 27 Aug. 1989, pp. 3, 23.

McKercher, B.J.C., 'Old Diplomacy and New, the Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1919–1939,' in M.L.Dockrill and B.J.C.McKercher (eds), *Diplomacy and World Power: Studies in British Foreign Policy, 1890–1950,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 79–115.

Mamatey, V.S., 'The Development of Czechoslovak Democracy, 1920–1938', in V.S.Mamatey and R.Luža (eds), *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, pp. 99–166.

Marès, A., 'Formation et développement du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères Tchécoslovaque, 1918–1932', *Relations Internationales* 31, 1982, pp. 295–312.

Orde, A., 'France and Hungary in 1920: Revisionism and Railways', *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, 1980, pp. 475–92.

——'Baring Brothers, the Bank of England, the British Government and the Czechoslovak State Loan of 1922', *English Historical Review* 106, 1991, pp. 27–40.

Parker, R.A.C., 'Great Britain, France and the Ethiopian Crisis 1935–1936', *English Historical Review* 89, 1974, pp. 293–332.

Protheroe, G., 'Sir George Clerk and the Struggle for British Influence in Central Europe, 1919–1926', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 12, 2001, pp. 39–65.

Pryor, Z.P., 'Czechoslovak Economic Development in the Interwar Period', in V.S.Mamatey and R.Luža (eds), *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, pp. 188–215.

Robertson, J.C., 'The Hoare—Laval Plan', *Journal of Contemporary History* 10, 1975, pp. 433–63.

Sakmyster, T.L., 'Great Britain and the Making of the Treaty of Trianon', in B.Király, P. Pastor and I.Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study in Trianon,* New York: Brooklyn College Press 1982, pp. 107–29.

——'From Habsburg Admiral to Hungarian Regent: The Political Metamorphosis of Miklós Horthy, 1918–1921', *East European Quarterly* 17, 1983, pp. 129–48.

——'Great Britain and the Establishment of the Horthy Regime', in J.Morison (ed.), *Eastern Europe and the West,* New York: St Martin's Press, 1992, pp. 71–80.

Seton-Watson, H., 'R.W.Seton-Watson and the Trianon Settlement', in B.Király, P.Pastor and I.Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon,* New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 3–13.

Sharp, A., 'The Foreign Office in Eclipse, 1919–1922', *History* 61, 1976, pp. 198–218.

Snejdarek, A., ‘La Politique Étrangère de la Tchécoslovaquie de 1918 a 1923’, *Relations Internationales* 31, 1982, pp. 283–94.
Soutou, G., ‘L’impérialisme du pauvre: la politique économique du gouvernement français en Europe centrale et orientale de 1918 a 1929’, *Relations Internationales* 7, 1976, pp. 219–39.
Stambrook, F.G., ‘“Das Kind”—Lord D’Abernon and the Origins of the Locarno Pact’, *Central European History* 1, 1968, pp. 233–63.
Steiner, Z., ‘The Foreign Office and the War’, in F.H.Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 516–31.
Vigh, K., ‘Causes and Consequences of Trianon: A Re-Examination’, in B.Király, P.Pastor and I. Sanders (eds), *War and Society in East Central Europe vol. 6, Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon*, New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 59–88.
Wandycz, P.S., ‘The Little Entente: Sixty Years Later’, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 59, 1981, pp. 548–64.
Warman, R.M., ‘The Erosion of Foreign Office Influence in the Making of Foreign Policy, 1916–1918’, *The Historical Journal* 15, 1972, pp. 133–59.
Warner, G., ‘France and Non-intervention in Spain, July—August 1936’, *International Affairs* 38, 1962, pp. 203–20.
Watt, D.Cameron, ‘The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935: an Interim Judgment’, *Journal of Modern History* 28, 1956, pp. 155–75.
——‘Appeasement: the Rise of a Revisionist School?’, *Political Quarterly* 36(2), 1965, pp. 191–213.
——‘The Secret Laval—Mussolini Agreement of 1935 on Ethiopia’, in E.M.Robertson (ed.), *The Origins of the Second World War*, London: Macmillan, 1971, pp. 225–42.
Zinner, P.E., ‘Czechoslovakia: the Diplomacy of Eduard Beneš’, in G.A.Craig and F.Gilbert (eds), *The Diplomats, 1919–1939*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 100–22.
Zorach, J., ‘The Enigma of the Gajda Affair in Czechoslovak Politics in 1926’, *The Slavic Review* 35, 1976, pp. 683–98.

Newspapers

Financial Times
1930:25 Nov.
The Times (London)
1915:23, 27 Apr.
1924:1 Jan.
1930:24 Nov.
1934:26 Feb., 20 Apr., 21 June.
1937:5, 16, 27 Feb., 3, 19 Mar., 5, 6, 9, 10 Apr.
1951:20, 23 June, 18 July.
New York Times
2001:8 Oct.

Research aids

Cook, C, *Sources in British Political History, 1900–1951*, 5 vols, London: Macmillan, 1975–81.
Dictionary of National Biography 1951–1960, London: Oxford University Press, 1971. *Who Was Who*, 10 vols, London: A&C Black, 1920–2001.
vol. 1 1897–1915.
vol. 5 1951–60.

Personal communication: letters to author
Gladwyn. Lord, 24 Mar. 1988.
Seton-Watson, Christopher, 31 Mar. 1988.

MA thesis
Protheroe, G., ‘Sir Nevile Henderson: the Shaping of a Mission’, London School of Economics, 1984.

Index

Abel-Allah Hassan, Muhammad (‘Mad Mullah’) 5, 6
Abdullah ibn Husayn 17, 20–1
Abernon, Lord D’ 110, 113, 155
Adowa, defeat of Italian army 5
Alexander, King 157
Alice, H.R.H.Princess 143
Alsace-Lorraine 33
Amanullah, King 133, 134, 135
Anglo-German Naval Agreement 168–70, 181, 199
Anglo-Russian entente (1907) 8
Angora 124–5, 126, 129, 130, 134, 138, 143, 147
anti-Semitism, attitude to Young Turks 8–9
Apponyi, Count 61–2, 65, 66
Arab nationalism 17
Arabia 22–3
Armstrong, Harold 146
Asquith, Herbert Henry 8, 12, 16, 30, 31, 32
Atatürk *see* Mustafa Kemal Atatürk
Austria 16, 166;
  reconstruction 101–2;
  relationship with Czechoslovakia 82–3
Austria-Hungary 10–13, 15–16, 29;
  Allies’ policy after World War I 39–40, 41;
  dismemberment 33;
  Italian declaration of war 27–8
Aveling, Francis 117

Badoglio, General 162
Baldwin, Stanley 112, 157, 159, 168, 174, 188, 190, 191, 195
Balfour, A.J. 12, 35, 38, 43
Balkan League 40
Balkan states 16, 17, 25, 28–30
Bandholtz, Harry H., Major General 44, 48– 9, 53, 59
Bank of Abyssinia 6
Barczy, István 62
Bargeton, Paul 172
Barrington, Eric 3–4
Barthou, Louis 155, 156–7, 158, 159, 160
Barton, Sir Sydney 171
Battle of the White Mountain (1620) 79
Beaumont-Nesbitt, Colonel F.G. 196
Becka, Bohdan 112

Belgium 14, 34, 152
Benckendorff, Count 27
Beneš, Eduard 77, 78, 80, 83, 85, 86–7, 88, 89, 92, 98, 107–10, 114, 117–18, 155, 165;
economy 93–7, 102–6, 112–13, 118;
Ruhr crisis 99–101
Berthelot, Philippe 52, 57, 92
Bertie, Francis 4
Bethlen, Count 105
Bethmann Hollweg, Theobald Von 11
Bevan, E.R. 38
Bibó, István 67
Bieberstein, Marschall von 9
Bismarck, Otto Eduard L. von 13
Blaisdell, Donald C. 142
Block, Sir Adam 122
Blum, Léon 181, 192, 193, 194, 195, 197–8
Bohemia 12, 15
Bouček, Dr 111, 116
Boulogne Conference (1916) 32
Bourbon, Prince Sixte de 12
Bourne, F.A., Cardinal 82
Bracken, Bernard 155
Bratianu, Ion C. 45–8
Briand, Aristide 31, 87, 92
Brinon, Fernand de 170
Brooke, Lady 186
(*see also* Eden, Elfrida Marjorie)
Bruce Lockhart *see* Lockhart, Robert Bruce
Buchanan, Sir George 19, 41
Buffalo (Clerk's nickname) 7
Bulgaria 28–9
Bunsen, Sir Maurice de 17, 18;
de Bunsen committee 19–20

Cadogan, Alexander 95, 97, 196
Caillaux, Joseph 191
Calais Conference (1915) 30
Callwell, Sir Charles 29
Cambon, Paul 24, 43–4
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry 8
Campbell, D.C. 61
Campbell, Ronald 157, 159, 163, 164, 198
Cardenas, Juan de 194
Cartwright, Captain 112
Cecil, Lord Robert 32, 38
Černý, Jan 94, 115–16
Cerruti, Vittorio 185
Chagall, Marc 190
Chamberlain, Neville 165, 177, 202
Chamberlain, Sir Austen 23, 113, 114–15, 121, 124, 125, 129, 174
Chambrun, Comte de 140, 141

Charles IV, King 87
Chautemps, Camille 194
Chelnokoff, Michael 36
Churchill, Winston 9, 17, 113, 176, 196
Ciano, Count Galeazzo 185
Ciccodicola, Frederico 5, 6
Clary, Prince 80
Clayton, Gilbert 21
Clemenceau, G.E.B. 39, 44, 84
Clerk, John 3
Clerk, Lady 84, 95, 135, 154, 186, 189–90
(*see also* Whitewell, Janet Muriel)
Clerk, Sir Godfrey, General 3
Colefax, Lady Sybil 151
Comert, Pierre 184
Constantinople 16–18, 25–6
Corbett, Vincent 4
Corbin, Charles 162, 166–7, 169, 178
Couget, Fernand 90–2, 98
Coulson, Basil 76, 81
Craigie, Sir Robert 169
Crawford, Sir Richard 139
Crewe, Lord 108
Cromer, Lord 7, 29
Crowe, Sir Eyre 10, 11–12, 17, 39;
Czechoslovakia 91, 95, 100, 108;
Hungary 48, 50, 51–2, 53, 57–8, 61, 65
Curzon, Lord 41, 43, 50–1, 53;
Czechoslovakia 78, 81, 87, 88, 89, 90–1, 104–5, 107, 109–10
Czechoslovakia 15, 16, 32, 38, 40, 41, 74– 119, 120, 201;
anti-Semitism 79–80;
economy 92–8, 101–7, 109, 112–13, 118;
fascism 116–17;
Little Entente 85, 86–7, 92, 97, 99, 102–5, 159, 175;
Locarno Agreements (1925) 113, 114–15, 117, 118;
relationship with France 85, 90–1, 98, 107–9, 114;
relationship with Germany 98–101, 109–10, 113–16;
relationship with Hungary 85, 86–9, 90– 2, 101–7, 109;
Ruhr crisis 99–101;
Treaty of Trianon 85, 86, 88, 89

Daladier, Édouard 191
Dalmatia 26, 30
Dardanelles 30
Darley, Henry, Major 6–7
Dawson, Geoffrey 155
De Bunsen committee 19–20
De Bunsen, Sir Maurice 17, 18
Delbos, Yvon 193, 194, 195
Delcassé, Théophile 26, 28
Derby, Lord 153, 170

Des Closières, Fernand 138–9, 140
Diamandy, Constantine 48, 55
Dillon, E.J. 44
Dodd, Charles 117
Dollfuss, Engelbert 157
Drummond, Eric 29, 176, 180, 185

'Eastern Locarno' Pact 156, 157, 166
Eastern Pact 160–5, 167
Eden, Elfrida Marjorie 186, 189
(*see also* Brooke, Lady)
Eden, Sir Anthony 153, 159, 164–5, 167, 168, 170, 173, 178, 184, 186–90, 192, 195–7, 198, 199
Edib Server Bey 127
Edward, Prince of Wales 197
Edward VII, King 152
Edward VIII, King 197
'Edwardians' ('reformers') 4
Egypt 21
Einstein, Lewis 11
Elliot, Maxine 197
Ethiopia:
Italy 5–7, 162, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171–87, 192, 199;
slave trade 6–7;
Tripartite Pact 7, 175
Evans, Sir Arthur 27

Faruqi, Muhammad Sharif al- 21, 23
Feisal, King 143
Ferdinand, King 47
Fethi Bey, Ali 141, 142
Fisher, Sir Warren 153, 154, 187
FitzGerald, Oswald, Lieutenant-Colonel 19
Fitzmaurice, Gerald 8
Flandin, Pierre-Etienne 157, 159, 161, 162, 163, 172, 180, 187–8, 190–1
Foch, Ferdinand, Marshal 84, 99–100, 104
Fouchet, Maurice 90–2
France 153–200;
Calais Conference 30;
Czechoslovakia-Hungary incident 90–1;
'Eastern Locarno' 156, 157, 166;
eastern Mediterranean 134;
Eastern Pact 160–5, 167;
economy 155;
German reoccupation of Rhineland 188–92, 195;
Hoare-Laval pact 183–6, 188;
Hungary 51–3;
interests in Middle East 21–5;
Popular Front government 192–6;
relationship with Czechoslovakia 85, 90–1, 98, 107–9, 111, 114;
relationship with Germany 155–70, 173, 175–6, 178, 181–2, 184, 187–92, 195, 199–200;
relationship with Italy 171–87, 192–3;

relationship with Spain 193–5, 199;
Rome Accords 162, 163, 167, 199;
Ruhr crisis 98–101;
Saar 159, 160, 161;
Somme campaign 32;
Stresa conference 165–6, 167, 168, 171–2;
Turkey 140–2, 145;
Versailles Treaty 84, 155, 158, 162, 163, 164, 167, 188;
Zeila proposal 173
Franco, Francisco 193
François-Poncet, André 181
Franz Ferdinand, Archduke 11
Friedrich, Stephen 44–5, 50, 54–5, 59–62, 65

Gajda, General 116–17
Gamelin, General 162, 190
Garami, Ernest 50, 59
Geneva Protocol 114
George V, King 39, 187
Germany 152, 184, 187, 199;
Anglo-German Naval Agreement 168–70, 181, 199;
British policy towards (1917) 33–4;
Hitler, A. 155, 157, 164–5, 166, 168, 169, 170, 184, 187, 188, 191, 192;
'Night of the Long Knives' 155, 157;
relationship with Czechoslovakia 98–101, 109–10, 113–16;
relationship with France 155–70, 155–200, 173, 175–6, 178, 181– 2, 184, 187–92, 195, 199–200;
reoccupation of Rhineland 188–92, 195;
Ruhr crisis 98–101;
World War I 13–16
Ghazi
(*see also* Mustafa Kemal Atatürk) 125
Gladstone, William Ewart 8
Gladwyn, Cynthia 190
Goebbels, J. 155
Gömbös, Gyula 57
Goode, Sir William 40
Gorton, Reginald St. George, Brigadier
General 44, 48–9, 67
Goschen, Edward 11
Gosling, Cecil 74–5, 76, 77, 78, 81
Graziani, Jean, General 44
Greece, relationship with Turkey 144
Greenwood, Arthur 195
Greig, Charles Alexis 147
Grey, Sir Edward 7, 8, 10;
World War I 11–12, 14, 17, 21, 23, 25, 26–8, 29, 30, 31

Habsburg Empire 40, 56, 76;
restoration 86–7, 92
Hadow, R.H. 127–30

Halifax, Lord 147
Hankey, Sir Maurice 17, 29, 30–1, 32, 35, 86;
peacemaking 41
Hardinge, Charles, Lord 4, 9, 12, 33, 38–9, 61;
Czechoslovakia 78, 91, 92
Harrington, Sir John Lane 5–6, 7
Harvey, Oliver 160–1, 162, 186, 197 198
Headlam, Sir Cuthbert 184, 185
Headlam-Morley, James 5 3
Héjjas, Iván 67
Helm, Alex 132, 134, 147
Henderson, Sir Arthur 136, 152
Henderson, Sir Nevile 201
Herriot, Édouard 160, 164, 165, 170, 181
Hitler, A. 155, 157, 164–5, 166, 168, 169, 170, 184, 187, 188, 191, 192, 199, 202, 203
Hlinka, Father Andrej 75, 78–9, 116
Hoare, Reginald 124, 125, 168, 170, 193, 195, 196, 199;
Ethiopia 173, 174, 176– 8, 181, 183–4
Hoare-Laval pact 183–6, 188
Hohler, Sir Thomas 7, 40, 66, 67;
Czechoslovakia 88, 89, 90–1
Holderness, Sir Thomas 18–19
Horthy, Nicholas, Admiral 54, 56–9, 65–7, 69, 87–8
Howard, Sir Esmé 41
Howard Smith, C. 113
Huguenin, Edouard 9
Humphreys, R.J. 89
Hungary 39, 40, 43–69;
anti-Semitism andWhite Terror 56–9, 65–6;
invasion ofSlovakia 75;
reconstruction 101–7, 118;
relationship with Czechoslovakia 85, 86–9, 90–2, 101–7, 109;
Romanian invasion 43–59, 69;
Versailles Treaty 111,
see also Austria-Hungary
Husayn, Sharif 19, 21–3
Huszár, Károly 62, 66

Islam, and declaration of war on Ottoman
Empire 16–17
Ismet Inönü 128, 138–41, 144, 145, 151, 202
Italy 14–15;
alliance during World War I 26–8;
declaration of war on Austria-Hungary 27–8;
Ethiopia 5–7, 162, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171–87, 192, 199;
Mussolini, Caesar Benito 7, 124, 134, 143, 145, 146, 162, 171–5, 177–9, 182– 6, 193;
relationship with France 171–87, 192–3;
relationship with Turkey 133, 134;
Rome Accords 19, 162, 163, 167;
treaty with Turkey 133
Ivo Mallet, William 135

Jászi, Oscar 55, 65, 67–9
Jebb, Gladwyn 196
Jehlička, František Dr 78
Joseph, Archduke (Hungary) 39, 44, 52, 54, 64
Jouvenel, Bertrand 188
Jovanovic, Jovan 35

Kaplan, Dora 78
Karakhan, Lev M. 137
Karl, King/Emperor (Hungary) 80, 86–8
Károlyi, Michael 44
Kemal *see* Mustafa Kemal Atatürk
Kennedy, A.L. 155, 184–5
Kerr, Philip 12
Kiamil Bey 150
Kitchener, Lord 16, 17, 19, 20
Knight, W L. 129
Knox, Geoffrey 125, 126–7, 129–30, 131
Kramář, Karel 82, 85–6, 118
Kun, Bela 44, 46, 47

Lagarde, Léonce 5
Lampson, Miles 97, 103, 106, 112, 113
Lansdowne, Lord 34
Laroche, Jules 104
Lausanne Treaty 123, 126, 128, 129–32, 137, 143
Laval, Pierre 7, 157–60, 162–3, 164, 169–70, 191;
Ethiopia 171, 172, 173–84, 187
Law, Bonar 98
Law, Nigel 184
Lawford, Valentine 154, 189, 196, 197, 198
Lawrence, Sir Herbert 139
Layton, Walter 36
League of Nations 114, 146, 155, 159, 163, 165, 166;
  Ethiopia 171–87;
  German reoccupation of Rhineland 188–92
Lebrun, Albert 198
Leeper, Allen 39, 40, 41, 48, 51
Leeper, Rex 189
Léger, Alexis 157, 162, 166, 190–1;
Ethiopia 170, 172, 173, 174, 177, 178–9, 183–4
Leith-Ross, Sir Frederick 139
Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich 38, 44, 78
Lincoln, Abraham 158
Lindbergh, Charles 200
Lindley, Francis 74–5
Lindsay, Sir Ronald 124
Little Entente (Czechoslovakia) 85, 86–7, 92, 97, 99, 102–5, 159, 175
Litvinov, Maxim 144, 156, 165, 167
Lloyd George, David 12, 17, 32, 38, 98, 176;

peacemaking 39;
Russia 35, 36, 37–8;
Turkey 12–13
Lloyd Thomas, Hugh 193, 194, 195, 197
Lobkowitz, Max, Prince 81–2
Locarno Agreements (1925) 113, 114–15, 117, 118, 167, 179, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 194
Lockhart, Robert Bruce 36, 77–8, 80, 81, 83, 93, 96–7, 101, 155–6, 189, 196
Loraine, Sir Percy 53, 148
Loree, Colonel James Taber 49
Lothian, Lord 164
Lowther, Sir Gerard 8, 9
Lvov, G.Y. 36

Macdonald, Ramsay 112, 146, 154, 167, 171
Macedonia 28
Maclean, Fitzroy 197
McMahon, Sir Henry 17, 19, 20–3
Magyars 76, 78–9
Maniu, Julius 47
Mallet, Sir Louis 9–10, 16, 33,
Mallet, William Ivo 135
Mantoux, Paul 32
Marin, Louis 156, 160
Masaryk, Thomas 15–16, 27, 31–2, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 86–7, 92, 98, 99–100, 107–8, 111, 115–17, 119, 125, 165;
peacemaking 41;
Ruhr crisis 99–100
Massigli, René 170, 171, 172, 183
Maxwell, General Sir John 21, 23
Mendl, Lady 197, 200
(*see also* Wolfe, Elsie de)
Mendl, Sir Charles 192, 197, 200
Menelik II 5, 6, 7
Mensdorff-Pouilly, Count Albert 12
Mesopotamia 21–2, 23–4
Metternich, Klemens von, prince 13
Millerand, Alexandre 85, 107
Milner, Lord 35–7
Misri, Aziz Ali al- 17
Mittelhauser 98
Mombelli, Ernesto, General 44
Morant, Sir Robert 3
Morgan, James 146, 150
Mosul 129
Mussolini, Caesar Benito 7, 124, 134, 143, 145, 146, 162, 171–5, 177–9, 182–6, 193, 203
Mustafa Kemal Atatürk 120, 122–5, 132–3, 134, 141, 142–5, 146, 147, 148–9, 150, 151
(*see also* Ghazi)

Namier, Lewis 38
nationalism 147;
Arab nationalism 17;

Masaryk on 16
Nazim Pasha 9
New Europe, The 35, 38, 39, 40, 41–2, 120;
Czechoslovakia 76, 110, 113;
Hungary 43, 46, 48, 52, 53, 54, 65, 68
Nicholas II, Tsar 36
Nicolson, Harold 12, 43, 65, 113, 122
Nicolson, Sir Arthur 4, 9, 11–12, 14, 17, 20– 3, 25, 30, 33, 45
Niemeyer, Otto 101, 102–4, 122
Nikolaievich, Nikolai 14
Noël, Léon 172
Norman, Montagu 93, 101, 102, 127
Northcliffe, Lord 38
Nuri Pasha 144

Ogaden 5
Oliphant, Lancelot 10, 12, 125, 128, 129, 130, 142, 148–9
Orlando, V.E. 39
Ostenburg, Gyula 57
Osuský, Stefan 155
Ottoman Empire 8–10, 16–25,
see also Turkey
Ovey, Sir Esmond 154

Paget, Sir Ralph 12, 33
Paléologue, Maurice 36, 85
Palestine 20, 23–4
Papanastassiou, Alexander 144
Pašić, Nicola 28
Peidl, Julius 44
Percy, Eustace 12
Pertinax (André Géraud) 178, 200
Pester Lloyd 55
Peterson, Maurice 108, 179, 183
Petibon, Colonel Jean 190
Phipps, Sir Eric 81–2, 152, 153, 154, 169, 197–8, 199, 201
Pichon, Stephen 57
Picot, Georges 24
Piétri, François 170, 180
Pilsudski, Jozef 116
Piltz, Erazm 85
Pironneau, André 180
Poincaré, Raymond 92, 98, 99, 100
Poland 13–14, 109;
Pilsudski, Jozef 116;
relationship with Czechoslovakia 74, 82, 114;
relationship with Soviet Union 85
Portland, Duke of 81
Pospíšil, Vilém 95, 96
Prager Presse 40, 74, 118
Prónay, Pál 57, 67

Rašín, Alois 93
Rasputin, Grigori 36
Rattigan, Frank 47, 50–1, 53
'reformers' ('Edwardians') 4
Rendel, George 139, 141, 147
Repington, a Court, Colonel 84
Retinger, Joseph 12, 14
Revelstoke, Lord 36, 95–6
Rhineland, German reoccupation of 188–92, 195
Ribbentrop, Joachim von 168
Rifaat Pasha, Mehmed 8
Rist, Charles 139, 140, 141, 142
Robertson, Sir William 12, 33
Rodd, Sir Rennell 29
Romania, invasion of Hungary 43–59, 69
Rome Accords (1935) 162, 163, 167, 199
Royal Geographical Society 203
Ruhr crisis 98–101
Rumbold, Sir Horace 74, 152
Russia: British policy towards (1917) 34;
information on and assessment of (1917) 35–8;
and the Italian alliance during World War I 26–7;
March Revolution 37;
and status of Poland 13–14,
see also Soviet Union

Saar 159, 160, 161
St. Aulaire, M. de 47
St Quentin, René de 183, 193
Salisbury, Lord 4
Sanders, Liman von 10
Sanderson, Thomas 4
Sands, Ethel 151
Sargent, Sir Orme 154, 158, 160–1, 164, 167, 182, 188
Sarraut, Albert 184, 191, 192
Saunders, G. 38
Sazonov, Sergei 26
Selassie, Haile 5
Semadam, Alexander 66
Serbia 25, 28–9, 30, 35, 45
Seton-Watson, R.W. 10, 12–13;
Czechoslovakia 75–7, 79;
nation-building in Hungary 45, 46, 48, 52–4, 65, 68–9;
peacemaking 39, 40;
World War I 14– 15, 25, 27, 28, 31, 38
Simon, Sir John 148, 150, 154, 155, 156, 158, 159–60, 161, 162–4, 165, 167, 168, 171–2, 198, 199
Simpson, Wallis 197
Sinclair, Sir Archibald 153
Skinner, Robert 6
slave trade 6–7

Slovakia 76, 79;
Hungary's invasion of 75
Smallbones, Robert 112
Smith, C.Howard 12
Smuts, Jan 12
Somali land 5
Somme campaign (1916) 32
Somssich, Count 54
Sonnino, Giorgio 26
Sotelo, Calvo 193
South Slavs 15
Soviet Union 84, 160, 165–7;
Pact of Mutual Assistance 167–8;
relationship with Czechoslovakia 79;
relationship with Turkey 133–4, 135, 137, 138, 142, 144, 145–6,
see also Russia
Spain 193–5, 199
Spencer Smith, Michael 97
Spina, Dr 117
Šrobár, Vavro 75, 78
Stalin, J. 145
Stanhope, Lord 153
Steed, Henry Wickham 10, 12–13, 14, 16, 27–8, 38, 180
Sterling, Rowland 12
Storrs, Ronald 20, 21
Strang, William 173
Stresa conference 165–6, 167, 168, 171–2
Stresemann, Gustav 109–10, 113
Sudan 5
Supilo, Frano 14, 25, 26–7, 28; arrest 31;
peacemaking 41
Suritz, Y.Z. 150
Suvich, Fluvio 164
Svátek, Dr 111
Švehla, Antonín 98, 111, 115, 117
Sykes, Sir Mark 17, 19, 20, 24–5
Symes, G.S. 19
Syria 20, 22, 23–4

Tahy, Lazlo de 88
Talaat Pasha, Mehmed 9
Talib, Sayyid 17
Tardieu, André 156
Teleki, Count 86
Tevfik Rüştü Aras 121, 128, 134, 136, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145, 146, 150
Thun-Salm-Hohenstein, Oswald, Count 84
Tilley, SirJohn 12
Toposa 6
Toynbee, Arnold 38
treaties:
Anglo-German Naval Agreement 168–70, 181, 199;

Angora (1926) 123;
Bucharest (1918) 49;
'Eastern Locarno' Pact 156, 157, 166;
Eastern Pact 160–5, 167;
Lausanne Treaty 123, 126, 128, 129–32, 137, 143;
Locarno Agreements (1925) 113, 114–15, 117, 118, 167, 179, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 194;
London (1915) 27;
Pact of Mutual Assistance 167–8;
Rapallo (1922) 113;
Rome Accords (1935) 162, 163, 167, 199;
St Jean de Maurienne 122;
Sévres (1920) 122;
Tirana (1927) 134;
Trianon, Treaty of 39, 65, 85, 86, 88, 89;
Tripartite Pact 7, 175;
Versailles 84, 99, 110–11, 113, 119, 155, 158, 162, 163, 164, 167, 188
Trevelyan, G. 25
Trianon, Treaty of 39, 65, 85, 86, 88, 89
Tripartite Pact 7, 175
Triple Alliance (1882) 25
Troubridge, Ernest, Admiral 40, 54, 60–1, 66, 67, 76
Troutbeck, John Munroe 135
Turkey 14, 120–52;
Angora 124–5, 126, 129, 130, 134, 138, 143, 147;
economy 125–32, 135, 136, 137–42, 144–6, 150–1;
France 140–2, 145;
Ismet Inönü 128, 138–9, 140–1, 144, 145, 151, 202;
Mustafa Kemal Atatürk 120, 122–5, 132–3, 134, 141, 142–5, 146, 147, 148–9, 150, 151;
relationship with Greece 144;
relationship with Soviet Union 133–4, 135, 137, 138, 142, 144, 145–6;
Sharia, replacement of 123;
Tevfik Rüştü Aras 121, 128, 134, 136, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145, 146, 150;
treaty with Italy 133,
see also Ottoman Empire
Tyrrell, Sir William 7, 12, 30, 33, 38, 78, 106, 131, 153, 154

USSR *see* Soviet Union

Valencia, Conde de Casa 194
Vance, J.G. 82, 83
Vansittart, Sir Robert 137, 143, 153–4, 155, 161, 163–4, 167, 169, 189, 196, 199, 201;
Ethiopia 170, 171, 173, 174–5, 177, 179, 180–3, 186, 188
Venizelos, Eleutherios 122, 143, 144
Versailles conference 84
Versailles Treaty 84, 99, 110–11, 113, 119, 155, 158, 162, 163, 164, 167, 188
Viviani, René 30

Wandycz, Piotr 99
Weakley, Ernest 20
Wedgwood, Josiah 66
Weygand, Maxime, General 156

Whitwell, Janet Muriel 83
(*see also* Clerk, Lady)
Wilhelm, Kaiser 10, 33
Wilson, Sir Henry 36
Wilson, Woodrow 39
Wolfe, Elsie de 197
(*see also* Mendl, Lady)
World War I 11
Wrangel, Baron 86
Wyatt, Stanley 138, 139, 140

Young, Robert J. 186
Young Turks 8–9
Yugoslav state 28;
advocating creation of 15, 25, 41
Yule, Lady 197