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Canada, imperial foreign policy and the abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, 1921

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CANADA, IMPERIAL FOREIGN POLICY AND THE ABROGATION
OF THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE, 1921

A Thesis

Presented to the
Department of History
and the
Faculty of the College of Graduate Studies
University of Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Thomas P. Socknat
August, 1967
Accepted for the faculty of the College of Graduate Studies of the University of Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

Chairman
Graduate Committee

Department
Department
PREFACE

Following the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, a united foreign policy for the British Empire was threatened by the continuing demands of the self-governing Dominions, especially Canada, for a larger role in external affairs. A near crisis arose in 1921 when the Anglo-Japanese Alliance came up for renewal. At an Imperial Conference that summer, the Canadian Prime Minister, Arthur Meighen, stubbornly opposed Imperial plans to renew the Alliance on the grounds that it would be contrary to the national interests of Canada, and refused to support a united policy until his basic demands were assured.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the effect of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance on the development of a distinctly Canadian foreign policy in 1921. It is not intended as a complete analysis of the Alliance, nor does it attempt to evaluate the serious consequences of abrogation.

A special acknowledgement is due to Dr. A. Stanley Trickett, Chairman of the Department of History at the University of Omaha, for encouraging my study in Canadian history. I sincerely appreciate his direction and guidance both in the preparation of this thesis and my graduate career. In addition, I am indebted to Dr. Harl Dalstrom of the Department
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Despite the aforementioned assistance, I accept full
responsibility for the final form of this thesis.

Thomas P. Socknat

Omaha, Nebraska

August, 1967
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CHAPTER I

IMPERIAL POLICY VERSUS NATIONAL POLICY

Following the First World War, Canadian interest in external affairs centered on the uncertain future of Imperial relations. The main question was whether there would continue to be one, united Imperial foreign policy or the development of an independent Canadian policy. In 1921 the Canadian government made a final attempt to reconcile a united policy for the Empire with the growing demand for a distinctly national policy. What emerged was a qualified Imperial commitment, reflecting Canada's traditional search for national autonomy and an independent role in foreign affairs.

Around the turn of the century, the Canadian Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, thwarted Joseph Chamberlain's vision of Imperial federation, and by 1907 the Dominion Premiers adopted a resolution calling for an Imperial Conference to meet every four years. The policy of consultation, however,


2 Laurier was the leader of the Liberal Party in Canada that tended to favor a nationalistic and independent policy. He favored the consultative conferences, but objected to the development of executive power. Oscar D. Skelton, Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier (2 vols.; New York: The Century Company, 1922), II, 505.
never had a chance to get off the ground before war broke out in Europe, during which the British War Cabinet continued to exercise the single voice of Imperial foreign policy.  

During the war, another Canadian Prime Minister, this time the Conservative Sir Robert Laird Borden, objected to the exclusion of the Dominions from the formation of Imperial policy and demanded a voice for the self-governing parts of the Empire. Britain's Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, accepted Borden's demands and agreed to the formation of an Imperial War Conference and Imperial War Cabinet in 1917. The War Conference was composed of the prime ministers of the self-governing Dominions and the Colonial Secretary and was concerned with the readjustment of constitutional relations within the Empire. The Imperial War Cabinet consisted of the British War Cabinet, plus the Dominion Premiers, and formulated war policy. An important constitutional precedent was

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3 The last conference held before the war was in 1911, at which time the Dominions approved of the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.


thus set by giving the Dominions a voice in foreign affairs.\(^6\)

Another important step toward Dominion freedom in foreign affairs was taken at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Here, under the leadership of Borden, the Dominions achieved international recognition of an unusual national status. They were allowed a dual representation, both as separate nations and as states within the British Empire Delegation. They received separate national representation in two international organizations—the League of Nations and the International Labor Organization—and were separate signatories to the various treaties, which later were ratified in the several Dominion parliaments. Furthermore, Canada was given the assurance of a separate diplomatic legation in the United States.\(^7\) Thus, Canada emerged from the Peace Conference as much more than a colony, but she was not yet recognized as a fully sovereign state. The actual achievement of such status was to come with the development of a new national awareness within Canada that would bring changes of national character.\(^8\)

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\(^8\) Dewey, *Dominions*, II, 34.
Borden never desired complete separation from the British Empire; rather, he sought the establishment of a sort of British league of nations in which Canada would enjoy absolute domestic independence and have a voice in all external questions which might involve peace and war. He repeatedly expressed his desire for "nationhood within the Empire," and this phrase became the motto of the Conservative Party in Canada. On the other hand, the extreme nationalists, mostly Liberals, favored Laurier's older line of asking for national autonomy and demanding that Canada remain aloof from Imperial obligations. The new Liberal leader, William Lyon Mackenzie King, argued that Canada should develop her own independent foreign policy to conform with her own particular interests. With these opposing views, there was much discussion in post-war Canada about the future of the Empire, but as long as

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10 The Conservatives stressed that they were not Imperialists. Dewey, Dominions, II, 50.

11 Ibid., p. 46. The French-Canadian Liberals wanted Canada to resist centralization and resist assumption of international commitments. Ibid., p. 47.

Borden remained in power the immediate policy seemed certain. In July, 1920, however, Borden resigned because of illness and chose the Minister of Interior, Arthur Meighen, as the new Prime Minister.

Arthur Meighen has been described as Canada's "greatest mind." An incurably shy, intellectual lawyer, he conveyed an icy image to the public and left a trail of enemies wherever he went. There has never been a man more loved and hated in Canadian politics, nor ever one who was such a "heroic failure" in the office of Prime Minister. He entered politics in 1908 after winning elections to the Canadian House of Commons as a Conservative from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. Quickly he won a prominent position within the Party and was personally responsible for the passage of Borden's Naval Aid Bill in

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13 Bruce Hutchison, Mr. Prime Minister 1867-1964 (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1964), p. 201. Hereafter cited as Hutchison, Prime Minister. On page 192, Hutchison writes: "No man heard Meighen without recognizing his genius. The whirring wheels of his mind were almost visible as he spoke, the machinery always working rapidly and smoothly, with a sure sense of direction, but the direction was often wrong. . . ."

14 Ibid., p. 192; Arthur R. M. Lower, Colony to Nation (4th ed. rev.; Canada: Longmans Canada Limited, 1964), p. 506. Hereafter cited as Lower, Nation. On page 190 of Prime Minister, Hutchison writes: "Meighen, to be sure, was a great man, but not a great statesman. Success in statecraft was forbidden by his times. It was forbidden by his brief moments of office. It was forbidden by his luck. It was forbidden by his own character." Arthur Meighen held the office of Prime Minister from the summer of 1920 until December, 1921, and again for a brief period in 1923. For a complete biography of Meighen, see Roger Graham, Arthur Meighen (3 vols.; Toronto: Clark, Irwin and Company Limited, 1960-65). Hereafter cited as Graham, Meighen.
1912. By 1913 he gained cabinet rank when he was appointed Solicitor-General.15 As Borden's protégé, Meighen successfully spear-headed the passage of both the Military Service Act and War-Time Elections Act in 1917, however, this accomplishment later proved to be a political liability since the public mind, especially that of French Canada, associated him with the hated war-time policy of conscription.16

At first there was considerable opposition in the Conservative Party to Meighen's appointment as Prime Minister. Almost all of Borden's colleagues favored Sir Thomas White, a long time Conservative, to succeed as Premier, and even refused to serve under Meighen. Borden records in his memoirs that "... it was apparent that Meighen would not receive the support of my immediate colleagues unless they were convinced that White would not accept."17 Eventually White declined the offer because of his health. Meighen was given the bid, and Borden persuaded the anti-Meighen faction to remain in the cabinet.18 Thus, in July, 1920, Meighen formed his flimsy

15 Ibid., I, 71-76.
16 Ibid., pp. 112-145.
18 Borden, Memoirs, II, 1040; Dawson, King, p. 343; Graham, Meighen, I, 292.
coalition government which, although short-lived, enabled him to make a notable contribution in Imperial affairs.

When Meighen became Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, he was immediately confronted with the uncertain future of the Empire. Although he agreed with Borden's philosophy of "nationhood within the Empire," his views were essentially a reflection of the conventional attitude of most English-speaking Canadians who had a strong emotional attachment to Great Britain. He was well-versed in domestic matters but largely inexperienced in Imperial and foreign affairs, which were formerly the concern of Borden and Newton W. Rowell, an Ontario Liberal in Borden's coalition government. While not considering himself an Imperial statesman, Meighen did have a definite formula for Canada's future in the Empire—a united Imperial foreign policy in which Canada would have an adequate voice; thereby working for her primary aim of Anglo-American accord. Contrary to Borden, Meighen was not concerned with new constitutional arrangements for the Empire. Just as long as Canada had a voice in an Imperial policy which protected her interests, Meighen would be satisfied with the present situation. Therefore, he

19 The Canadian Prime Minister automatically became the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

20 Graham, Meighen, II, 55.

21 Galbraith, Diplomatic Status, p. 82.
considered participation in Imperial councils as one of his most important duties.\textsuperscript{22}

At the beginning of Meighen's term there were no specific plans for the next meeting of the Imperial Cabinet or for an Imperial Conference, but there was a general feeling that a meeting would be convened in the near future.\textsuperscript{23} This attitude was probably based on the following resolution proposed by Borden at the Imperial War Conference in 1917:

\textbf{Resolution IX}

The Imperial War Conference are of opinion that the readjustment of the constitutional relations of the component parts of the Empire is too important and intricate a subject to be dealt with during the war, and that it should form the subject of a special Imperial Conference to be summoned as soon as possible after the cessation of hostilities.

They deem it their duty, however, to place on record their view that any such readjustment, while thoroughly preserving all existing powers of self-government and complete control of domestic affairs, should be based upon a full recognition of Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth, and of India as an important portion of the same, should recognize the right of the Dominions and India to an adequate voice in foreign relations, and should provide effective arrangements for continuous consultation in all important matters of common Imperial concern, and for such necessary concerted action, founded on consultation, as the several Governments may determine.\textsuperscript{24}

From London, Lord Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies, reminded the Dominion governments of this commitment

\textsuperscript{22}Graham, \textit{Meighen}, II, 62.

\textsuperscript{23}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 60.

\textsuperscript{24}Borden, \textit{Studies}, p. 112; Dawson, \textit{Status}, p. 175.
as early as April, 1920. He suggested that the constitutional conference meet in 1921, possibly in Ottawa. After much hesitation, the Canadian Governor-General replied that the Canadian Government was doubtful about the proposal and that any such conference must be preceded by a full discussion of the issues by the people. By November it was finally agreed that the Dominion Premiers should meet in London the next June, where they might prepare for a later constitutional conference.

In Canada, discussion on the upcoming conference was aroused when Winston Churchill, the new Colonial Secretary, announced that there would be a new system of consultation within the Empire in which "the Dominions will share with the Mother Country in the responsibility of dealing with great and dominate questions." Some Canadians immediately began to smell a plot and in March The Toronto Globe, a leading Liberal paper, expressed fear of possible centralization of


26 Governor-General to Colonial Secretary, August 30, 1920, (Arthur Meighen Papers), as cited in Graham, Meighen, II, 61-62. This message reflects the undecided attitude toward the Empire in Canada and Meighen's avoidance of constitutional theories.

27 Ibid., p. 62.


29 Ibid., February 14, 1921, p. 2.
the Empire. The issue was further aggravated by Churchill's statement in April that the June meeting, rather than being an Imperial Conference, would be the first meeting of an Imperial Cabinet.

Reaction of the Canadian Press was sharp and loud. The Manitoba Free Press blasted Churchill and insisted that he "... had no business to try to create out of a regular meeting of the Imperial Conference a new organ of Empire government ..." and then added "... Mr. Churchill's appointment as Colonial Secretary gave rise to free expression of opinion in the Dominions that he could be relied upon to complicate matters by his rashness and assurance; and these expectations are being fully realized." In Toronto, The Globe referred to the whole idea as "rather startling" and demanded there be no change from a conference to cabinet system without the consent of Dominion Parliaments.

The proposed June meeting did become a topic of considerable discussion in the Canadian House of Commons, where, as

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30 The Globe (Toronto), March 17, 1921, p. 4. The Montreal Star had earlier warned that any plan for centralization would cause disruption of the Empire. January 22, 1921, p. 10.

31 The Globe (Toronto), April 27, 1921, p. 2. This "Peace Cabinet" was to be an extension of the Imperial War Cabinet. Dawson, Status, p. 213.


33 The Globe (Toronto), April 28, 1921, p. 4.
early as February, fear was expressed that the proposed conference would make changes in Imperial relations without the consent of the Canadian Parliament. The general attitude of the Liberal Opposition was that the Meighen government was not representative of the country and therefore could not speak for the Canadian people at London. In March the Liberals demanded a national election and Ernest Lapointe, a French-Canadian Liberal, suggested that Canada should set her own house in order "... before undertaking to rebuild the British Empire or attempting to modify the Constitutional structure of other nations." Other Liberals argued that there was no question which required Imperial action.

In April Meighen outlined the agenda of the proposed conference in the House of Commons. According to this report, the Dominion Premiers would consider four major subjects: (1) preparations for a later, special constitutional conference; (2) general review of foreign affairs, particularly as they affect the Dominions; (3) consideration of the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance; (4) consideration of some working method for common understanding on foreign policy affecting


35 Ibid., p. 468. Throughout the year the Liberals demanded an election, and in December, 1921, Meighen was defeated.

36 Ibid., p. 526.
the whole Empire. He promised that the constitutional conference would not take place before a public discussion of the matter, and emphasized that the London meeting was neither an Imperial Conference nor an Imperial Cabinet, but simply a special meeting of the Dominion Prime Ministers.

Debate on the proposed agenda took place in the House on the afternoon and evening of April 27, and was marked by a heavy attendance. The stage was set by Sir Robert Borden, who reviewed the growth of Dominion autonomy, emphasized the importance of Imperial co-operation, and warned against any commitments in Eastern Europe or Western Asia. While referring to Meighen, Borden was cheered as he stated: "I believe the present Prime Minister will stand as strongly for our full autonomy and all our constitutional rights as any of his predecessors."

Next in line was William Lyon Mackenzie King, leader of the Opposition, who expressed the fear that an effort would be made at London to commit Canada to a policy of Imperial Defense and make new constitutional arrangements for Imperial unity. Although Meighen had promised not to commit Canada to

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37 Ibid., III, 2504-05; 2637-39; The Globe (Toronto), April 26, 1921, p. 33.
38 Canada, Debates, III, 2638.
39 More than two-thirds of the House was present for the debate. This reflects the widespread interest in the future of Imperial relations. Graham, Meighen, II, 63.
40 Canada, Debates, III, 2628-29; The Globe (Toronto), April 28, 1921, p. 2.
any agreement without the approval of Parliament, King became insistent that definite limits be placed on the Prime Minister's authority. His motion read as follows:

"At the coming conference no steps should be taken in any way involving any change in the relations of Canada to other parts of the Empire; and that, in view of the present financial position of Canada, no action should be taken implying any obligation on the part of Canada to undertake new expenditures for naval or military purposes."

King stressed that this was not intended as a want of confidence motion, but Meighen disagreed. "If the hon. member [King] has confidence in the Government," he argued, "and especially in the Prime Minister as regards this conference, I do not know why the motion is advanced." He insisted that it would be inconsistent with the purposes of the conference to reveal Canada's attitude beforehand and reaffirmed his pledge that no action would be taken to bind the country without ratification by Parliament.

Meighen's position was defended in a long speech on Imperial affairs by Newton W. Rowell, one of the few Canadians experienced in external affairs. He emphasized the importance of the London meeting but warned against a written constitution for the Empire. "The constitutional conference," Rowell

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41 Canada, Debates, III, 2634. Meighen and King were bitter political enemies. Bruce Hutchison writes: "The mutual detestation of these two men has no parallel in Canadian politics." Prime Minister, p. 196.

42 Canada, Debates, III, 2635.

43 Ibid., p. 2641.
declared, "should not create for us any new status, but . . .
should recognize . . . the constitutional position of all the
Dominions as being equal in status with the Mother Country as
self-governing nations of the British Empire." 44 He then
proposed that future Imperial relations be based upon nine
tenets of policy which would protect Canadian interests as
well as promote Imperial co-operation. 45 In closing he de­
manded that Meighen be trusted to carry out his duties as any
other Prime Minister and urged King to withdraw his motion.
King refused and the motion was finally defeated by thirty-two
votes. 46

The outcome was hailed by The Montreal Star as a "...remarkable demonstration of enthusiasm for Premier Meighen . . .", and "... a signal tribute to his popularity. . . ." 47

44 Ibid., p. 2649.

45 Rowell's nine tenets of foreign policy were as follows:
(1) the Empire had no territorial ambitions or aggressive in­
tentions; (2) it should stand for settlement of all interna­
tional disputes by peaceable means; (3) it should give whole­
hearted support to the League of Nations; (4) it should give
leadership and support to disarmament and secure co-operation
of the U. S.; (5) it should refrain from any special or exclu­
sive alliances; (6) it should promote international co-opera­
tion; (7) it should recognize Canada's special interest in all
important questions between the Empire and the U. S.; (8) it
should not settle important questions between the Empire and
the U. S. without the consultation of Canada; (9) if a question
is of purely Canadian concern, Canada should dictate the
settlement. Ibid., pp. 2652-53. This outline later influenced
Meighen's proposals at the Imperial Conference. See below,
Chapter III.

46 Ibid., p. 2658.

47 The Montreal Star, April 28, 1921, p. 4.
Another Montreal paper, The Gazette, also supported the government and accused King of being determined to "run head-down" at anything and everything from Conservatives. In June The Gazette reassured the country that Meighen was a "safe man" to have in London.

As Meighen prepared for the upcoming conference his position as to Imperial relations generally reflected the public temper. He favored a united foreign policy for the Empire, but only if it protected Canadian interests. He also opposed any new constitutional machinery for Imperial unity. In fact, the public fear of any new arrangements was partly responsible for King's attempt to spell-out the national position and tie the hands of the Prime Minister. Although Meighen refused to commit Canada to any definite line of action, both he and Rowell hinted during the debate that the primary concern of Canada at the London conference would be the cultivation of Anglo-American harmony rather than Imperial unity, a goal threatened by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

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48 The Gazette (Montreal), April 29, 1921, p. 12.
49 Ibid., June 6, 1921, p. 12.
50 For Canadian views on the Alliance see Chapter II.
CHAPTER II

THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE

Alliances are usually formed to protect the interests of two or more powers from the threats of some outside power or powers. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was no exception to this rule. It was negotiated in its original form in 1902 by Count Hayashi, the Japanese Ambassador at London, and Lord Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, as a security measure against the seeming imperialistic ambitions of Russia and Germany, and with a view to preserving the status quo in the Far East. The specific provisions of the Alliance safeguarded the "special interests" of Britain in China and of Japan in both China and Korea. In case one of the signatory powers went to war with an outside power the other signatory would remain neutral; however, if the enemy was joined by another outside power the neutral signatory was bound to aid her ally. It was to have effect for a period of five years.


The Alliance set a diplomatic precedent since it was the first alliance between a European and Asiatic power. It also marked the end of Britain's policy of splendid isolation.\(^3\) By 1900 the British Empire was faced with two principle threats. In the Far East Russia was casting her eyes on China and India, while in Europe Germany had enacted a Naval Bill which aimed at ending Britain's naval supremacy on the high seas.\(^4\) The Anglo-Japanese Alliance freed Britain's Far East squadron and made possible the concentration of her naval strength in European waters. Japan, meanwhile, would protect British interests in East Asia and serve as a check on the designs of Russia.\(^5\)

The Alliance was of even greater importance to Japan. From a diplomatic standpoint it became Japan's "... ticket of admission to the great international game."\(^6\) She was just opening her doors to the West and seeking recognition as a

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world power. In addition, it provided the Japanese with a safety measure in case of a war with Russia. The benefit to Japan was soon realized, as the Alliance served her interests in the Russo-Japanese war and helped establish her dominance of Manchuria and Korea, plus strengthening her position in China.

Although the Alliance was to continue in effect until 1907, it was renewed during the Russo-Japanese peace negotiations in 1905, with some important changes. In its revised form, the Alliance recognized Japan's newly-won dominance in Korea and was enlarged in scope to include India. In this way, Britain hoped to direct Russia's attention from Asia to Europe, especially because of the growing menace of Germany.

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7 Chang, Alliance, p. 79; Buell, Washington, p. 107. The Japanese Foreign Office worked feverishly to bring about the alliance and even hinted at the possibility of a Russo-Japanese agreement in order to hasten British negotiations. Chang, Alliance, p. 82; Buell, Washington, p. 108.

8 Chang, Alliance, p. 111; Buell, Washington, p. 110. Most accounts seem to condemn the alliance. Buell on page 110 claims it protected Japanese militarism from 1902 until 1921 and was responsible for the large Japanese navy. Dennis on page 65 of Alliance argues that it protected Japanese economic advancement in China from British commercial policy. Ichihashi, however, argues that the alliance has been "grossly misinterpreted." He charges: Professor Dennis "... gathered together information for the purpose of proving his preconceived indictment against the alliance; he has not treated the subject from a historical standpoint." Yamato Ichihashi, The Washington Conference and After (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1928), p. 129. Hereafter cited as Ichihashi, Washington and After.

9 Gooch and Temperley, British Documents, IV, 128-133.

10 Chang, Alliance, p. 124. Britain feared Russia would turn towards India and Central Asia to recoup her losses to
Furthermore, the 1905 Alliance required armed intervention rather than neutrality on the part of one party if the other party was at war with a third power.¹¹ This time it was to remain in force for ten years.

The new military obligations of the Alliance aroused fear among the self-governing Dominions of the Empire that they might be involved in a war on the side of Japan against the United States. Japanese-American relations were, from time to time, strained over a number of issues, such as the annexation of Hawaii, the immigration question, the San Francisco school incident, and most of all, Japan's ambitions in China.¹² In order to prevent friction between the two English-speaking powers, the British Ambassador in Washington, Lord Bryce, and President Taft, through Secretary of State Knox, negotiated a treaty of general arbitration during the summer of 1911. The treaty provided that all disputes between the two countries that could not be settled by diplomacy would be submitted to a court of arbitration.¹³ After this treaty was


sent to the United States Senate for approval, Britain re-
newed negotiations with Japan to modify the Alliance.

Subsequently, on July 13, 1911, the third and final
revision of the Alliance occurred due to the initiative of
the British Government. Unlike the previous two versions,
the 1911 Alliance was the work of the whole Empire. At a
meeting of the Imperial Defense Committee during the summer
of 1911, the new version was submitted to the Dominion repre-
sentatives and received their unanimous approval. With
this action the Anglo-Japanese Alliance became the first
treaty of alliance to receive Dominion approval before
British ratification.

The main alteration in the 1911 Alliance was the
addition of the following Provision, Article IV, which empha-
sized the Empire's desire to maintain Anglo-American accord:

Should either high contracting party conclude a
treaty of general arbitration with a third power, it
is agreed that nothing in this agreement shall entail
upon such contracting party an obligation to go to war
with the power with whom such treaty of arbitration is
in force.

Thus, Britain attempted to exempt the United States from the
operation of the Alliance; a move which aggravated Japanese

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14 Chang, Alliance, p. 152. Australia abstained from
voting. The Dominions were also consulted on the problem of

15 Dennis, Alliance, p. 36; Galbraith, Diplomatic
Status, p. 41.

16 Dennis, Alliance, p. 104; Gooch and Temperley,
British Documents, VIII, 532-533.
unrest until the proposed arbitration treaty was killed in the United States Senate. 17 Article IV, therefore, did not come into effect until 1914, when Cecil Arthur Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador in Washington and Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan negotiated a Peace Commission Treaty. The British Foreign Office immediately requested and received Japan's assurance that the treaty would be considered a general treaty of arbitration within the meaning of Article IV in the Alliance. 18 This interpretation, however, was kept secret until 1921. 19

Meanwhile, as war clouds gathered over Europe, Britain had a more urgent purpose in renewing the Alliance. It was hoped that a reinforced connection with Japan would eliminate any possibility of some German-Japanese agreement and, at the same time, maintain a Far Eastern ally in the troubled years ahead. 20 Again it was to remain in force for ten years with the added provision that if neither party gave notice of termination at least twelve months before the expiration date,


18 Dennis, *Alliance*, p. 60; Dewey, *Dominions*, II, 70-71. In reality the Peace Commission Treaty was not an arbitration treaty since it merely provided for investigation.


the Alliance would remain binding until one year after such notice. 21

During the ensuing war—the first real test of the Alliance—Japan proved to be a helpful ally to the British Empire. 22 While Great Britain's fleet was employed in the North Sea, Atlantic, and Mediterranean, the Japanese navy patrolled both the Indian and Pacific Oceans, even the British Columbia coast. They destroyed German naval bases and convoyed ANZAC and Indian forces to the battle fronts. 23 Japan's gallant response, however, was not without a selfish design. The war offered an excuse for Japan to assume the old German rights in the Orient and to engage in the Siberian intervention; all in hopes of expanding the "Island Empire."

The necessity of obtaining Japan's co-operation forced Britain to support these imperialistic activities. 24 An example of such acquiescence occurred early in 1917 at the height of the German submarine campaign. In order to get Japanese aid in

21 Dennis, Alliance, p. 104; Gooch and Temperley, British Documents, VIII, 532-533.


24 Chang, Alliance, p. 184.
the Mediterranean, Britain promised, in a secret Anglo-Japanese note, to support Japanese claims to the German rights in Shantung and the German islands in the Pacific north of the equator at a future peace conference. In return, Japan would "... treat in same spirit Great Britain's claims to German Islands South of the Equator." Consequently, Britain was bound by this agreement at the Paris Peace Conference, and Japan received the League of Nations mandate over former German possessions in the Pacific and on the China mainland; thereby becoming the dominant power in the Far East.

After the war the future of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance seemed uncertain. With the collapse of Tsarist Russia and Germany, neither Japan nor Britain needed the Alliance for defensive purposes. In fact, only one country, the United States, was in a position to threaten their interests, and to the British, a war with the English-speaking nation was unthinkable. Moreover, the Alliance was an example of those arrangements which were to be supplanted by the League of Nations. By February, 1920, in a prepared memorandum, the

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27 Article XX of the Covenant stated: "The Members of the League severally agree that this Covenant is accepted as abrogating all obligations or
assistant legal advisor to the British Foreign Office recommended the modification of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance so as to bring it "... into complete accordance with the procedure for the avoidance of war and settlement of disputes which is laid down by the Covenant." Consequently, on July 8, 1920, Foreign Secretary Curzon and Baron Chinda, the Japanese Ambassador in London, sent a joint communication to the Secretariat of the League in which they declared that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1911 "... though in harmony with the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations," was "... not entirely consistent with the letter of that Covenant." Accordingly they promised "... that if the said agreement be continued after July, 1921, it must be in a form not inconsistent with the Covenant." Shortly afterward, it was generally accepted that this declaration was the formal notice of termination required by the 1911 proviso and, therefore, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance would expire on July 13, 1921, unless it was renewed before

understandings inter se which are inconsistent with the terms thereof.

In case any Member of the League shall, before becoming a Member of the League, have undertaken any obligations inconsistent with terms of this Covenant it shall be the duty of such Members to take immediate steps to procure its release from such obligations."


28 Memorandum by Mr. Malkin on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as affected by the Covenant of the League of Nations, February 18, 1920, Foreign Office, Documents, VI, 1003.

29 League Summary, p. 65. On page 188 of Alliance, Chang states that this communication indicated desire for renewal.
that date. Thus, with a limited amount of time in which to act, the British Empire was forced to decide whether or not the Anglo-Japanese Alliance should be renewed.

The future of the Alliance was also closely related to the problem of naval competition in the Pacific. All three Pacific powers, the United States, British Empire, and Japan seemed to be headed for a dangerous and expensive race in naval armaments. In 1919 the British Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Jellicoe, compiled a series of reports on Imperial defense needs in which he emphasized the increasing necessity for a Far Eastern Navy of considerable strength. The estimated cost of this new fleet was approximately a hundred million dollars annually. Japan was also embarking on a costly building program intended to give her a navy equal to the United States. By 1921, half of Japanese revenue was being devoted to naval and military spending. Both Britain and Japan, however, were directly challenged by an unprecedented building program in the United States designed to produce a navy second to none. This threat of American naval dominance increased world tension since the only adversaries against whom the United States fleet could be used were Great Britain and Japan.


31 Ibid., p. 41.

32 Ibid., p. 40; Graham, Meighen, II, 70.
Meanwhile, a loud clamour arose in both the United States and British Empire against the senseless escalation of naval expenditures. In February, 1921, Senator Borah reintro­duced his famous resolution calling for naval negotiations between Great Britain, Japan, and the United States and for subsequent naval reductions.\(^{33}\) A few months later Lord Lee of Fareham, First Lord of the Admiralty, let it be known informally that Britain was prepared to reach an agreement on naval equality with the United States and thus abandon her traditional policy of naval supremacy.\(^{34}\) Despite this popular movement to forestall an armaments race, however, an agreement between the three Pacific powers was almost impossible as long as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance remained in effect. In fact, American naval experts warned that the United States must have a Pacific fleet equal to a combined Anglo-Japanese navy if the Alliance was renewed.\(^{35}\)

The mere idea of renewing the Alliance was viewed with intense suspicion by the United States, and the State Department


constantly checked Britain's plans. As early as October, 1919, the United States Ambassador in London was instructed to inform the State Department of any developments in regard to the Alliance. The following spring he was further advised that if the Alliance was renewed it should be modified so as to encourage Anglo-American co-operation in the Far East, and its duration should be shortened to five years "... since the orientation of Japan's foreign policy is seemingly unstable."\(^{37}\)

Even though Article IV of the 1911 version was designed to exclude the possibility of an Anglo-American clash, some Americans still argued that the Alliance contained a secret clause aimed at the United States.\(^{38}\) While the Hearst papers actually accused Britain of uniting with Japan against the United States, most Americans merely wanted to know the reasons for a renewal.\(^{39}\) "If in truth it is not aimed at the United States or any other great Power," inquired The New York Times.


\(^{37}\) Acting Secretary of State (Polk) to the Ambassador in Great Britain (Davis), May 10, 1920. Ibid., p. 680. The U. S. Government made no formal declaration on the Alliance.


"why renew it at all?" Distrust of the Alliance centered on Japanese imperialism rather than fear of a war between the United States and the British Empire. In 1921, The New York Times reported that nine out of ten Americans opposed the Alliance because of Japan's aggressive policies. The Alliance appeared to establish an Anglo-Japanese condominium in the Far East in which Japan was free to extend its power on the Asia mainland. Moreover, the United States, with its own commercial interests at stake, tended to sympathize with China.

The Chinese were violently opposed to the continuation of the Anglo-Japanese pact since they seemed to be its principal target. Ever since the infamous Twenty-one Demands, the Japanese had made serious inroads into Mongolia, Manchuria, and China itself. Among the Chinese protests was a message sent by a group of businessmen to the governments of the British Empire and the United States in which they argued that termination of the Alliance would prevent further Japanese territorial expansion. Dr. C. T. Wang, former Chinese plenipotentiary at the Paris Peace Conference, also

42 Graham, Meighen, II, 69.
43 Canadian Annual Review, 1921, p. 96.
44 The Vancouver Sun, June 16, 1921, p. 1.
urged Britain to terminate the Alliance and support the Open-Door. 45 Probably the most influential representative of China, however, was Bertram Lenox Simpson, a political advisor to the President of China, who conducted an effective anti-renewal campaign in the United States, Britain, and Canada. 46

Of the Alliance's two contracting parties, Japan was probably the strongest in favor of renewal. The military power viewed the Alliance as valuable protection for Japanese military activities abroad and insisted upon an extension. 47 During the summer of 1920 the United States Charge in Japan, Edward Bell, evaluated Japanese opinion on the Alliance. He reported that although the general public was indifferent, a large element, especially the intellectual classes, favored renewal because of the prestige value of a diplomatic connection with Great Britain. This liberal faction defended Article IV as an important step towards better American-Japanese relations, while, on the other hand, the chauvinistic


46 Putnam Weale /Bertram Lenox Simpson/, An Indiscreet Chronicle from the Pacific (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1922). Hereafter cited as Weale, Chronicle. For an account of Simpson's connection with Canada, see below in this Chapter.

47 Chang, Alliance, p. 188. In 1919, the British military attache in Tokyo reported that the Vice-Chief of the Japanese General Staff, Fukuda Masataro, strongly favored continuation of the Alliance. Brigadier-General Woodroffe to Mr. Alston, October 5, 1919. Foreign Office, Documents, VI, 772.
element claimed the Alliance was now ineffective and useless. Generally the Japanese government was committed to renewal and even tried to convince the United States of their good will.

Great Britain, therefore, was caught between the opposing views of the United States and Japan. By 1920, Britain was anxious to cultivate closer ties with the United States but, at the same time, she could not abruptly turn her back on an old ally. In fact, some Britishers actually feared that Japan would ally herself with Germany and Russia if the Alliance was not renewed and thus endanger British interests in India and the Pacific. As early as December, 1919, the British Ambassador in Tokyo warned:

Do not . . . be too sure that a Russia-Japan-Germany alliance won't work. It may not be this exact combination—but the new Anglo-Saxon combination is looming up in the mist as a real bug-bear to them, and if they are not admitted to it, they will cast about for some protection against it.

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48 The Charge in Japan to the Secretary of State, June 11, 1920. U. S. A., Foreign Relations, 1920, II, 682-684. In a conversation with Charles Dailet, Sun Correspondent, Viscount Kato stated there was no reason for the Alliance to be renewed and complained that Britain was "Master of the Orient" too long. The Vancouver Sun, April 27, 1921, p. 1.

49 The Montreal Star, July 5, 1921, p. 1. On July 4, 1921, the following statement issued by Baron Shidehara, Japanese Ambassador to the United States, appeared on page one of The New York Times: "By no stretch of the imagination can it be honestly stated that the alliance was ever designed or remotely intended as an instrument of hostility or even defense against the United States."

50 Canadian Annual Review, 1921, p. 96.

51 Letter from Mr. Alston (Tokyo) to Sir J. Tilley (Received February 12, 1920), December 30, 1919. Foreign Office, Documents, VI, 913.
The overall British position as to the Alliance was clearly stated in a lengthy memorandum prepared by C. H. Bentinck, a member of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, in co-operation with the Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon. In this document, the Foreign Office claimed that while Great Britain and the United States possessed similar interests in China, Japan was antagonistic towards their efforts in preserving the status quo. In considering the possible renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Britain could not overlook these conflicting interests, even though the Alliance had been beneficial to both parties, and Japan, "in spite of lukewarmness," had served as a faithful ally during the War. According to the memorandum, Britain's paramount goal


1. Japan apparently desires to retain a disunited and feeble China where she can fish in troubled waters. It is in the interests of Great Britain that China should be united and strong enough to hold her own against aggression from her neighbors.

2. The natural outlet for the superfluous population of Japan is China. Where Japan comes, however, she closes the door to the trade of all but her own nationals. Great Britain seeks to maintain the open door and equal commercial opportunity for all.

3. Japan aspires to the hegemony of the Far East and her foreign policy is not always free from selfishness and opportunism.

4. Her economic interests compete with those of Great Britain. During the war she pushed her trade with India, China and the whole Pacific littoral at the expense of this country whose chief commercial rival she is in the Far East.

5. Japan desires and intends to expand both in China and in the Pacific. In this she menaces our
was improved relations with the United States. It even suggested that renewal of the Alliance was unnecessary if Britain could count on active co-operation from the United States. In spite of similar interests, however, an Anglo-American agreement was probably impossible. 53 "Our future position in Hongkong, the Straits Settlements and the Pacific Islands. She threatens our long-established economically paramount position in the Yangtze Valley. Her military party are suspected of harbouring designs upon the integrity of China both in Manchuria, Mongolia and in Shantung. The future has still to show how far she is likely to prove a source of danger to Russian interests in Northern Manchuria and Eastern Siberia.

6. Just as Imperialist Germany demanded a 'place in the sun' at the expense, if possible, of the British Empire, so the world-wide expansion of this Empire evokes a certain amount of jealousy in the minds of many Japanese.

7. Lastly, the colour bar—racial equality claim—baffles agreement between Japan and the Dominions and meets with implacable opposition in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada. The United States of America are in this respect also at one with the Dominions."

Ibid., pp. 1017-1018.

53 Ibid., p. 1018. The similarity of interests between the United States and Great Britain were cited as follows: "1. The United States, as shown above, are confronted with the same racial problems as are the Dominions.
2. Both have possessions which they must defend in the Pacific.
3. Great Britain and the United States sincerely desire the rehabilitation of China and agree that equal opportunity should be accorded to the commercial enterprise of all nations.
4. The English-speaking communities naturally tend to draw together.
5. The aggressive attitude of Japan and her doubtful commercial morality have increased this tendency so that both politically and economically the two great Anglo-Saxon peoples have been driven together to redress the balance of power in the Far East."
course," continued the report, "lies between our ally with whom our interests conflict and our friend who is united to us by race, tradition, community of interests, and ideals." \(^{54}\)

The Foreign Office believed that renewal of the Alliance offered Britain three advantages: an insurance policy for the Empire in the Far East, a safeguard against a possible Russo-German rapprochement, and a certain check over Japan's policy in China. \(^{55}\) In conclusion, the position of the Foreign Office on renewal was that

Some sort of Tripartite understanding in the Far East, to which France might also adhere, would indeed be an ideal situation. Until our ideal can be realized, however, we must content ourselves with the next best arrangement—an alliance with Japan; intimate friendship and co-operation with the United States of America and France. \(^{56}\)

This attitude was generally shared throughout Great Britain since the Alliance had been the basis of British Far Eastern policy for almost twenty years. \(^{57}\) The Times insisted that the Alliance could not be abandoned without a more comprehensive arrangement—a typical attitude of the British papers. In 1921 the task facing the British government was to reconcile Anglo-American harmony with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Since the problem was of Imperial concern, Britain referred

\(^{54}\) Ibid., p. 1019.

\(^{55}\) Ibid., p. 1022.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., pp. 1022-1023.

\(^{57}\) The Times, June 20, 1921; Kennedy, "Far East," p. 165.
the matter to the June meeting of the Dominion Prime Ministers for a solution.

Australia, New Zealand, and Canada were directly concerned with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The two South Pacific Dominions regarded the Alliance as an insurance policy against Japanese expansion and, consequently, favored renewal. As long as the Alliance remained in effect, Japan would not attempt to challenge the "White Australia" program, since such a move would threaten her partnership with Britain.58 Moreover, neither Australia nor New Zealand desired to maintain the costly military and naval forces which would be necessary without the Alliance. Therefore, if it were not renewed, they would demand a new protective arrangement as a replacement.59

Prime Minister William Hughes of Australia, however, did not favor an unconditional renewal of the Alliance. Anxious to foster Anglo-American friendship, he favored renewal only in a modified form so as to be acceptable to the United States.60 Hughes realized that in future years Australia would need American good will, especially in case Japan extended her imperialistic arm into the South Pacific. Although there were differences of opinion within the Australian Parliament, the general consensus was in favor of renewal one way or

59 Dennis, Alliance, pp. 84-85.
60 Hughes, Adventure, pp. 119-120.
another. By April, 1921, Hughes informed the House of Representatives that he would work for a modified Alliance at the upcoming Imperial Conference. A few weeks later he cabled his position to London.

Generally speaking, the attitude of New Zealand was the same as that of Australia. Premier William F. Massey placed an exceedingly important value on Japan's loyalty during the War and, consequently, viewed renewal of the Alliance as an expression of gratitude. Thus, while Australia and New Zealand seemed to agree in principle with Britain's position, only Canada remained uncommitted.

Canada was primarily interested in the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance because of her close connection with the United States. Unlike the other Dominions, Canada's destiny within the Empire appeared to be her role as an interpreter between the United States and Great Britain. Because of their Imperial connection, Canadians felt they understood Britain better than their southern neighbors and, at the same time, as fellow North Americans, felt they understood the

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United States better than Britain. In fact, the two American nations often shared the same fears and anxieties, such as the West coast hysteria in regard to Japanese immigration. In 1921 it would have been difficult to decide whether greater Canadian sympathies were with their Mother Country or their sister to the South. At any rate, Canadians wanted to steer clear from such a decision since it would either tear apart their own country or break-up the Empire. Therefore, haunted with fear of an Anglo-American confrontation, Canada tended to view the Alliance with disfavor.

The Canadian press generally opposed renewal of the Alliance on grounds that it was no longer necessary and only threatened relations with the United States. A leading advocate of this opinion was The Globe of Toronto, a voice of the Liberal Party. As early as December 28, 1920, a Globe editorial expressed strong opposition to renewal and warned against a Japanese-American war. It suggested that "Canada . . . treaty or no treaty—would feel under no obligation to come to the help of Japan against the United States and so open her own borders to invasion and to all the horrors of modern war."  


67 The Globe (Toronto), December 28, 1920, p. 4.
It was not until May, however, that the Alliance became a popular topic of editorials. The Toronto Globe continued its fight against the Alliance and again warned that, in case of an Anglo-American struggle, "... Canadian soil would become the theatre of the major operations on land. Canadian blood would flow like water and the women and children of this Dominion would be subjected to all the horror of modern war."\(^68\) In June, The Globe adopted a positive position in favor of a tripartite agreement, between the United States, the British Empire, and Japan, to replace the Alliance.\(^69\) According to the Toronto paper, the Alliance not only threatened the West but also protected Japanese aggression in the Far East.\(^70\)

Another strong voice against renewal was John W. Dafoe, the Liberal editor of the Manitoba Free Press. On May 16, he claimed that Canada would be justified to oppose the Alliance since offensive and defensive alliances were not in "... harmony with the new international spirit" and proposed that "a good understanding between the British nations and the United States would be ... the best possible guarantee of the peace of the world."\(^71\) "The case for renewal of the treaty from the British point of view," the editor continued, "does

\(^{68}\) Ibid., May 3, 1921, p. 4.

\(^{69}\) Ibid., June 24, 1921, p. 4.

\(^{70}\) Ibid., June 30, 1921, p. 4.

\(^{71}\) Manitoba Free Press, May 16, 1921, p. 13.
not appear very strong. Apart from the peace of mind that
the signing might bring to Australia and New Zealand . . . the
advantage to any of the British nations is not apparent."
During the summer of 1921 the Free Press continued its denun-
ciation of the Alliance. In regard to criticism that abroga-
tion would isolate Japan, the "Voice of the Prairies" stated:

Nobody wants to see Japan isolated or treated with 

in gratitude, but, unfortunately Japan's idea of grati-
tude appears to be recognition and support of her 

imperialistic policy in the Far East. If Japan will 

not accept an international policy that cuts at the 

roots of imperialism and forbids encroachments by the 

strong upon the weak . . . then she will find herself 

isolated by her own course.

The outstanding exception to this prevailing attitude 
of the press was The Montreal Star, an ultra-conservative 
paper which put on a "drum-and-trumpet campaign" for renewal. 

In regard to the fears in the United States, The Star claimed 
that Americans insisted on misunderstanding the treaty since 
"... they can only regard the Anglo-Japanese as anti-American 

by deliberately reading all the documents in the case in the 

contrary sense." On June 21, The Star argued in favor of 

renewal since Japan was a proven ally and claimed that the 

Canadian faction in opposition was under 


72Ibid.
73Ibid., August 22, 1921, p. 11.
74John Bartlet Brebner, "Canada, the Anglo-Japanese 

Alliance and the Washington Conference," Political Science 

Quarterly, 1935, L, 49. Hereafter cited as Brebner, "Anglo-

Japanese."
75The Montreal Star, April 29, 1921, p. 10.
delusion that boot-licking is the way to win American respect and consideration."

The Gazette, another Montreal paper, strongly supported the Conservative government and followed Premier Meighen's position on the Alliance.

In comparison to the other Provinces, British Columbia was not as concerned with the renewal of the Alliance as it was with retaining control of Japanese immigration. By 1921 over 15,000 Japanese immigrants resided in British Columbia and, mostly for economic reasons, were resented by the rest of the British population. The formation of leagues to exclude orientals, and anti-Japanese agitations were characteristic of the West coast in both Canada and the United States. This preoccupation with the immigrant problem was clearly reflected in the editorial page of The Vancouver Sun, a leading paper in British Columbia. On June 8, The Sun stated that

The primary motive on which all dealings with the Orient must be based is a purely biological one. No matter what treaty or trade pact may be under discussion there is one fundamental premise which

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77 Canadian Annual Review, 1921, p. 94; Arthur R. M. Lower, Canada and the Far East—1940 (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1941), p. 75. Hereafter cited as Lower, Far East. After a trip to Western Canada, Wickham H. Steed of The Times claimed he found trustworthy evidence that Japanese agents, probably members of the Pan-Asiatic Black Dragon Society, were working in British Columbia and in the event of a Japanese-American conflict in which British Columbia would be considered hostile to Japan, these agents could completely isolate the province in twenty-five hours. Steed, "Pacific," pp. 398-401.
must be accepted before negotiations are opened. Canada must be reserved for the White race.

In conclusion, the editorial claimed that

The question of the desirability of Orientals as settlers or the question of racial prejudice do not enter into the problem at all. It is purely a matter of biology and self-preservation and the sooner it is thus understood the better.  

Regarding the United States, The Sun asserted that Canada was the "key" to Anglo-American harmony. "Nothing is more important to the world," declared the editor, "than that the Anglo-Saxon race, typified in the two great English-speaking nations, should continue in harmony and cooperation."  

Unlike the press, the Canadian government did not take a definite stand on renewal before the Imperial Conference in June. When before Parliament in April, however, Premier Meighen did hint at the position he would take in London:

If there is one Dominion to which, more than another, the question of the renewal is of importance, it is to the Dominion of Canada. I say that with particular reference to the relationship this Dominion bears, and must always bear, as a portion of the British Empire standing—if I may say it—between Great Britain on the one hand and the United States on the other. I need not enlarge upon how serious, or even how momentous, is the deliberation that must take place as regards the question of the renewal of that great degree, out of the very great interest of the United States in the renewal or the non-renewal thereof.

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78 The Vancouver Sun, June 8, 1921, p. 6.
79 Ibid., p. 6.
80 Ibid., August 25, 1921, p. 6.
81 Canada, Debates, III, 2639.
The only other real reference to the Alliance in the House was by Newton W. Rowell who openly declared his opposition to renewal after noting "... the feeling that does exist in the United States in reference to this alliance."\(^\text{82}\)

Because of the emphasis upon Anglo-American co-operation in 1921, it was not surprising that the idea of a tripartite arrangement became a popular alternative to renewal in Canada. In fact, the first official suggestion for a Pacific conference among the United States, the British Empire, and Japan appears to have originated in Ottawa. As early as February, 1921, Meighen cabled Lloyd George, suggesting that the Alliance be terminated and a conference between the three Pacific powers be arranged. Moreover, in order to learn the views of the United States, he suggested that

a representative of the Canadian Government should get in touch with the new President and his Secretary of State as soon as possible after their inauguration and discover through informal confidential conversations whether any such policy is feasible. For this purpose I would nominate Sir Robert Borden who is willing to act. \(^\text{83}\)

\(^{82}\)\textit{Ibid.}, p. 2657; \textit{The Montreal Star} blasted Rowell's suggestion that Canada discourage renewal because of the American attitude. April 29, 1921, p. 10.

\(^{83}\)Governor-General to Colonial Secretary, February 15, 1921, (Borden Papers, post-1921 series, reel 128, folder 253. Microfilm copy from Public Archives of Canada). The Canadian Government also expressed the attitude that ". . . every possible effort should be made to find some alternative policy to that of renewal. Admitting that the Alliance had been useful in the past, it nevertheless seems true that the conditions have been so altered that the old motives no longer hold, while the objections have greatly increased." \textit{Ibid.}
Lloyd George's reply, however, was negative since he did not want to contact Washington before the upcoming Imperial Conference and thereby tie the hands of the Prime Ministers. Loring C. Christie, legal advisor in the Department of External Affairs, blasted this rejection as a disastrous step away from Anglo-American co-operation and suggested that Canada approach Washington separately; otherwise, there would be only two choices at the London meeting—renewal or abrogation. It was at this point that Meighen left his proposal and began to arrange his trip to London.

While preparing for his debut in Imperial affairs, Meighen relied heavily upon the advice of certain associates experienced in foreign matters, such as Borden and Rowell. He probably depended most, however, upon Loring C. Christie, his

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84 Colonial Secretary to Governor-General, February 26, 1921, copy, Ibid.
85 Memorandum, Christie to Meighen, March 3, 1921, Ibid. In this memorandum Christie argued that according to Lloyd George's telegram the

"... formulation of a proposal to the United States could hardly fail to tie the hands of the June meeting 'especially if it was favorably regarded by Washington.' If it was not acceptable to Washington it is difficult to see how it would tie the meeting; and in that event moreover it would seem an advantage to the meeting to know the truth. If on the other hand it proved to be favorably regarded by Washington one would suppose that ... the meeting would welcome the opportunity for actual co-operation and thus for giving reality to the pronouncements that British-American concord is the highest aim of our foreign policy."

Ibid.
legal advisor, who supplied all of the specific data and arguments he would need in London. 86

Another person who appeared on the scene and consulted with Meighen about the Alliance was Bertram Lenox Simpson, also known by the pseudonym Putnam Weale. An advisor to the President of China, Simpson was conducting a campaign for the Chinese Foreign Office against renewal of the Alliance. On May 3, during their conference, Meighen asked Simpson to submit a memorandum on China's attitude toward the Alliance. 87 In this memorandum, Simpson clearly stated China's grievances and warned Meighen of an impending Anglo-American clash if the Alliance was renewed, despite Article IV. Simpson reasoned that in the event of a Japanese-American war, China would enter as an ally of the United States. This in turn would require the British Empire to aid Japan against China and consequently, sooner or later, the Empire would be fighting the United States. 88 This memorandum provided more ammunition for Meighen's future assault on the Alliance but it is doubtful that Simpson had much influence on the Premier's decisive stand. 89 As early as February, Meighen was determined to end

86 Graham, Meighen, II, 73-74.
87 Weale, Chronicle, p. 52.
89 Graham, Meighen, II, 75.
the Alliance, but officially, he remained silent until the Imperial Conference.
CHAPTER III

THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE, 1921

In June, 1921 the first Imperial gathering since the Paris Peace Conference convened in London. Although this meeting became known as a regular Imperial Conference, it was officially entitled the "Conference of Prime Ministers and Representatives of the United Kingdom, the Dominions, and India."¹ Unlike similar meetings before the War when Dominion representatives were merely informed as to a foreign policy formulated by the British Foreign Office, the Dominion Premiers converged upon London in 1921 in order to directly participate in the determination of an Imperial foreign policy.² Of these prime ministers, Jan Christian Smuts of South

¹Great Britain, House of Commons, Parliamentary Papers (Reports, Vol. VII), Cmd. 1474, "Conference of Prime Ministers and representatives of the United Kingdom, the Dominions and India held in June, July and August, 1921, Summary of Proceedings and Documents." Hereafter cited as Great Britain, Cmd. 1474. This report offers only a sketchy summary of the proceedings and only opening speeches are published. According to this summary: "The greater part of the proceedings, particularly that relating to foreign affairs and defense, was of a highly confidential character. . . . Other parts, though not so secret in their nature, were intermingled with matter which must for the present be kept confidential." p. 1.

Africa, William M. Hughes of Australia, and William F. Massey of New Zealand were all veterans in foreign affairs, whereas the Canadian Premier, Arthur Meighen, was making his first appearance outside Canada as an Imperial leader. For this reason, some historians have described Meighen's role at the Conference as being like a "debutante among dowagers."³

The Imperial Conference was primarily concerned with three questions: preparation for a constitutional conference; defense; and foreign policy, especially the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. While these first two subjects were quickly, yet tactfully, abandoned, the latter proved to be the most significant issue at the meeting. Throughout the conference, the major factor influencing the consideration of foreign policy was the fervent desire on the part of all the participating parts of the Empire for closer ties with the United States. This plea for Anglo-American harmony, once uttered, was echoed by each prime minister, who differed only in their suggestions regarding the effort which should be made to achieve the commonly desired goal. As early as February, 1921, The Times asserted that "... the future of civilization, as we know it today, rests upon a close understanding of the English-speaking races."⁴ The desire for closer

³Graham, Meighen, II, 81. Lord Riddell observed: "Meighen, the Canadian Premier, has considerable ability and is well-read, but lacks experience." Lord Riddell, Diary, p. 303.

⁴Vinson, "Imperial Conference," p. 257. Vinson emphasizes that the whole Empire, rather than just Canada, desired the cultivation of American friendship.
relations with the United States, therefore, became an invisible hand that shaped the outcome of the conference.  

The Conference of Prime Ministers formally opened at No. 10 Downing Street on June 20, and the general mood of the premiers was expressed in the first few sessions. In his opening speech Lloyd George emphasized the importance of the Far Eastern question. "There is no quarter of the world," he declared, "where we desire more greatly to maintain peace and fair play for all nations and to avoid a competition of armaments than in the Pacific and in the Far East." Referring to the Alliance he continued:

Our Alliance with Japan has been a valuable factor in that direction in the past. We have found Japan a faithful ally, who rendered us valuable assistance in an hour of serious and very critical need. The British Empire will not easily forget that Japanese men-of-war escorted the transports which brought the Australian and New Zealand forces to Europe at a time when German cruisers were still at large in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. We desire to preserve that well-tried friendship which has stood us both in good stead, and to apply it to the solution of all questions in the Far East, where Japan has special interests, and where we ourselves, like the United States, desire equal opportunities and the open door.

In this endeavor Lloyd George hoped to receive American sympathy and understanding. "Friendly co-operation with the United States," he declared, "is for us a cardinal principle, dictated by what seems to us the proper nature of things,

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5 *The Times*, February 11, 1921, p. 11.
dictated by instinct quite as much as by reason and common sense." Thus, Lloyd George desired Imperial co-operation "... with the great Republic in all parts of the world."8

Following Lloyd George, the Dominion premiers and Srinivasa Sastri, the representative of India, delivered their individual introductory statements. First on the agenda was the Canadian Prime Minister, Arthur Meighen. He urged that lengthy introductory statements be avoided in order to consider the problems before the conference and then proceeded to deliver a brief, ten-minute speech in which he generally remained uncommitted on the principle topics. Regarding the Alliance, he declared: "All I can do now is to assure you that I, representing Canada, approach this question with a full sense of responsibility, and in seeking to interpret what I believe is the prevailing opinion of my country on the subject, I do so with a firm resolve to reach, if it can be reached, common ground with all representatives here."9 He further emphasized that Canada was satisfied with the constitutional progress within the Empire and did not seek any revolutionary changes. As to the value of the conference

8Ibid. On June 21, 1921, The Vancouver Sun reported that the United States would be the major factor in deciding the future of the alliance. The headlines read: "ANGLO-JAP PACT DEPENDS ON U. S." p. 1.

9Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 16.
itself, he praised the principle of co-operation and unity through consultation as the basis of the new world order. 10

Meighen's example of brevity was not shared by the other representatives, however, and rather lengthy speeches were delivered the next day. In his initial remarks, Premier Hughes of Australia requested renewal of the Alliance in a modified form acceptable to the United States Government since its attitude was a difficulty that must be faced. He continued:

I am sure I state the opinion of Australia when I say the people have a very warm concern in their hearts for America. They see in America today what they themselves hope to be in the future. We have a country very similar in extent and resources, and it may be laid down as a sine quo non that any future Treaty with Japan, to be satisfactory to Australia, must specifically exclude the possibility of a war with the United States of America. . . . In any future Treaty we must guard against even the suspicion of hostility or unfriendliness to the United States. 11

Furthermore, he claimed the Alliance was directly tied to disarmament and suggested that a conference to include both the United States and Japan might be the best solution. 12

The New Zealand Prime Minister, William Massey, also emphasized the importance of the Alliance and essentially agreed with Hughes' remarks. In support of renewal, Massey reviewed

10 Ibid., p. 17. Meighen also urged full publicity be given to the proceedings.

11 Ibid., p. 19.

12 Ibid., p. 20. Hughes supported the Alliance as the best means of protection for Australia and as "a restraining hand upon Japan," it would promote world peace. The Globe (Toronto), June 30, 1921, p. 1.
Japan's loyal service during the War. In fact, if Japan had been an enemy "... neither Australia nor New Zealand would have been able to send troops to the front, neither could we have sent food or equipment." This had to be remembered "... in connection with the renewal of the Treaty."\(^1\)

His staunch position in favor of renewal, however, was weakened by the prevailing desire for Anglo-American accord. "I am prepared to take the American view into consideration," added Massey. "I do not want to leave any wrong impression on that point."\(^2\)

Even though South Africa was not directly concerned with the Pacific, Prime Minister Smuts, in his opening remarks, emphasized the future importance of the Far East in Imperial foreign policy. He observed:

Undoubtedly the scene has shifted away from Europe to the Far East and to the Pacific. The problems of the Pacific are to my mind the world problems of the next fifty years or more. In these problems we are, as an Empire, very vitally interested. Three of the Dominions border on the Pacific; India is next door; there, too, are the United States and Japan. There, also is China, the fate of the greatest human population on earth will have to be decided. There, Europe, Asia and America are meeting, and there, I believe, the next great chapter in human history will be enacted.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 31.

\(^2\)Ibid. Massey's views on the Alliance were in open conflict with those of Sir John Findlay, a former New Zealand attorney-general, who was serving as an unofficial counsellor to the government. Before the conference convened, Findlay claimed that both New Zealanders and Australians opposed the renewal of the Alliance. Tate and Foy, "Abrogation," p. 542.

\(^3\)Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 25.
While Smuts failed to disclose his exact position as to re-
newal of the Alliance at this time, he emphatically expressed
his opposition to all exclusive alliances, which, he warned,
would lead to the establishment of rival groups and finally
to a "... terrible Catastrophe more fatal than the one we
have passed through." Reiterating the plea for a closer
relationship with the United States, Smuts pointed out that
America was also a staunch ally during the War. "The only
path of safety for the British Empire," he declared, "is a
path on which she can walk together with America."

Following the introductory speeches the conference
turned to the consideration of foreign affairs. The whole
day of June 24, was devoted to an exhaustive exposition of
Imperial foreign policy since the peace conference by the
British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, with the Colonial Sec­
retary, Winston Churchill, handling the special problems of
the Middle East. Afterward, according to the published
report of the proceedings, "there followed a series of

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16 Ibid., p. 26. As early as May 23, 1921, however, Smuts declared in favor of renewal if not objectionable to
the United States. The Vancouver Sun, May 23, 1921, p. 1.
18 Ibid., p. 2. On page 419 in Canada, A Modern History
(Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1960), John
Bartlet Brebner states that Curzon put on ", ... one of his
most monumental performances, a full-dress rehearsal of world
affairs, building up to the necessity of renewing the Anglo­
Japanese Alliance. ..." Hereafter cited as Brebner, Canada.
important discussions, which were largely conversational in form, each representative intervening in turn as occasion prompted, without formality of any kind." While Hughes, Massey, and Smuts discussed specific aspects of policy, Meighen confined himself to the question of how a foreign policy for the whole Empire should be formulated. He proposed three "postulates" to govern the future conduct of Imperial policy. First, there should be regular conferences between the representatives of Britain, the Dominions, and India for the purpose of determining one Imperial foreign policy. Secondly, the British government should always take into account the views of the governments of the Dominions and India before formulating policy, even though it bore final responsibility to the King. Thirdly, if a special aspect of policy is of special importance to any single Dominion, that Dominion's voice in the formulation of policy should be commensurate with the importance of the decision to it. Regarding this point, Meighen added: "In all questions affecting Canada and the United States, the Dominion should have full and final authority."

19 Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 3. The report stated that this type of procedure had three objectives: "First, that the members of the Conference should all put their ideas into common stock and thus gain a thorough understanding of each other's point of view; second, that the principal questions of foreign policy should be examined by this means from every point of view; and third, that there should be a free and full discussion of the general aims and methods to be pursued." Ibid.

20 William M. Hughes Papers, Stenographic Report of Imperial Conference of 1921, secret. As quoted in Galbraith,
Although Meighen defended his three postulates as merely an elaboration of existing procedure, he met strong opposition from the other members of the conference. Lloyd George agreed with the general idea of the proposals but stressed that the whole Empire valued the friendship of the United States, not just Canada. It is a "very dangerous doctrine," he warned, that allows one Dominion or one country to have a decisive voice in determining Imperial foreign policy because "we are all involved once anything happens." 21 Premier Hughes argued that if Meighen's third proposal was accepted, Australia should control Imperial policy regarding the Pacific, the Far East, and the navy since "... they were more vital to her than to the other Dominions." 22 Undeniably there were weaknesses in Meighen's proposals and a few primary questions were left unanswered. For instance: How was more continuous consultation to be achieved? How could the British government, if it continued to bear sole responsibility to the King, accept views with which it did not agree? How would it be decided which Dominion should have the predominant influence in determining

"Imperial Conference," pp. 145-146. These proposals bear marked similarity to the nine tenets of foreign policy advocated by Newton W. Rowell in the Canadian House of Commons, April 27, 1921. See above, Chapter I, footnote 45. Hereafter cited as Hughes Papers, Galbraith, "Imperial Conference."

21 Hughes Papers, Galbraith, "Imperial Conference," p. 146.

22 Ibid., p. 147.
the policy to be pursued by all? In regard to the latter question, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was a case in point. While Canada could demand abrogation because of her dependence upon Anglo-American accord, Australia and New Zealand viewed the Alliance from the standpoint of their own security and, therefore, could demand renewal.

Closely related to this discussion on foreign policy was the project of a constitutional conference which was to assure the Dominions of a greater influence in the formulation of Imperial policy. One of the chief duties on the agenda was arranging for such a future constitutional meeting, but this plan ran into stiff opposition from the Dominion premiers. Meighen argued that such action was not only unnecessary but also dangerous. Remembering Mackenzie King's gag motion in the Canadian Parliament earlier that spring, he warned the others that any announcement that constitutional changes were being contemplated would create political unrest in the Dominions. Besides, argued Meighen, the minor changes required by the existing structure could be accomplished in regular conferences in the future. On this issue Meighen was supported by the Australian Prime Minister. "It may be that I am very

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23 Graham, Meighen, II, 86-87. Meighen desired to establish a concrete principle that Canada should have control of Imperial policy affecting North America just as India controlled policy affecting the Far East. Canadian Annual Review, 1921, p. 78.

24 Ibid., II, 87.

25 Ibid., p. 88.
dense," declared Hughes, "but I am totally at a loss to understand what it is that this constitutional conference proposes to do."²⁶ He praised the elasticity of the present situation and claimed the Dominions could not do any more, not even as independent nations, that they could not do under this existing arrangement. For example, Hughes observed, Canada was already preparing to have her own ambassador in Washington.²⁷ After several meetings were devoted to the issue, the premiers decided to abandon Borden's constitutional resolution of 1917. As a replacement, they adopted their own resolution in which they claimed that "having regard to the constitutional developments since 1917, no advantage is to be gained by holding a constitutional conference."²⁸ Furthermore, they affirmed their desire for continuous consultation; expressed their desire for annual conferences, ". . . or at such intervals as may prove feasible"; and sanctioned ". . . the existing practice of direct communication between the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and the Dominions, as well as the right of the latter to nominate Cabinet Ministers to represent them

²⁶Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 22. Hughes also stated: "I know, of course, the Resolution of the 1917 Conference, but much water has run under the bridge since then." Ibid.

²⁷Hughes, Adventure, pp. 144-145.

in consultation with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom."29

The conference also deferred action concerning an Imperial navy on the grounds that "... the method and expense of such co-operation are matters for the final determination of the several Parliaments concerned."30 The general consensus of the Dominion premiers, therefore, was to maintain the status quo in their Imperial relationship.

Meanwhile, secret conversations were taking place in Washington on the future of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance between Auckland Geddes, the British Ambassador and United States Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes. On June 23, Hughes informed Geddes that the United States overwhelmingly opposed renewal of the Alliance because it encouraged Japanese aggression in the Far East; therefore, he insisted on its immediate termination.31 Ambassador Geddes replied that Britain could not rush such negotiations without offending Japan and suggested that the best solution would be to simply replace the Alliance with a tripartite pact. Although Japan would probably oppose such an agreement, Geddes felt confident that Britain could persuade her to acquiesce. Immediately Hughes gave his

29 Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 10.

30 Ibid.

31 Memorandum of a Conversation between Secretary of State Hughes and Ambassador Geddes, June 23, 1921, U. S. A., Foreign Relations, 1921, II, 315.
personal assent and before the day had ended he received President Harding's approval for the plan. Hughes warned Geddes, however, that before a final settlement could be reached it must conform with American foreign policy of no alliances and no obligations. All of these developments were kept highly confidential.

Back in London, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance quickly moved into the limelight as the most significant and urgent problem facing the Empire. Since the joint communique to the League of Nations the previous year was viewed as a formal notice of termination, the conferring statesmen were required to reach a decision on the question of renewal before the expiration date of July 13. Debate on the Alliance was finally opened on June 28, by Foreign Secretary Curzon and after a brief historical survey of the treaty, he presented the case both for and against its renewal. Also, he revealed part of Ambassador Geddes' message that Secretary of State Hughes was interested in "tripartite co-operation" in the Far East and then suggested that the Empire express its willingness to participate in a Pacific conference. In conclusion, however, he recommended renewal of the Alliance in a modified

32 U. S., State Department, Decimal Files 741.9411/140%. As cited in Vinson, "Imperial Conference," pp. 262-263. This part of the memo regarding the tripartite agreement was omitted from the published version of Foreign Relations.

33 Graham, Meighen, II, 90; Carter, Security, p. 44. Just how much Curzon related of this highly confidential dispatch is not known.
form and warned the premiers they only had sixteen days left in which to act.  

At last the time arrived for Meighen to make his stand. On June 29, the day following Curzon's speech, the Canadian Premier launched his carefully planned assault. He immediately voiced his strong opposition to renewal of the Alliance, in any form, and then proceeded to present his case. In the first place, argued Meighen, the perpetuation of the Alliance was pointless since the original reasons for its existence, the menace of Russia and Germany, had disappeared. A continuation would not only fail to prevent a future Russo-German pact but would probably encourage such a combination. Moreover, such entanglements were incompatible with the League of Nations. Since alliances have failed to maintain peace in the

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34 Vinson, "Imperial Conference," p. 263; Brebner, "Anglo-Japanese," p. 53. According to Brebner, the British Cabinet, the Committee on Imperial Defense, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and India all favored renewal in some form. Brebner, Canada, p. 419. According to Premier Hughes the Alliance had to remain in effect even with the possibility of a Pacific Conference since such a conference would probably not be held for another year. Hughes, Adventure, p. 124.

35 He also circulated a confidential memorandum against renewal. The Globe (Toronto), June 30, 1921, p. 1. Although the transcript of the debates has not yet been released from secrecy, the correspondent for the Canadian Press News Agency, Grattan O'Leary, who was also a close friend of Meighen, cabled reliable dispatches to the Canadian press which provide some insight into the conference proceedings.


37 Graham, Meighen, II, 90.
past, he argued, the time had come to try new methods for the prevention of war.  

Meighen bluntly denied that Japan was the faithful ally as was so often alleged. Although she had fulfilled her wartime obligations, she had not insured the "independence and integrity" of China. In fact, Japan had actually expanded her Empire at the expense of Manchuria, Shantung, Korea, Formosa, and the Pescadores. Renewal of the Alliance, warned Meighen, would make the British Empire an accomplice to such aggressive acts. Furthermore, since China rightfully despised the Alliance, renewal would ultimately lead to the dangerous situation of a Sino-American combination opposing the Anglo-Japanese pact, with Canada caught in between.

Of course, the principal reason for Canada's opposition to the Alliance was her desire for Anglo-American harmony. Meighen reasserted his demand that Canada should have a special voice in Imperial policy affecting relations with the United States and, therefore, a decisive voice in the future of the Alliance. He emphasized that Canada's security would be at stake in the event of a Japanese-American conflict.

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38 The Globe (Toronto), June 30, 1921, p. 1.

39 Graham, Meighen, II, 90.

40 Ibid., p. 91. Meighen claimed that Canada was forced to view the Alliance from a double standpoint—close proximity to the United States and a "halfway house" between Great Britain and Japan. The Montreal Star, June 18, 1921, p. 1.

41 Graham, Meighen, II, 90.
Canada might even refuse to adhere to the treaty, thus threatening disruption of the Empire. In reply to Curzon's suggestion for a modified Alliance, Meighen observed that regardless of the specific terms, its mere existence would antagonize the United States and encourage Japanese aggression. Good Anglo-American relations, he reminded the conference, was the "touchstone of British policy and the hope of the world."

The Canadian Premier then pointed out that the principle task facing the conference was to maintain the old friendship of Japan without impairing good relations with other nations. This could best be achieved by a conference on Pacific affairs among the United States, China, Japan, and the British Empire. As early as February, Meighen recalled, he had suggested the possibility of such a conference to the British Government. Although the suggestion had been turned down, he again urged that such overtures begin at once, before the Alliance expired. Meighen was confident that the United States would agree to such a proposal and cited the Senate's unanimous passage of the Borah resolution, which authorized the President to call a conference on the reduction of naval armaments.

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42 Weale, Chronicle, p. 108.
43 Graham, Meighen, II, 91.
45 The Globe (Toronto), June 30, 1921, p. 1.
in the Pacific, as an example of America's willingness to negotiate with Great Britain and Japan.\textsuperscript{47} Furthermore, the recent confidential dispatch from Ambassador Geddes testified that Secretary of State Hughes would be interested in a conference on Far Eastern questions. Renewal of the Alliance, however, would close the door on such negotiations.\textsuperscript{48}

Immediately following Meighen's presentation, the Australian Prime Minister took the floor and burst out in opposition to termination of the Alliance, at times indulging in violent language and misinterpretation of Meighen's arguments.\textsuperscript{49} He angrily ridiculed Meighen as the "Voice of America" rather than the voice of his own country. Australia also desired American friendship, but complete repudiation of an old and trusted ally would only earn the contempt of

\textsuperscript{47}The Borah Resolution was tacked onto a Naval Bill in the following amendment:

"The President is authorized and requested to invite the Governments of Great Britain and Japan to send representatives to a conference which shall be charged with the duty of promptly entering into an understanding or agreement by which the naval building program of each of said Governments, to wit, the United States, Great Britain, and Japan, shall be substantially reduced during the next five years to such an extent and such terms as may be agreed upon, which understanding or agreement is to be reported to the respective Governments for approval."\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{48}Graham, Meighen, II, 91-93.


\textsuperscript{49}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 93.
the United States. Above all, Hughes favored renewal of a modified Alliance, acceptable to the United States, for the same compelling reason Canada favored termination—security. Australia would also vote against renewal, he declared, "... provided that America gives us assurance of safety." Since the United States could not be depended upon in this regard, there was no other worthy substitute for the treaty with Japan. The British Empire needed a reliable friend in the Pacific and, therefore, the Alliance had to be renewed at once.

The other premiers generally agreed with Hughes' position. Smuts also favored a modified Alliance which would safeguard Anglo-American relations. He warned that the Empire must move closer to the United States in the future to meet the Japanese threat to peace in the Pacific. Naturally, Massey agreed wholeheartedly with Hughes and supported renewal. It was apparent that the whole conference was in opposition to Meighen's demands, but the Canadian Premier remained persistent. The majority demanded renewal of the Alliance in a modified form before attempting any further negotiations, but Meighen stubbornly insisted on complete abrogation. "Around and around this point the Conference turned," Hughes later

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51 Hughes Papers, Galbraith, "Imperial Conference," p. 147.
52 Ibid.
recalled, "at times buzzing like an angry beetle impaled upon a pin." The conference was deadlocked.

Into this situation Lloyd George emerged with the rather startling announcement that he did not believe the Alliance would expire on July 13 after all, and that he had asked the Law Officers of the Crown to report on the matter. Thereupon Lord Chancellor Birkenhead, "... in a dazzling feat of legal legerdemain," convinced the conference that the 1920 note to the League of Nations had not constituted a formal notice of termination; therefore, the Alliance would remain in effect one year after such notice was given. Lloyd George engineered this "about-face" in Lord Birkenhead's pronouncement in order to remove the necessity of an immediate decision, thereby providing time in which to arrive at some compromise between the stubborn stands taken by Meighen and Hughes.

Meighen immediately took advantage of the situation and stiffened in his determination for a Pacific conference. On July 1, he launched another attack on the Alliance. After briefly recapitulating his case against renewal point by

53 Hughes, Adventure, p. 124. Hughes also recalled that "the debate had generated much bad feeling and all efforts to bridge the gulf had failed." Ibid., p. 126.

54 Brebner, "Anglo-Japanese," p. 54; Graham, Meighen, II, 94. Even before this pronouncement, however, Britain and Japan had negotiated a three-month extension of the Alliance until October 13, 1921. Hughes, Adventure, p. 123.

55 Graham, Meighen, II, 94.
by point, he re-emphasized the importance of Anglo-American friendship. Finally, he urged the conference to pursue his proposal for a conference on Pacific affairs and alleged there was nothing to lose. In fact, the Alliance could even continue in force during such negotiations. One by one the others began to fall under Meighen's persuasion until only Hughes remained obdurate. Suddenly it was evident that Meighen had won his first victory in Imperial diplomacy.

At last the conference instructed Lord Curzon to ascertain whether the governments of Japan, the United States, and China, respectively, would be willing to participate in a conference on Pacific affairs, including the naval armaments question. If the replies were favorable, such a meeting was to be summoned. Regarding the Alliance, it was agreed, over Meighen's objection, that the notice of termination should not be given until after the proposed conference. If no agreement was reached it would merely be modified according to the League Covenant and continue in force. Consequently, Britain and Japan proceeded to inform the League Secretariat that as long as the Alliance remained in effect, it would be subordinate to the Covenant.

As the conference suggested, Curzon began his inquiries on the Pacific gathering with the Japanese Ambassador in

58 *League Summary*, 1921, pp. 64-65.
London, but the meeting was not very encouraging. The next day, July 5, he contacted George Harvey, the American Ambassador, and suggested that the United States "... invite powers directly concerned to take part in conference to be held to consider all essential matters bearing upon Far East and Pacific Ocean with a view to arriving at a common understanding designed to assure settlement by peaceful means, the elimination of naval warfare, consequent elimination of arms, etc." It was important that the United States appear to take the initiative in any such gathering since the American anti-British faction would oppose the voice of London.

Although Harvey agreed to inform Washington of the proposal, he delayed the cable until he was finally prodded into action by Curzon on Friday, July 8. Curzon urged Harvey to get the American reply before the morning of Monday, July 11. The preceding evening, due to anxious questions in the House of Commons on the future of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Lloyd George intimated that he was expecting replies to a British proposal from the United States, Japan, and

59 Harvey to Hughes, July 8, 1921 (8 p.m.), U. S. A., Foreign Relations, 1921, I, 19.

60 Hughes, Adventure, p. 126.


62 Harvey to Hughes, July 8, 1921 (8 p.m.), U. S. A., Foreign Relations, 1921, I, 19.
China and, therefore, would make a definite statement on July 11.63

Meanwhile, the United States Government itself was sending informal inquiries to the governments of Great Britain, Japan, France, and Italy, suggesting the possibility of a conference on the limitation of armaments to be held in Washington later in the year.64 Originally it was planned not to issue an official statement until after the executive signing of the Borah resolution, but rumors of the London proceedings spurred Secretary Hughes into action.65 He informed the President that the United States had to claim the initiative and Harding agreed. On July 8, Hughes cabled Harvey to "... ascertain informally whether it would be agreeable to the British Government to be invited by this Government to participate in a conference on limitation of armament. ..."66

As this cable to Harvey passed, in transit, the one from Harvey to Hughes, American and British plans for a

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66 Hughes to Harvey, July 8, 1921 (4 p.m.), U. S. A., *Foreign Relations*, 1921, I, 18.
conference almost seemed to coincide. At first, however, the American suggestion referred only to a meeting on armaments, but on receipt of Harvey's cable carrying Curzon's inquiry, the proposed conference was broadened to include Pacific and Far Eastern affairs as well. In his statement on June 10, Harding noted that the limitation of armaments was closely related to the Far Eastern situation and, therefore, the powers interested in these problems should reach a "... common understanding with respect to principles and policies in the Far East."  

Although enthusiastically received in the British Empire, Harding's proposal did not satisfy the prime ministers' demand for a small Pacific conference which could find some substitute for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Instead, the Washington meeting would be a large conference in which Far Eastern affairs might be subordinated by the question of armaments. Consequently, the Imperial Conference proposed to the United States Government that there should be a preliminary

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67 Canadian Annual Review, 1921, pp. 108-109. In regard to this announcement, Meighen issued the following statement: "It was with the greatest satisfaction that I learned of President Harding's notable announcement. To a distracted world it offers a new hope, a promise of relief from the uncertainties and apprehensions that have clouded the future. Nowhere will it be welcomed more eagerly than in Canada; for it has been the unwavering belief of Canadians that the issues involved in the question of armaments, as well as the closely connected problems of the Pacific and the Far East, can be best settled by full and frank consultation among the nations chiefly interested—that is, by the method of free conference." Ibid., p. 109.
conference of only the four main Pacific powers in order to settle the outstanding problems among them before the second conference on armaments in Washington. They suggested this preliminary gathering should take place in London in order that Lloyd George and Curzon could attend and before August 15, when the Dominion premiers would return to their domestic problems at home. 68 This proposal, strongly supported by the premiers, was rejected by the United States on the grounds that it would detract attention from the armament question. "Although it is desired to promote convenience so far as practicable," stated Secretary Hughes, "it is considered impossible to have the conference as early as August 15." 69

The next proposal was for a plan of "quiet consultation" between the four powers in London on specific questions, such as the open door, territorial integrity of China, Shantung, and leased territory around the Pacific. Curzon emphasized that a preliminary understanding on Pacific matters would assure the success of the Washington conference. 70 Again Secretary Hughes rejected the proposal. "Opinion in the United States," he declared, "is decisive against a preliminary conference at London." Furthermore, he warned Great Britain and Japan not to "... make an agreement in advance of the

69 Hughes to Harvey, July 13, 1921, Ibid., pp. 28-29.
70 Harvey to Hughes, July 19, 1921, Ibid., pp. 36-37.
Nevertheless, the premiers devised a new plan for a tripartite consideration, somewhere on the North American Continent, of the agenda for the Washington meeting. On July 27, Harvey informed Hughes that the prime ministers were ready to sail for Bar Harbor, Maine, and would arrive August 18. Secretary Hughes, however, flatly rejected the plan and brought an end to the movement for any preliminary meeting on the grounds that it would be discourteous to other countries.

The opposition of the United States Government to all attempts for a preliminary conference was viewed with the utmost regret by the prime ministers, not only because they would not be able to attend the later conference, but also because the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was left in an unsettled position. Despite this disappointment, however, the Imperial

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71 Hughes to Harvey, July 20, 1921, Ibid., pp. 37-38.
72 British Foreign Office to British Ambassador in Washington, handed to Secretary of State Hughes, July 27, 1921, Ibid., pp. 45-46. For a few days British Columbia was under the impression that Vancouver would host a preliminary meeting. The mayor even issued formal invitations. The Vancouver Sun, July 27-29, 1921.
74 Hughes to Harvey, July 28, 1921, Ibid., pp. 47-50.
75 Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 7.
76 Carter, Security, p. 47. The Times, on July 21, 1921, p. 11, insisted it would be natural to have a preliminary conference as preparation for the conference in Washington.
statesmen, especially Meighen, were generally satisfied with the outcome of their London meeting. The Empire emerged from the squabbling sessions with one, united foreign policy and an endorsement of similar conferences in the future. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the biggest stumbling-block, was neither renewed nor abrogated; but merely engulfed in Meighen's proposal for a special Pacific conference. Furthermore, the Empire's demand for a meeting on Far Eastern questions was later incorporated into the Washington Conference. True, the United States appeared to take the initiative in calling the international meeting, but the British Empire had carefully set the stage. As the 1921 Imperial Conference adjourned and the hopes for a preliminary parley faded, the premiers returned to their own Dominions and began to prepare for the forthcoming Washington Conference at which the future of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance would definitely be decided.

77 Great Britain, Cmd. 1474, p. 3. On August 6, 1921, The Vancouver Sun headlines read: "UNITED EMPIRE MADE SURE."
CHAPTER IV

ABROGATION OF THE ALLIANCE

Following the unsuccessful attempt for a preliminary conference, a new problem arose when the Dominion governments failed to receive separate invitations to the Washington Conference of 1921. On August 11, President Harding issued formal invitations to Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan to attend "a Conference on the subject of Limitation of Armament" and to these powers plus China, Belgium, Holland, and Portugal to discuss problems affecting the Pacific and Far East.¹ The Dominions resented this procedure since they were recognized as separate political entities as members of the League of Nations.² Moreover, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand were all directly involved in Pacific affairs and, therefore, believed they deserved special representation.

The United States Government, however, was not entirely to blame since it could not have been expected to change traditional diplomatic policy without first receiving specific notification from Great Britain.³ In fact, the United States

¹Canada, Sessional Papers, 1922, No. 47, p. 7.
²Borden, Canada, p. 113.
actually expected that Dominion representatives would be named to the British delegation but discovered that the British government opposed such arrangements. After Britain officially accepted Harding's invitation, Secretary of State Hughes suggested that Britain should have six representatives in their delegation in order to adequately provide for the Dominions. 

Ambassador Harvey replied that Curzon favored only two or three representatives since Great Britain was authorized to speak for the whole Empire. "Confidentially," added Harvey, "I feel that Curzon and Lloyd George do not care to have the Dominions directly represented by their own delegates upon the same plane of authority as themselves." In reply to this message, Hughes admitted he also favored small delegations but warned Harvey that the "idea should not get abroad that we have limited size of delegation and thus made impracticable Dominion representation."

Although this problem was not discussed at the Imperial Conference, Meighen naturally assumed that Canada would be represented on the British Empire delegation and, therefore, was not disturbed with the lack of direct invitations.

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4 Hughes to Harvey, August 24, 1921, U. S. A., Foreign Relations, 1921, I, 60-61.
5 Harvey to Hughes, August 26, 1921, Ibid., pp. 63-64.
6 Hughes to Harvey, August 29, 1921, Ibid., p. 65.
7 The Montreal Star stated that Canada could not expect a separate invitation because the British Empire was a unit in its foreign policy. August 11, 1921, p. 10.
usual, he was interested in Canadian participation rather than her status. Since he had not received official word on the forthcoming conference, however, Meighen cabled Lloyd George on August 22:

Would be glad to receive information by cable concerning Washington Conference indicating position with regard to Agenda scheme of representation proposed and other aspects of arrangements particularly with regard to procedure contemplated for handling Far Eastern and Pacific questions. Shall be glad if you will arrange to furnish us by mail with copies of relevant correspondence, memoranda, and papers prepared by experts for use at Conference. I hope also you will arrange to telegraph us from time to time any important developments.

When he failed to receive a reply after several days, Meighen sent another cable to London, this time marked "Private and Personal," emphasizing that he was "... most anxious to know method by which it is proposed to provide for representation of Canada on British Empire Delegation." Finally on October 3, Lloyd George cabled Meighen that he was "... most anxious for standpoint of Canada to be well represented on British Empire Delegation, at approaching Conference in Washington." He then added: "Please inform me by telegraph whom you wish appointed."

Meighen promptly nominated Sir Robert Borden as the Canadian delegate, with Loring Christie to serve on the

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9 Meighen to Lloyd George, August 27, 1921, Ibid.

10 Lloyd George to Meighen, October 3, 1921, Ibid.
Secretariat. When Borden's appointment was announced in the press, however, Premier Smuts cabled Meighen urging him to press for an invitation directly from Washington before sending a delegate. He also pointed out that the United States did not ratify Peace Treaty to which we are signatories as component independent States of British Empire. On the contrary agitation in Congress against our independent voting power in League Nations was direct challenge to new Dominion status. This is first great international Conference after Paris and if Dominions concerned are not invited and yet attend, bad precedent will be set and Dominion status will suffer. If a stand is made now and America acquiesces, battle for international recognition our equal status is finally won.

Smuts also sent a copy of this telegram to Lloyd George for his consideration. On October 21, the British Premier notified Meighen that to raise the question of representation "... would give America the impression we were making factious differences at the eleventh hour," and added that it would only "... produce an undesirable atmosphere on the very eve of the Conference." On the other hand, he was in accord with Smuts' view "... that Dominion representatives should hold same status as at Paris" and, therefore, proposed that each Dominion representative should be given full power to sign "... on behalf of his respective Dominion in accordance with precedent established at Paris." "Under this procedure," he continued, "signature of each Dominion delegate will be necessary in addition to signature of British

11 Meighen to Lloyd George, October 3, 1921, Ibid.
12 Smuts to Meighen, October 19, 1921, Ibid.
Delegates to commit British Empire Delegation as a whole to any agreement made at the Conference, and any Dominion delegate can, if he wishes, reserve assent on behalf of his Government. . . ."  

With this assurance, Meighen agreed to the representation of Canada but emphasized that it was essential to retain the same status as at Paris. He replied to Smuts that there was not enough time to review the subject "... to attain end you desire." Meighen was strongly supported in his decision by Borden, the proposed Canadian delegate. He emphasized the extreme importance of the conference and warned that it would be unwise for any Dominion to withhold its co-operation. Another factor in Meighen's decision was the fear that Canada might lose her representation entirely in the vain pursuit of status. There were too many important questions at stake in the upcoming conference, including that bugaboo—the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

Contrary to Meighen, Smuts was deeply concerned with the formalities of status and declared that South Africa would

13 Colonial Secretary to Governor-General, October 21, 1921, Ibid.

14 Meighen to Lloyd George, October 27, 1921, Ibid.

15 Meighen to Smuts, October 23, 1921, Ibid.

16 Borden, Canada, p. 113. The Montreal Star claimed it was "absolutely necessary to have an informed and authoritative Canadian public man at the elbow of the British delegates. . . ." October 4, 1921, p. 10.
not attend the conference without her own invitation. New Zealand actively supported membership within the British delegation without distinctive representation and Australia finally swallowed her pride and appointed a delegate.

When the Washington Conference finally convened in November, the British Empire delegation consisted of seven members, three of which represented Great Britain: Arthur J. Balfour, Lord President of the Council; Lord Lee of Fareham, First Lord of the Admiralty; and Sir Auckland Geddes, Ambassador to the United States. Since neither Lloyd George nor Curzon could attend, Balfour served as head of the delegation. The other delegates were Sir Robert Borden of Canada; Senator George Foster Pearce, Australian Minister of Defense; Sir John Salmond, Justice of the Supreme Court of New Zealand; and Srinivasa Sastri, member of the Indian Council of State. Although Smuts refused to attend, the interests of South Africa were represented by Balfour.

Following the conference, Borden reported that the prevailing atmosphere at Washington was one of Imperial unity. In the private meetings of the Empire delegation, the delegates exchanged views and reached "... in advance

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17 The Times, October 24, 1921, p. 11.
conclusions that could be put forward on behalf of the whole Empire." He continued:

Throughout the Conference each Delegate was in touch with his own Government by means of the telegraphs or the posts. Thus no Dominion could be committed without its consent, and each was enabled to state its view and exert its influence in advance of the formulation of agreement with other Powers. It should be added that in many instances the influence of the Dominions contributed very materially to the conclusions finally reached.

The New Zealand delegate, Sir John Salmond, also testified to the united policy adopted by the Empire.

Contrary to Borden's assertion that there was no difference between the Dominions' status at the Paris Peace Conference and that at Washington, however, the Dominions were not represented in quite the same way. In 1919 they received dual representation, both as members of the British Empire Delegation and as separate members in their own right, while in 1921 they were only component parts of one, united Empire. Despite this united policy, the several Dominions did work for their own aims. Australia and New Zealand were determined to safeguard their position in the Pacific, while

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20 Ibid., p. 45.  
21 Ibid.  
Canada was dedicated to the principle of Anglo-American harmony. All three sought a new arrangement to replace the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

The Alliance was, in fact, the key to the success of the Washington Conference. No agreements could be reached regarding the two principle topics, limitation of armaments and consideration of Pacific and Far Eastern questions, without first finding some suitable substitute for the Anglo-Japanese pact. As the delegates gathered in November, the United States Government still favored complete termination, while the Japanese appeared to be ready to consider tripartite arrangements, and the British Empire desired immediate negotiations. Since the Alliance was not directly included in the conference agenda, all such negotiations were secretly conducted outside the conference between Secretary of State Hughes, Balfour, and the heads of the Japanese delegation. The nature of these conversations was largely unknown to the other delegates.

Borden, who arrived in Washington before Balfour, Pearce, and Salmond, immediately began preparatory moves to

24Ichihashi, Washington and After, p. 120.


replace the Alliance with a new arrangement. On November 7 he conferred with two other members of the British delegation, Ambassador Geddes and Lord Lee, and learned that they generally agreed with his views on the Alliance. When Lord Lee mentioned the Imperial Conference, Borden emphasized the fact that Canadian public opinion "... supported the stand taken by Mr. Meighen."28 A couple days later Borden had private conversations with two important members of the American delegation, Senator Lodge and Elihu Root. They both agreed with him "... that the greatest success obtainable at this Conference would be an understanding (an alliance being both impossible and undesirable) between the British Commonwealth and the American Republic."29 Root "... spoke very strongly of the disastrous effect upon American public opinion of a renewal of the alliance," and emphasized it was regarded as a threat to the United States."30 In regard to the difficulties faced by Australia and New Zealand, Root assured Borden that a new arrangement in the Pacific would provide much more security for those Dominions than the Alliance.31 Through these conversations, Borden cleared the way for immediate


29 November 9, 1921, Ibid., p. 6.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.
negotiations on the Alliance which actually opened the following day between Secretary Hughes and Balfour.

On November 11, opening day of the conference, Balfour conferred privately with the American Secretary of State. He reported that the Japanese delegation had been looking for him all day, probably about the future of the Alliance. It was necessary, he urged, that some new policy to replace the old treaty must be reached as soon as possible. For this purpose Balfour suggested a tripartite agreement between the United States, Japan, and the British Empire for "... the preservation of peace and the maintenance of the territorial status quo." This agreement would also include a mutual pledge to respect each other's rights and to consult with one another in order to devise the best means of protecting these rights. If threatened by some aggressive power or powers, any two of the contracting parties could enter into a purely defensive military arrangement as long as they informed the other contracting party. This type of agreement, claimed Balfour, would maintain the "general peace" and protect the existing rights of the three powers "... in the islands of the Pacific Ocean and the territories bordering thereon." Hughes requested time to study this proposal and immediately suggested that words such as "treaty" and "alliance" should be replaced

33 Ibid.
by the less definite term "arrangement." Popular opinion would not allow the United States to enter into an "alliance" and the Senate might not approve a "treaty," but there probably would not be many objections to an "arrangement." Hughes also suggested that this new "arrangement" should be modeled after the Root-Takahira Agreement and Lansing-Ishii notes which were merely statements of principles and policies. What Hughes desired was an arrangement which would express America's desire for friendship with Japan and, at the same time, her opposition to Japan's aggression in Asia.

A number of such private and informal discussions followed in which Hughes continued to question Balfour's tripartite proposal. He pointed out that it indirectly allowed for the preservation of an alliance between Great Britain and Japan without the consent of the United States; therefore, it would be unacceptable to the American people. Nevertheless, Hughes agreed with the general principles in Balfour's suggestion and eventually incorporated them into the final agreement.

Meanwhile, Hughes turned his consideration to another proposal drafted by Chandler P. Anderson, legal advisor to

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34 Memorandum of Hughes' conversation with Balfour, November 11, 1921, Ibid., pp. 1-2.

35 Ibid.

the United States delegation. Anderson's draft eliminated all reference to force and "... provided for conferences when the general peace was in jeopardy, called upon each power to respect the territorial possessions of the other signatory powers, and provided that none of the signatories would enter into a separate arrangement with any other power or powers." 37 Hughes rejected this treaty draft because it did not cancel the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and from then on he conducted these deliberations without the aid of his delegation.

In a private interview with Hughes on November 23, Borden proposed that the new arrangement should prevent the outbreak of hostilities. "The various nations," declared Borden, "would bind themselves not to commence hostilities until after investigation of their differences by a permanent international tribunal." He believed this procedure "... would not bind the United States or any other nation to any definite action in the final result." In response, Hughes assured Borden that he also hoped such an arrangement could be accomplished. 38

The next draft was presented to Hughes on November 26, by the Japanese Ambassador, Kijuro Shidehara. It was similar

37 Anderson Papers, Diary, Vol. V, Box 47, Ibid., p. 44.

in form to Balfour's version in that it was tripartite in scope and protected territorial rights, but it also recognized Japan's conquests in Asia.\(^{39}\) Again Hughes rejected the proposal because it failed to terminate the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.\(^{40}\)

Finally, after numerous discussions, Hughes introduced his own draft for a four-power arrangement between the United States, the British Empire, Japan, and France. The inclusion of France was intended to appease that country and to off-set any possible Anglo-Japanese re-alignment. This agreement applied only to the "... insular possessions and insular dominions in the region of the Pacific Ocean." If threatened by another power, the contracting parties would "... communicate with one another fully and frankly", and a joint conference would handle all disputes between the signatory powers if not settled by diplomacy. Hughes' draft was accepted by the four powers concerned and on December 10 it was publicly introduced as the Four-Power Treaty. The most essential provision of the Treaty was Article IV which provided for the automatic abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance once ratification had occurred.\(^{41}\)


\(^{40}\) Department of State, Decimal files, 500. A 4A/150. As cited in Vinson, "Four Power Treaty," p. 44.


"The High Contracting Parties agree as between themselves to respect their rights in relation to their
On December 8 Borden sent a letter to Meighen marked "Most Secret" in which he disclosed this movement to supersede the Alliance. "It is proposed," he wrote, "in accordance with the arrangements made between the Dominions and Great Britain before we came to Washington that so far as the British Empire is concerned the agreement should be signed by

insular possessions and insular dominions in the region of the Pacific Ocean.

If there should develop between any of the High Contracting Parties a controversy arising out of any Pacific question and involving their said rights which is not satisfactorily settled by diplomacy and is likely to affect the harmonious accord now happily subsisting between them, they shall invite the other High Contracting Parties to a joint conference to which the whole subject will be referred for consideration and adjustment.

II.

If the said rights are threatened by the aggressive action of any other Power, the High Contracting Parties shall communicate with one another fully and frankly in order to arrive at an understanding as to the most efficient measures to be taken, jointly or separately, to meet the exigencies of the particular situation.

III.

This Treaty shall remain in force for ten years from the time it shall take effect, and after the expiration of said period it shall continue to be in force subject to the right of any of the High Contracting Parties to terminate it upon twelve months' notice.

IV.

This Treaty shall be ratified as soon as possible in accordance with the constitutional methods of the High Contracting Parties and shall take effect on the deposit of ratifications, which shall take place at Washington, and thereupon the agreement between Great Britain and Japan, which was concluded at London on July 13, 1911, shall terminate. The Government of the United States will transmit to all the Signatory Powers a certified copy of the proces-verbal of the deposit of ratifications."

Ibid.
the Dominion representatives on behalf of their own respective Dominions, as well as by the British representatives." In requesting authority to sign the Treaty on behalf of Canada, Borden pointed out to Meighen that the Treaty was "... entirely in line with the proposal and purposes advocated by you at last summer's conference." According to Borden, the essential feature of the Treaty was that it substituted "... the conference method for other methods of solving international disputes." The new arrangement also won instant approval from the Canadian press. The Conservative Montreal Star hailed the Treaty as the "... greatest peace plan in the history of the world" and the Liberal Toronto Globe claimed it was a great historical landmark. "The four-power treaty is a triumph of common-sense," declared The Globe, "and is specially a cause for gratifications in the British Empire because of its effects upon Anglo-American relations." In London The Times summed up British reaction when it labeled the Treaty a

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42 Borden to Meighen, December 8, 1921, "Washington Conference Correspondence, 1921-1922," from unpublished Borden Papers (Microfilm copy).

43 Borden to Meighen, December 10, 1921, Ibid.

44 Borden to Meighen, December 27, 1921, Ibid.


46 The Globe (Toronto), December 12, 1921, p. 4.
"Triumph of Peace" since it promised "... to fulfill what has long been a dearest wish of all the peoples of this Empire." 47

When the Four-Power Treaty was signed on December 13, 1921, it became the first formal achievement of the Washington Conference even though it was drafted outside the conference sessions. The most positive result, of course, was the abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. For Canada this marked the end of a long struggle to harmonize Anglo-American relations, but to the other powers it was merely a preliminary step which paved the way to future agreements at the Washington Conference. 48

47 The Times, December 12, 1921, p. 11.

48 The other principle agreements were the Five-Power Treaty concerning the limitation of armaments, and the Nine-Power Treaty concerning the future of China. For a good account of Borden's influential role in the Washington Conference, see Carter, Security, pp. 55-64, and the unpublished Borden Papers.
CONCLUSION

An important, if somewhat obscure, development in Imperial policy-making was the emergence of a distinctly Canadian foreign policy in 1921. The demand for such an independent role, while strongly supported by the Liberal Party and steadily gaining momentum throughout Canada after the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, was not supported by the Conservative Party. As a result of its traditional position of loyalty to the Empire, the latter hesitated about making drastic demands on London in regard to foreign policy. When, however, Canadian security seemingly was threatened by the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1921, the Conservative government modified its position and supported a more nationalistic role in foreign affairs.

Canada was in a peculiar situation because of her dual position. She was part of the British Empire and was bound by its ties, yet, on the other hand, she was a state on the North American continent and was related by strong social, political, and economic ties to the United States, her southern neighbor. If hostilities ever broke out between Japan and the United States, Canada would have found herself in an untenable position if Imperial commitments had forced her to aid Japan. In such a situation, the clashes of pro-American,
pro-British and anti-Japanese sentiments would have torn Canada apart. Therefore, since Canadian security was dependent on continued good relations with the United States, the Canadian Prime Minister, Arthur Meighen, went to the 1921 Imperial Conference determined to work towards prevention of the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. As a typical Canadian Conservative, he favored a single, united foreign policy for the Empire, but only if Canadian interests were properly protected. In other words, he placed national interests first and Imperial loyalty second.

At the London sessions Prime Minister Meighen's demands that the Alliance be terminated met with stiff opposition from the other prime ministers present, especially that of William Hughes of Australia. However, the Canadian Premier was determined and persistent. Time and time again, he stressed the importance of Anglo-American harmony, not only for Canada but for the Empire as a whole. The mere fact, he argued, that the United States was suspicious of the Alliance was reason enough for its termination. In addition, and rather startlingly, he demanded that in all matters affecting relations with the United States, Canada should have the decisive voice, including the question of the moment, the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. As he requested such an arrangement he warned the conference that if the Alliance was renewed Canada might not continue to support Imperial policy. Meighen's action successfully blocked immediate renewal of the Alliance with Japan
when the Imperial statesmen unanimously agreed to his proposal that a conference of Pacific powers be convened to review the situation and find a proper solution to the problem.

While Premier Meighen was not solely responsible for the final abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, his persistent opposition to renewal paved the way for the Four-Power Treaty of 1922. Although the United States earlier had secretly agreed to co-operate with Great Britain and Japan in a tripartite solution, it is doubtful that this had changed British desires for renewal of the Alliance. In fact, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, had strongly urged that renewal be effected before any possible new arrangement was considered. It is altogether probable that renewal under such conditions would have closed the door to future Anglo-American negotiations; thus, Meighen, by blocking renewal, helped assure that the door remained open for a final settlement that was acceptable to Washington.

In retrospect it is clear that what Meighen advocated at the Imperial Conference of 1921 was a distinctly Canadian foreign policy based on the principle of co-operation with the United States. It must be developed, he warned, either as part of a common Imperial policy or, if necessary, by Canada, independently. Meighen's steadfast determination to support national interests at the expense of Imperial unity has often been overlooked due to the fact that the question
of the moment was resolved by an agreement which assured a single, united policy for the whole Empire. Canada, however, never retreated from Meighen's position. In the future she agreed to an Imperial policy only as long as it protected and served her particular national interest. Whenever Canadian interests and Imperial policy were in future conflict, the precedent of 1921 served to posture Canadian foreign policy on lines independent from the rest of the British Empire. In fact, the Washington Conference was the last time that a united delegation represented the British Empire at an important international conference.

The drift of Canada from support of a single Imperial foreign policy, to a policy based solidly on national interests, was clearly expressed in mid-summer, 1921, when the *Manitoba Free Press* boldly claimed that Canada had passed beyond the stage in national self-government when its international responsibilities and commitments could be determined by the British Foreign Office alone, and said: "We must now consciously take charge of our own foreign policy."¹

¹*Manitoba Free Press*, August 11, 1921, p. 11.
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