



# The Lost Peace International Relations in Europe, 1918 – 1939

Anthony Adamthwaite

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Anne-Marie, Katherine, Christian and Jonathan 'Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant: even so are the young children.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate.' Psalms, cxxvii

## Abbreviations

DBFP	<i>Documents on British Foreign Policy</i> , 1919 – 1939 (continuing), (London, HMSO, 1946 – )
DDF	<i>Documents diplomatiques français</i> , 1932 – 1939 (continuing), (Paris, 1963)
DGFP	Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918 – 1945 (London, HMSO, 1949)
FRUS	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i> (continuing) (Washington, USGPO, 1933 – )

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## Preface

Until relatively recently scholarly attention was focused on the origins of the Second World War. Post – 1918 international relations were seen entirely in the context of the historiography of war origins. The fact that in the 1940s and 1950s governments gave priority to the publication of material on the late 1930s confirmed this distortion. Consequently, students anxious to make a start on the study of sources for interwar diplomacy are not well served. There are several selections of documents on the origins of the Second World War but nothing on the problems of peace-making. This selection of documents has a double purpose: to illustrate the attempts to create a lasting peace after the First World War and to illuminate the frustration of those attempts and the subsequent collapse of the peace settlement. It is misleading to describe international affairs after 1918 as one long slide to inevitable catastrophe. Different policies might have averted disaster at several turning points. Post-Versailles Europe was not doomed from the beginning. *Dis aliter visum*.

Space makes it impossible to illustrate all aspects of interwar European diplomacy and this has led to many omissions, of which I am fully conscious. I have thought it better to select substantial passages rather than to make the book an anthology of snippets. The focus is on international relations in Europe because Europe was still the centre of the international system but I have tried to show the increasing influence of the United States of America and Japan. The aim of the selection is not to chronicle the *res gestae* of foreign policy but to give students some idea of its formulation. Accordingly, official dispatches have been largely omitted in favour of the diaries and private correspondence of ministers and officials and the records of policy-making discussions. The selection draws on the main published collections and includes some hitherto unpublished French material as well as German and Soviet documents translated for the first time. I am grateful to Mrs Molly Marriott for her careful typing of part of the manuscript.



1 European Frontiers after the First World War



2 Europe, 1938-1939



# Contents

<i>Abbreviations</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>Preface</i>	xv
<i>Map 1: European Frontiers after the First World War</i>	
<i>Map 2: Europe, 1938 – 39</i>	
<i>Map 3: The Far East c. 1939</i>	
 <b>Introduction</b>	 1
 <b>I Peace-making, 1918 – 23</b>	 14
1 The United States threatens to withdraw from the war, 30 October 1918	18
2 The German Cabinet considers Allied peace terms, 21 March 1919	20
3 Conversation between Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Orlando 27 March 1919	24
4 President Poincaré argues for indefinite occupation of the Rhineland as security for payment of German reparations, 28 April 1919	30
5 Smuts encourages Keynes to denounce the Treaty of Versailles, 10 June 1919	32
6 The German army looks to the resurrection of Germany, 28 June 1919	34
7 The United States and the League of Nations, 25 November 1919	35
8 The British Cabinet sums up its policy on Russia, 29 January 1920	38
9 Excerpt from the Theses on the National and Colonial Question adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist International, 1920	39
10 Britain at the Washington Conference, 11 November 1921	41

11	Japan at the Washington Conference, 27 December 1921	42
12	Lloyd George and Briand discuss an Anglo-French alliance, 21 December 1921	44
13	Reparations and War Debts. Cabinet minutes 22 December 1921	46
14	Cecil's proposals for a Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, with comments by the Foreign Office, 1 July 1922	50
15	Seeckt calls for the partition of Poland between Germany and the Soviet Union, 11 September 1922	54
16	Baldwin and Poincaré on Anglo-French differences, 19 September 1923	54
17	Canadian views on British empire and British foreign policy, 3 October 1923	58
18	Britain considers financial pressure on France, 14 November 1923	63
<b>II</b>	<b>Détente, 1924 – 8</b>	65
19	MacDonald and Herriot conclude a 'moral pact of continuous cooperation', 21 June 1924	67
20	Germany evades the disarmament clauses of Versailles, 20 February 1925	68
21	Britain as honest broker, 19 March 1925	70
22	Stresemann's foreign policy goals, 7 September 1925	72
23	<i>Mein Kampf</i> , 1925	73
24	France and Locarno, 12 February 1926	76
25	Germany's aims, 6 March 1926	79
26	Foch opposes early withdrawal from the Rhineland, 8 March 1926	79
27	Stresemann and Briand discuss Franco-German rapprochement at Thoiry, 17 September 1926	82
28	Disarmament: A British view, 31 January 1928	87
29	Monetary reconstruction in Europe: Anglo-French rivalry, 27 – 28 April 1928	93
30	Anglo-American relations assessed, 12 November 1928	97
<b>III</b>	<b>Disintegration, 1929 – 33</b>	105
31	Naval disarmament: France versus the Anglo-Saxon powers, 13 January 1930	109

32	French plans for Franco-German economic cooperation, 11 February 1930	113
33	Britain assesses Briand's proposal for a European federal union, 30 May 1930	116
34	President Hoover's proposal for a Moratorium on War Debts and Reparations, 20 June 1931	120
35	Sir John Simon on the Manchurian crisis, 25 November 1931	122
36	Britain's dilemma in the Far East, 1 February 1932	124
37	France's scheme for a Danubian economic entente rejected, 11 May 1932	126
38	Hitler's letter to Colonel von Reichenau, 4 December 1932	130
39	General Weygand reviews French defence policy, 16 January 1933	136
40	Hitler's first speech to the generals, 3 February 1933	139
41	Japan withdraws from the League of Nations, 27 March 1933	140
42	Debts, depression and disarmament, 7 April 1933	141
43	Britain, France and the United States must call Germany's bluff, 16 May 1933	143
44	Roosevelt urged to broadcast to Germany, 17 October 1933	149
45	Open versus secret diplomacy, October – November 1933	150
46	Franco-Soviet-Czech discussions at Geneva, 25 November 1933	154

#### **IV Challenge and Response, 1934 – 36** 158

47	The Soviet ambassador in Paris on France's delay in negotiating an alliance, 25 January 1934	161
48	Neville Chamberlain suggests an Anglo-Japanese pact, 1 September 1934	161
49	Roosevelt opposed to an Anglo-Japanese pact, 9 November 1934	163
50	Mussolini on Abyssinia, 30 December 1934	164
51	Clifford Allen meets Hitler, January 1935	166
52	Hoare-Laval talks on Abyssinia, 7 December 1935	167
53	Hitler considers the reoccupation of the Rhineland, 14 February 1936	172



54	France's Popular Front government divided on Spain, 25 July 1936	175
55	Britain stresses the urgency of a non-intervention agreement, 7 August 1936	176
56	Japan's aims, 7 August 1936	177
57	Hitler on the Four Year Plan, August 1936	180
<b>V</b>	<b>Undeclared War, 1937 – 39</b>	<b>184</b>
58	Italy will not save Austria, 6 November 1937	187
59	The Hossbach Memorandum, 10 November 1937	188
60	The United States must take firm action against Japan, 14 November 1937	193
61	General Jodl's amendment to 'Operation Green', 7 December 1937	195
62	The British Cabinet reviews its foreign and defence policies, 8 December 1937	197
63	The aims of the Japanese army, 3 July 1938	200
64	Roosevelt suggests a conference on Czechoslovakia, 27 September 1938	205
65	Italy and the Munich crisis, 27 – 30 September 1938	206
66	Japan instructs its ambassadors in Germany and Italy on the conclusion of a tripartite pact, 25 January 1939	211
67	Beck defines Poland's position, 24 March 1939	214
68	British and French public opinion polls, 1938 – 9	215
69	A meeting of the military missions of Britain, France and the Soviet Union, 14 August 1939	219
	Chronology	221
	Further Reading	227
	Biographical Sketches	232