

1. who
2. Summary
3. B-2

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LEST WE FORGET

We have much in common with the British people - language, custom, law and today we share dangers similar to those inadequately met by Britain in the 1930s. The product of their poor preparation for war together with that of their allies came to be a period described by Churchill as "How the British people held the fort alone until those who hitherto had been half blind were half ready."¹

Our contemporary condition is one in which those who "had been half blind" may well be called upon to provide the crucial capability either with allies or alone. We can no longer permit ourselves to be "half ready."

My object in this paper is to afford a basis for exploiting the advice of JFK in his book, Why England Slept. "We have, however, one great advantage over the English. We have the benefit of their experience. From their mistakes we should be able to learn a lesson that may prove invaluable to us in the future. . . . let us try to profit by them and save ourselves her anguish."²

The time of interest is Britain in the early 1930s and the issue addressed is defense. I do not mean to imply that defense was the dominant issue in England at this time; these were economic and social with even some attention given to energy. I do not wish to imply that this paper represents a comprehensive view of all defense issues; it does, however, represent actual views expressed at that time or by its historians.

My focus is on British air power, not because of service affiliation, but rather because it was a central issue dealing with the only capability seen as a direct threat to English territory. In the contemporary vocabulary the issue was strategic offensive and defensive forces.

England's actions were a product of its society and beliefs. They led to the decisions that established British strength and contributed to German initiatives.

". . . the ideas most widely held were: first, the idea that armaments were a cause of war; second, the belief that rearmament was a blow to the League; third, that Europe must achieve disarmament in the conference that was called in 1932 if she was ever to have peace; fourth, the feeling that Britain had undertaken unilateral disarmament in the twenties and should try to continue that policy; fifth, the great strength of the pacifist movement; and sixth, the feeling of separation from the Continent and subsequent immunity."³

The Conservative Party came into power on August 21, 1931, replacing the Labor Party which had failed to solve the severe economic problems of the time. The conservative solution was rigid economy and a balanced budget. Hitler, in 1932, chose rearmament. The British defense program in 1932 had the "lowest estimate introduced since 1913,"⁴ just before their entry into WW I. The government noted it "would view the situation with anxiety but for their earnest hope and expectation that the Disarmament Conference now

in session in Geneva will bring about a reduction in air armaments."⁵

In November 1932 Baldwin made a speech that was to have a continuing effect on British policy. "I think it is well for the man in the street to realize that there is no power on earth which can protect him from being bombed. Whatever people may tell him, the bomber will always get through. . . . The only defense is in offense, which means that you have to kill more women and children more quickly than the enemy if you want to save yourselves."⁶ This speech came to be quoted again and again. It strengthened the pacifist movement and Oxford students passed the famous resolution. . . ."this house will not die for king or country."⁷

On 30 January 1933 Hitler became Chancellor of the German Reich. The British government increased its defense budget by about 5 percent⁸ but apologized for the increase by noting that the increase was intended to cover expenses deferred in earlier years. With respect to air power the government held in suspense for another year the plan to add squadrons and noted that this was "a decision which was a further earnest of a wholehearted desire of the UK government to promote disarmament and to bring about a reduction in the world's air forces on an equitable basis."⁹ "The need for economy which was the primary concern of the national government and the hope for a successful conclusion

of the Disarmament Conference, combined with the general pacifist feeling among the people to make any great increase in the estimates impossible."¹⁰

On 14 October 1933 the Germans withdrew from the Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations. On 18 October the leader of the British opposition Labor Party said on behalf of the party ". . . we shall oppose the rearmament of Germany. We demand that the British Government shall take the lead and call upon its associates themselves to disarm. . . . we shall not support an increase in armaments but we shall also refuse to support our own or any other government in an endeavor to apply penalties or sanctions against Germany." "During this period the fear of Communism, not Nazism, was the great British bogey." Sir Arthur Balfour in speaking of the Russian danger said, "One of the greatest menaces to peace today is the totally unarmed condition of Germany."¹²

What came to be a crucial by-election occurred on 25 October, 11 days after Germany's withdrawal from the League and the Disarmament Conference. Labor won a decisive victory in a conservative district. Churchill expressed these views about the times. "By the autumn of 1933 it was plain that neither by precept nor still less by example would the British effort for disarmament succeed. The pacifism of the Labor and Liberal Parties was not affected even by the grave event of the German withdrawal from the League of Nations. . . . Anyone who differed . . . was called

'warmonger' and 'scaremonger'." ¹³ This view was borne out by the comments of the successful labor candidate. "The British people demand . . . that the . . . government shall give the lead by initiating immediately a policy of general disarmament." ¹⁴ The head of the Labor Party said that all nations must "disarm to the level of Germany as a preliminary to total disarmament." ¹⁵

There is the view that the East Fulham election results were misread. "Electors as distinct from politicians were interested in housing and unemployment, not in foreign affairs." ¹⁶ Nonetheless, this "was only the first of six by-elections . . . all fought on the issue of peace" ¹⁷ and all of which showed a shift of 20-25 percent against the government. The perception of the issue had significant impact on events in the crucial year of 1934.

1934 opened with Japan's notice of its withdrawal from the League of Nations. The British Government remained committed to disarmament and on January 31 submitted comprehensive proposals to the conference. The British defense program for 1934 showed this emphasis. The air budget was increased by less than 1 percent. This 1934 program again noted that the ". . . government have by their successive postponements of the modest Home Defense Scheme of 1923 . . . given proof of their sincerity of their purpose to achieve air disarmament. . . ." ¹⁸

On 6 February 1934 the British foreign minister commented, "The first proposition is that Germany's claim to equality of rights in the matter of armaments cannot be resisted, and ought not to be resisted."¹⁹

Churchill was not so sanguine. In March 1934 he wrote, "I dread the day when the means of threatening the heart of the British Empire should pass into the hands of the present rulers of Germany."²⁰ The London Economist commented on Churchill's concerns with the view that "Once again he has displayed an unerring instinct for hitting on the worst possible policies."²¹

On 29 March 1934 Germany published her new defense estimates, which as a whole were up by a third, while expenditures on aviation were up by 230 percent."²²

Chamberlain, a member of the government, said, ". . . to put it bluntly, we are presented with proposals impossible to carry out. . . . it was necessary to cut our coat according to the cloth."²³

The Air Ministry plans called for preparing the Royal Air Force for war in about 8 years time - 1942. In reviewing these plans, Chamberlain's representative on 6 July ". . . suggested dispensing with reserves." This was "a big risk" but with respect to Germany he considered it would be about 8 years before their AF "became a truly formidable weapon."²⁴

In the same month a cabinet subcommittee noted that without further money for air reserves the Air Force ". . . would not

be capable of operating on a war footing for more than a week or two."²⁵

On July 9 Churchill wrote, "I look with wonder upon our thoughtless crowds. . . in the summer sunshine and upon this unheeding House of Commons. . . and all the while a terrible process is astir. Germany is rearming."²⁶

On 13 July there was a debate in the House of Commons during which Anthony Eden said, "Where I differ from (Churchill) is that he seems to conceive that in order to have an effective world consultation system, nations have to be heavily armed. I do not agree . . . general disarmament must continue to be the ultimate aim."²⁷

In the same debate Clement Atlee said with respect to Hitler, "I think we can generally say today that his dictatorship is gradually falling down."²⁸

On July 20 he added, "We deny the need for increased air armaments. . . we deny the proposition that an increased British Air Force will make for the peace of the world and we reject altogether the claim to parity."²⁹

Five days later the Nazis murdered the Chancellor of Austria. The Nazi interest in Austria was foretold. "In the first paragraph of Mein Kampf it will be remembered, Hitler had written

that the reunion of Austria and Germany was a task to be furthered with every means our lives long."³⁰

A debate on the British defense program was held 5 days later on 30 July. The Labor Party moved a resolution of censure for the government. ". . . policy of rearmament neither necessitated by any new commitment nor calculated to add to the security of the nation but which will serve to jeopardize. . . disarmament and encourage a revival of dangerous and wasteful competition in preparation for war."³¹

Churchill's views were of course diametrically opposed to those of labor; he had recommended that the AF be doubled and redoubled.³² Clement Atlee continued his attack on the government's program. "Let there be no mistake about this White Paper. It marks a complete change of policy. . . . We believe that the policy outlined here is disastrous."³³

Baldwin in defending the government proposals for a 1-percent increase in the Air Force noted that no squadrons had been added since 1932 and added, "The sole reason for the delay. . . was to set an example to other countries." All the other countries had moved far ahead so that what the British had been doing in effect was "practicing unilateral disarmament." Baldwin added, ". . . when you think of the defense of England you no longer think of the chalk cliffs of Dover; you think of the Rhine. That is where the frontier lies."³⁴

Churchill's view of the activities in Germany were more extreme. He said, "I first assert that Germany has already in violation of the treaty created a military air force which is now nearly two-thirds as strong as our present home defense air force. . . some time in 1936 Germany will be definitely and substantially stronger in the air than Great Britain. . . once they have got that lead we may never be able to overtake them."³⁵

The Liberal Party joined the Labor Party in criticizing the government's program. "It is a fallacy if one is examining the methods by which security may be obtained, to start from the assumption that we got security by an increase of air armaments. . ."³⁶ The Liberal spokesman answered the government's claim that they needed the increase in order to fulfill their collective obligations by saying, "We are not universal policemen to carry out all the obligations of the League."³⁷

Sir John Simon, Foreign Minister, in summarizing the government's position admitted that "Germany's interest in air development is very marked and the sums proposed to be spent upon it under the proclaimed head of 'civil aviation' and 'passive air defense' are very striking." Simon then attacked the positions of both Labor and Churchill and concluded with the statement "that at no moment during our stewardship will we fail to have a military force adequate to the circumstances with which we might have to deal."³⁸

The Labor motion of censure was defeated and the government program sustained.

In commenting on this debate JFK notes that Churchill had recognized that even if the government program was put through relatively in four years England would be worse off. JFK goes on to observe, "This is an important point. Both in England and in America the tendency has always been to examine programs and estimates on the basis of the previous year or years. . . . But we should think of the size of the appropriation only in relation to the war efforts of other countries, not our own. . . . One of England's greatest mistakes lay in measuring . . . increases in her program. . . by the standards of previous years. She found the expansion substantial. . . had a feeling of . . . complacency that was unwarranted. She did not measure . . . by the war effort Germany was putting out. In a democracy where Congress or Parliament's attitude is necessarily so much a reflection of the public's general feeling, this point may be vital. In England's case it was."³⁹

Throughout this debate and the ones to follow there were consistent problems with numbers to describe air strengths and comparable data on size of the current and future strength of the German Air Force. It is clear that Britain in 1923 had planned an Air Force of 52 squadrons and that they were still 10 short of that goal in 1932. Squadrons were not an effective unit of measurements, not

recognizing the quality, mission or physical location of the aircraft. There was also emphasis on total numbers of aircraft, a unit of measurement of little more value than squadrons. The German Air Force data was conflicting with differing credibility placed on alternate intelligence estimates within the government and unresolved issues on the relevance of the German Civil Air Fleet.

The actual strength of the German Air Force was both overestimated and underestimated. The texts of the debates lead to the view that in 1934 opponents never resolved these quantitative issues or reached any common understanding of them. Clearly the dominant issue was the qualitative judgment on the significance of any data. Here the differences were sharp and seem to center on subjective judgments of Hitler's intentions as they bore on Great Britain.

In August 1934 Hitler gave an interview to the correspondent of the London Daily Mail. Hitler told the correspondent that "war will not come again," that Germany had "a more profound impression than any other of the evil that war causes" and that "Germany's problems cannot be settled by war."⁴⁰ In the same period Hitler ordered the Army to treble its size to 300,000 by 1 October.

The July 1934 debate on the British air program was characterized by the Labor censure motion for excessive and improvident

expenditures. Churchill initiated a further debate in November by submitting an amendment saying that "in the present circumstances . . . the strength . . . of our air defenses is no longer adequate to secure the peace, safety and freedom of the British people."⁴¹ Churchill focused on the danger from the air, expressing the view that 30-40,000 people could be killed or injured in London alone in a 10-day period, and 3-4 million people would be driven out of the city. He noted that "the only direct measure of defense upon a great scale is the certainty of being able to inflict simultaneously upon the enemy as great damage as he can inflict upon ourselves."⁴² Churchill's principal points were that: Germany, in violation of the treaty already had a military air force approaching equality with Britain; second, given the existing programs of both nations in one year Germany would be as strong or stronger than Britain; third, on the same basis, Germany would be 50 percent stronger in two years, almost 100 percent stronger in three years. Churchill also noted the civil and military passive defense programs under way in Germany and urged that Britain start a program of its own.

Churchill had not surprised his party, the conservatives, with his speech; he had provided a copy of it to Baldwin before the debate. The British foreign minister explained "to the German ambassador that it was impossible to avoid the debate."⁴³ In cabinet council preceding the debate Hoare stressed it was

important to make it clear that Mr Churchill's charges were exaggerated and that we are going to be stronger than Germany for the next 18 months. Neville Chamberlain added that "The existing program was as much as could be accomplished efficiently and without waste of money or effort."⁴⁴ The day before the debate the British government advised the German Government in advance of what they were to say.

Baldwin in the government's reply to Churchill noted the problems presented by a closed society. "I have spoken more than once of the secrecy that enshrouds what is going on in Germany. It is a dark continent from that point of view."⁴⁵

Views expressed during this debate were similar to those earlier presented but since the issue was Churchill's amendment, his views came under frequent attack. These are some of the comments made.

"There is no more dangerous argument nor one which has been more completely falsified by history than the argument that you obtain security by multiplying armaments."⁴⁶

"Our national revenue, that vital arm of our defense, is like an overstretched catapult; overburden it with swollen demands for armaments . . . and it will snap in the day of decision."⁴⁷

"I do not believe that any sane country, and certainly not a military country like Germany, would commit the blunder of believing that they could intimidate a country that was prepared to suffer a casualty list of 3 million into the surrender of its empire or its liberties."⁴⁸

The concern with Russia led to the position, "I am prepared in the course of that policy to accept 'a concomitant' to abolish clauses that Germany resents, to give her equality of status, to sanction Hitler's foreign policy and to justify Germany rearming."⁴⁹

Baldwin's speech on the invulnerability of the bomber came back

"It is notorious that there is no defense against air attack. The suggestion that if there is an equal number of aeroplanes on each side, you thereby get stability and that nobody in such circumstances would do anything is fantastic."⁵⁰

The character of Germany's rearmament was not understood. "I do not think they are arming against us, I do not think they are arming against anyone, but they have got into their heads that the only way they can reestablish their position as a first class power is by having large armed forces. I do not believe they have any specific military objectives."⁵¹

In making the case for the government Baldwin said, "It is not the case that Germany is rapidly approaching equality with us. . . . her real strength is not 50 percent of our strength in Europe today. As for the position this time next year. . . we estimate that we shall still have in Europe a margin - in Europe alone - of nearly 50 percent. . . . All that I would say is this, that His Majesty's Government are determined in no conditions to accept any position of inferiority with regard to what air force may be raised in Germany in the future."⁵³

Baldwin would rue these assertions and the data on which they are based. Within 6 months he would tell the Commons that he had been "completely wrong."

The debate on British defenses continued in 1935. On March 4 the government announced a 10 million pound increase in defense. The Germans angered by this decision postponed the planned visit of Sir John Simon, the British Foreign Secretary.

The text of the "White Paper" in support of the increased defense program was far from being a belligerent doctrine, with an "it's hurting us more than it's hurting you" tone. The paper hit on a rather novel explanation for rearming

"We have taken risks for peace but . . . disarming ourselves in advance, by ourselves, by way of an example - has not increased our negotiating power in the disarmament discussions in Geneva."⁵⁴

On 10 March Goering in another interview with the British press told them officially what all the world knew, that Germany had a military air force. Churchill commented on this interview, "General Goering says, 'we have no old machines. Our planes are the most up to date in existence.' Many of our designs, on the other hand, are seven or eight years old. The average of our machines . . . is certainly double the age of the designs . . . in Germany."⁵⁵ Hitler confidently awaited the reaction of London to his unilateral abrogation of Versailles. It was just what he expected. Sir John Simon told the Commons that he still counted on going to Berlin.

The government program for rearmament naturally brought out the views on each side of the government's position.

On March 11 the Commons debated a Labor Party motion of censure against the government's proposed increase of 10 million pounds in defense spending. . . . Atlee deplored the policy of any increase in air armaments telling the House . . . "Britain could not avert the coming dangers 'by national defense' but 'only by moving forward to a new world - a world of law, the abolition of national armaments with a world force and world economic system.'"⁵⁶ Churchill attacked the accuracy of data earlier presented by the government. With reference to the new program Churchill "stated that the estimates called for an increase of only 100 ships a year whereas Germany, he said, would be producing 125 a month. . . . He concluded by calling attention to the 'geographical

vulnerability' of London and demanded that the government remedy the situation."⁵⁷ The Labor motion was defeated 424 to 79.

On 16 March 1935 Hitler "decreed a law establishing universal military service and providing for a peacetime army of . . . roughly half a million men." Sunday, March 17, was a day of rejoicing and celebration in Germany.⁵⁸ The British government hastened to ask whether Hitler would still receive its Foreign Secretary - Hitler graciously answered in the affirmative.

On 19 March the British government announced a further increase in air squadrons noting "our numerical weakness is serious and cannot be allowed to continue. . . the situation has deteriorated. . . but still . . . at the end of this year we shall have a margin, though I do not say a margin of 50 percent."⁵⁹

Churchill warned that "Britain had lost air parity already in both the numbers of machines and in their quality."⁶⁰ He was criticized by Labor for "the scaremongering speech endeavored to make our flesh creep. Was there ever such a mad policy put before the House of Commons?"⁶¹

The long-postponed meeting between Hitler and Sir John Simon and Anthony Eden took place on 25 March. Hitler told them that Germany "had reached parity" with Great Britain as far as their air forces were concerned. Hitler went on to tell them "that Germany's air power was intended as a bulwark against the Soviet Union."⁶²

On April 5 the Air Ministry . . . "informed the Foreign Office of the Air Ministry's most recent estimate of air strengths. . . . Britain's existing first-line home strength in the air was no more than 453 aircraft. . . this figure . . . corresponded with the Air Ministry figure of 850 German first-line and 'Immediate Reserve' aircraft for February 1935."⁶³ On 10 April the Foreign Minister advised the Prime Minister of the whole situation and warned of "the rapid growth of the German Air Force" and of "the speed at which these aeroplanes are being manufactured." One may have doubts "whether we shall be able to obtain a level of parity with her again."⁶⁴

On 30 April the Prime Minister met to discuss defense requirements. The Air Ministry "scheme assumed that the German first-line strength once it reached 1,512 aeroplanes would remain at that figure." The ministry "did not wish to embark on a very rapid program of expansion and . . . have a large number of obsolescent aircraft on its hands." Challenged on their view that Germany would not be ready for war until 1942 the Air Ministry dismissed as "nonprofessional" a view that "Germany would be ready for war not later than early 1938."⁶⁵

The Government was faced with the need to explain and defend in the House the greater German air strength despite Baldwin's recent assurances to the contrary. Chamberlain felt that the government was "bound to maintain the position" represented in

Baldwin's pledge. Chamberlain then proposed the formula, ". . . the government were entitled to put their own construction on (Baldwin's) statement and that it was not necessary to state the number of aeroplanes but to deal with the matter in terms of air power and air strength."⁶⁶

The Air Ministry agreed "and went on to stress that as German pilot training was inferior to ours it was incorrect to state, despite the actual aeroplane situation, that Germany was stronger."⁶⁷

Despite this formulation, continuing reports of German rearmament led to a decision to vastly increase the British air program. On May 22, 1935, Baldwin in defense of this program said, "First of all, with regard to the figure I gave in November of German aeroplanes . . . I was wrong . . . in my estimate of the future. I was completely wrong. We were completely mistaken on that subject . . ." ⁶⁸ The opposition was unprepared for this admission and retained their earlier views on armament and foreign policy.

Atlee noted that "The measure of the counterweight to any particular armed force is not the forces of this country or of France, but the combined forces of all loyal powers in the League of Nations." The Liberals did note that they "would feel bound to support measures of national defense when clear

Screen

- ① Boss runs randomly
- ② use force levels
- ③ more than enemy no.
- ④ randomly keep force - check on New system

Worst case

Solves first - all
Solves second

Gas win

proof was offered of their necessity." "The (speaker) then proceeded to deal at length with the question of private profits being made out of the means of death."⁶⁹

From this point onward Britain began rearming, though its path and scope had yet to be defined. Throughout the debates on air power there is a remarkable absence of comment on the functions of the forces at issue. As previously noted, Baldwin had early stated that ". . . The bomber will always get through. . ." and articulated a remarkably contemporary strategy ". . . you have to kill more women and children more quickly than the enemy if you want to save yourselves." Churchill agreed with Baldwin on the role of the offense. "The only direct measure of defense upon a great scale is the certainty of being able to inflict simultaneously upon the enemy as great damage as he can inflict upon ourselves." The opposition agreed that there "is no defense against air attack." Despite this commonality of view on the futility of defense and the role of the offense the issue of balance between these functions seems not to have been addressed. The dominant emphasis was placed on air defense in spite of skepticism about its effectiveness. There are allusions to "a standstill in the development of bombing aircraft because of the Disarmament Conference."⁷⁰ Whatever the reason in 1937, ". . . in the air Germany (was) as far ahead of Great Britain as she ever would be, with 800 bombers to Britain's 48."⁷¹

PHIV

- ① great diff: - Cas Opera
- ② No doubt by any means -
- ③ most unique & strict music, balance
 - ④ most people don't let talk
 - ⑤
- ⑥ cover of faces
- ⑦

JFK provides the following analysis of 1935 in Britain.

"Nineteen thirty-five appears crucial only as we look back. As I have stated before, democracies which are fundamentally peaceful have to receive external stimuli to force them to rearm. They do not have a long range point of view. Rather they react to each separate circumstance after it occurs. But when preparation for war, in this day of mechanization, takes such an extensive period, they are always behind. If they are moved to action by an event, say, in 1935, it will be 1937 or 1938 before their program is complete. By that time, they may have been shocked again by some new development, but it will take several more years before they can meet the new threat. In this way, the dictatorship with its long range policy can always keep ahead of a democracy. A dictatorship's leaders realize that ordinarily armaments are so repugnant to a democracy based on a capitalistic system - which means that everything must be paid for from taxes - that it will get along on a minimum armament program. A democracy will merely try to counterbalance the menaces that are actually staring it in the face."

⑥ rate of real power

④5 in SVN

45. then: how can

growth not respect to real output

⑥ OPEC raises power

③ what good is it

② Market Share - 2-3% by

① not for all time

①

Winston Churchill teaches the same lesson briefly and eloquently in the theme of his final book on WW II: "How the great democracies triumphed and so were able to resume the follies which so nearly cost them their life."

Aspen 1005

① "lay of manure" - of entire space too much

⊕ Soviets spending more of rubles - US spending more not useful - all

- ⊕ USSR has more forces
- 1) not useful
- 2) Soviet has forces - have 2 fronts
- 3) US also in quality
- 4) Don't throw away
- 5) 7

⊕ France - concern about - Soviets 10 yrs - unconvincing 10 yrs - just up - worry

- ⊕ What are Soviets up to
- 1) using jet as cover
- 2) PRC
- 3) Internal Kremlin power
- 4)

⊕ Never mind Motown, what can do with it - too

⊕ Keep other or mid class - blingbling - 12th street

⊕ Profit
⊕ Profit
⊕ Profit as - more likely as - walking to take enormous gambles -

⊕ Profit as - gain leverage - lots of people concerned

- ⊕ Economic Power
- ⊕ Political Power
- ⊕ Moral, psychology
- ⊕ What done well - to you
- not used effectively
- last time India SEA
- Antique

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Baron

① "Growing Competition"

- ② ICBM, highly vulnerable - esp US
- ③ Not vulnerable today - but future
- ④ Salt II wouldn't do much - "framework for growth"
- ⑤ Crisis measure a key of joint Soviet arms bar
- ⑥ not seeking to
- ⑦ pose Campaigns - } detente
- ⑧ 1. detente to Soviet tactics
- ⑨ Carter - cut them all - go after Salt of must but prefer more complex program - go after ncs, payoffs, tech, etc - C is serious -
- ⑩ Develop framework
 - A. with overall no long term
 - B. shorter term - Crisis measure, new ICBM
 - C. a good principles - 1 step in process -
- ⑪ Terms - step forward - + -
- ⑫ Unless get some terms LT sig - no settlement
- continuous competition