THE BREAKDOWN OF NAVAL LIMITATION IN
THE FAR EAST -- 1932-1936.

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts in History
in the
University of Canterbury

by

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University of Canterbury
1975
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr N.R. Bennett - Friend and Mentor.
ABSTRACT

The first London Naval Treaty of 1930 was the last great triumph of inter-war disarmament. The second London Naval Treaty of 1936 was little more than a face-saving device dependent on the goodwill of non-signatory powers and as such it rapidly became meaningless. It is the object of this work, beginning with the Shanghai crisis of January 1932, to attempt some explanation of this collapse.

This work therefore explores the demands of the Japanese naval authorities to secure the revision of the 1930 treaty, the determination of the Anglo-American powers to oppose this, Roosevelt's drive for a "Treaty Navy", and the way in which these trends acted upon and accelerated each other; thereby causing the destruction of that system of naval limitation established between 1922 and 1930.

I have therefore investigated the naval disarmament policies of the Pacific naval powers during the years 1932-36 and where appropriate examined the foreign and defence policies of those three nations. It must be emphasised that this work is not yet another general history of great power politics in the Far East during the 1930's. It is instead an investigation of a previously neglected area of history - between 1932 and 1936 the three Pacific naval powers were all obliged to find solutions to naval defence problems within the existing system of naval limitation. Ultimately the solutions destroyed the system.
ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations used in the text.

D.R.C.  Defence Requirements Committee
I.J.N.  Imperial Japanese Navy
U.S.N.  United States Navy

Abbreviations used in footnotes.

D.B.F.P.  Documents on British Foreign Policy
D.I.A.  Documents on International Affairs
D.L.N.C.  Documents on the London Naval Conference
F.D.R.(F.A.)  Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs
F.R.U.S.  Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States
G.B.P.P.  Great Britian Parliamentary Papers (British Sessional Papers)
H.C.D.  House of Commons Debates
I.M.T.F.E.  International Military Tribunal for the Far East
Survey  Survey of International Affairs
INTRODUCTION

(A) AIMS AND LIMITATIONS

In attempting any discussion of the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East it becomes difficult to deny altogether the validity of the platitude "History is the propaganda of the victors". The principal British and American primary sources for this period are designed to illustrate the nature of, and the reasoning behind, the diplomacy of those two nations. As their representatives were, of course, concerned primarily with the interests of their country, a pro-British or pro-American bias is inescapable. This is particularly noticeable in the "Papers Relating to the Foreign Policy of the United States" which, published in 1943, was designed to absolve the United States of any guilt for the Pacific War. The bias inherent in these sources would not present a problem if it could be balanced by equal access to the contemporary Japanese documents which, although just as subjective, would lean towards the Japanese point of view. Unfortunately, without any knowledge of the Japanese language the only major Japanese source available is the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. This, in its very nature, cannot fail to present the Japanese case from a British or American standpoint. Access to the complete Saionji-Harada Memoirs, or the Kido Diary, present in some copies of the Tokyo Tribunal, would to some extent have redressed
the imbalance, but these proved to be unavailable. Only the presence of Defence Exhibit 3011, the eighty nine page deposition of Enamoto Juji, who participated in all the interwar naval disarmament conferences,\(^1\) and the twenty four annexes attached to this document pull the whole topic closer to objectivity. This is not, in itself, enough and this work must contain to a certain extent an Anglo-American bias, as any attempt to correct this presumed bias without sources would be dishonest. It could, however, be argued that no attempt should be made to tackle this subject without fuller Japanese sources and this line of reasoning would indeed be valid were it not for the inadequacy of the existing secondary sources.

The above bias, so easily adopted in the aftermath of the Pacific War, is evident in the available secondary sources, although their bibliographies often reveal access to alternative Japanese sources. The hypocrisy of the double standard to which Saito\(^2\) allued in 1934, the "case of asserting moral superiority",\(^3\) comes through unrecognised in contemporary and post-war secondary sources. Although Hull recognised the legal right of Japan to terminate the Washington and London Naval Treaties,\(^4\) Japan's decision to do so is usually viewed as proof of Japan's aggressive

\(^1\) Enamoto - a councillor in the Navy Department 1915-1945, attended the conferences as part of the committee of technical experts. He also played a part in drafting the delegates' instructions. I.M.I.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 1-2.


\(^3\) D.I.A. 1934, pg 492

\(^4\) F.R.U.S. Vol 1, pg 275
intentions, in spite of the fact that, had the ratios agreed on in these treaties become reality, Japan would have been denied full security in her home waters. Arguments which the European powers presented as being reasonable were considered very unreasonable when those same arguments were put forward by the Japanese. Similarly, many of the Japanese proposals are treated as fantastic new suggestions, when, in fact, most of these: i.e. Japan's parity demand, her proposed global tonnage limit, her willingness to abolish those weapons she considered offensive, even her refusal to discuss other issues until her parity demand was settled, become more understandable when considered in terms of precedent. The desire to protect their overseas possessions and interests led the Anglo-American powers during the thirties to demand that the Japanese accept something less than full naval security, while at the same time they denied Japan the right to collect for herself, as a great power, similar possessions and interests. Thus, in the period 1932-1936 both Britain and the United States considered it reasonable that Japan should accept conditions neither would have allowed to be applied to themselves. This attitude has been continued by post-war historians.

To a large extent this approach is due to the depth to which the subject is explored. The breakdown of naval

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5 In 1932 Japan controlled Korea, Taiwan and the mandated islands, as well as possessing substantial commercial and financial privileges in Mainland China. Extensive as these interests were, they hardly compared with the possessions of the European powers or the American sphere of influence. Yet Japan, arriving late in the era of imperialism and seeking, like Wilhelm II, "a place in the sun", found further empire building deemed immoral by her already satiated western rivals in the new atmosphere which prevailed after Versailles.
limitations in the Far East is overshadowed by the successes of 1922 and 1930 that preceded it and the even more spectacular results of the failure that followed it. Even in the thirties the end of naval limitation, although an important milestone on the road to war, is obscured by the more obvious causes. The rise of the Nazis in Germany and of the military in Japan, the failure of European disarmament, the German air threat, the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, the end of the League's effectiveness and the breakdown of the Nine Power Treaty through the gradual expansion of Japanese aggression in China, all attract more scholarly attention than the breakdown of the Five Power Treaty. As a result, the end of naval limitation in the Far East is generally discussed as a side issue and dispensed with as quickly as possible, meriting often no more than a few lines; seldom a full chapter. Thus, while few historians covering the diplomatic history of the thirties or the Foreign and Defence policies of either Japan, Great Britain or the United States during those years, have dared ignore naval limitation completely, the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East is, to a very surprising degree, a neglected area of history.

The above inadequacies do not apply to the great wealth of articles written when disarmament was still the great hope of the future and it seemed possible to avoid another global war. The fault with these contemporary articles is that, quite apart from being too close to the subject for objectivity, most of them are unashamedly partisan, intended to demonstrate the fundamental reasonableness of the position taken up by the author, if aimed
at critics inside his country, or by the author's country if aimed at his country's rivals. Considering their public positions, the articles of Borah, Davis, Ishii, Pratt, Richmond, Stimson and Wakatsuki, all writing for "Foreign Affairs", must be treated as being subjective and the "Round Table" cannot be taken as anything but the point of view of one British faction.

The historiography of the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East, therefore, becomes an exercise involving not what has been written on the topic, but rather what has not been written. The failure of post-war authors to make an in-depth study of the topic in isolation has led to the perpetuation of that bias present in the 1943 edition of "Foreign Relations of the United States."

There is, however, one major exception to this rule: the presence of S.E. Pelz's recent work "Race to Pearl Harbour. The Failure of the Second London Naval Conference and the Onset of World War II" - Harvard 1974 - has taken much of the challenge out of the question of naval limitation in the Pacific during the thirties. Pelz's book deals, as the title suggests, primarily with the period 1935-41 rather than 1932-36 and places less emphasis on the actual negotiations than the present author. Moreover there are differences on points of detail; e.g. Pelz's claim that "Yamamoto's rank indicated the navy's contempt for the (1934) talks" seems difficult to square with Yamamoto's promotion from Rear to Vice Admiral during those talks. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that Pelz

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6 Pelz, S.E. "Race to Pearl Harbour" pg 133
7 J.M.I.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 24.
has provided a solid scholarly investigation of his topic based on extensive research. Indeed had the present author had prior knowledge of, and access to, Pelz's work, the present thesis topic would probably never have been attempted.

Obviously it would be impossible to divorce completely the subject of naval limitation in the Far East during the period 1932-36 from those events around it which exercised some influence on the positions taken up by Japan, Great Britain and the United States. As an integral part of the general question of disarmament, of the end of democracy in Japan, of the foreign policies of the Great Powers and of rearmament in the thirties, Naval Limitation 1932-36 was affected by developments in these fields and cannot be treated in complete isolation from them. Nevertheless, as it is not the object of this work to provide a general political history of the Great Powers in the Far East during the thirties, these more general questions will be dealt with only in so far as they intrude upon the specific topic of naval limitation. In short, this work intends to bring the topic of naval limitation in the Far East 1932-36 into the foreguard and relegate the surrounding events to that position of necessary background which naval limitation has previously held.

Similarly, although the distinction becomes hard to maintain at times, it is not the object of this work to provide a full record of British, Japanese and American defence policy during the thirties. Naval limitation dealt more with theoretical than with real defence policies; with the desirable minimums the powers concerned were
prepared to accept rather than the actual resources available to them at any given moment. The agreements reached at Washington in 1922 and at London in 1930 were for some time quite meaningless in terms of existing strength. The failure to agree in 1932, 1934 and 1935-6 stemmed, to a large extent, from attempts on the part of the British and the Americans, particularly the latter, to bring their real strength up to their agreed desirable minimum and from the Japanese realisation that their agreed minimum was not, in fact, desirable. Consequently the naval negotiations of 1932-36 were a lot closer to reality and it becomes harder to separate defence policy from naval disarmament. Naval limitation was considerably affected by defence policy and vice versa, but each is only a part of the other. To examine the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East purely in terms of defence policy, even just naval defence policy, would be to ignore the diplomatic nature of the naval negotiations and the political issues which lay beneath them.

It would be illogical to discuss some technological advances in connection with navalism in the thirties, as it is only the advantage of hindsight which makes us aware of their subsequent importance. To apply this hindsight to the diplomats and technical experts of 1932-36 would be to credit them with a knowledge of tactics which they did not, and could not be expected to, possess. Despite the substantial advances made in naval aviation during the inter-war period, "in the minds of all the principal navies, sea power still depended on the battleship. To some this meant the battleship supported by naval aviation: to others
it meant the battleship dependent on naval aviation: but to everyone sea power still meant the battleship". Naval limitation was discussed primarily from the standpoint of the battleship and when rearmament began it meant, first and foremost, battleship replacement. Any attempt to place the emphasis elsewhere would be to ignore the aims and preoccupations of the powers concerned.

On the other hand some technological advances did have a considerable effect upon the attitudes of the Pacific Powers towards naval limitations. Although Japan had not yet realised the full potential of air power in naval strategy, she recognised the threat to her fragile cities and thus sought the complete abolition of the aircraft carrier. Japan's attitude toward submarine tonnage was determined by her development of a strong force of long range submarines and advances in torpedo technology, intended to reduce the strength of any American fleet attacking across the Pacific. In this situation, American opposition on the subject of submarine tonnage would probably have been stronger, were it not for the fact that the U.S. Navy had built up its own fleet of high performance trans-Pacific submarines designed "to contest Japan's initial control of the sea in the Far East". Britain, while pressing for abolition, believed herself to have discovered in asdic an answer to the submarine

8 Hezlet, A. "Aircraft and Sea Power" pg 135.
9 Hezlet, A. "The Submarine and Sea Power" pg 114.
10 Morison, S.E. "The Rising Sun in the Pacific" pg 20.
11 Hezlet, A. "The Submarine and Sea Power" pg 120-121.
12 Unlike the earlier hydrophone, asdic could pick up silent stationary submarines, thereby, the Admiralty hoped, rendering them as easily detected as any other vessel.
By offering concessions, which she thus believed worthless, in this category Britain could hope for a quid pro quo in other categories. Even more important than these advances was the Japanese development of a superbattleship which influenced her whole approach to naval disarmament. Therefore these technological advances cannot be ignored, although, once again, their significance can only be considered within the context of naval limitations as a whole.

The different technical doctrines espoused by Admiral Richmond in Britain and by General "Billy" Mitchell in the United States both stand out in the inter-war period and both are possible thesis topics in themselves, but as neither was adopted by any major naval power they cannot be discussed in conjunction with this work. Mitchell's view that air power had rendered navies obsolete is not entirely true, even today. In the thirties it was not seriously adopted by the United States and Mitchell himself was eventually court martialed for indiscipline. As for Richmond, who theorised that capital ships need by only 7,000 tons, the size necessary to defeat an armed merchantman; Chatfield (First Sea Lord Jan 1933 – Nov 1938) informs us that MacDonald was "considerably affected" by Richmond's ideas. Chatfield himself admits that "the term 'capital ships' simply means the most powerful warship of the day", but goes on to say that "the size and type of the capital ship are mainly, but not entirely, relative to those of our

13 Whitestone, N. "The Submarine" pg 81.
14 For Richmond see B.D. Hunt "Smaller Navies and Disarmament" in A.M.J. Hyatt (editor) "Dreadnought to Polaris". For Mitchell see E.B. Potter "Sea Power" pg 635-6.
potential foes". Although the British were prepared to propose substantial qualitative reduction, they were never prepared to approach Richmond's position and even the Admiralty's more modest reductions came to nothing in view of the opinions of Japan and the United States on qualitative limitation.

One further restriction needs explanation. A vital part of the 1922 Washington Treaty was Article XIX: the non-fortification clause. During the thirties the Americans suspected that Japan was ignoring this part of the naval limitation system and illegally developing her mandated islands in the Pacific. These islands were indeed what Admiral Suetsugu described as "anchored aircraft carriers". They did extend the range of Japanese air-sea operations by 2,000 miles and the belief that they were strongly fortified did affect American war plans. In March 1933 Grew, the American ambassador to Japan, stated that the United States had abundant first hand evidence 'that Japan was fortifying the mandates' in contravention of express treaty obligations and the reluctance of the Japanese to open the islands to inspection seemed merely to confirm the American suspicions. Yet "post war investigations have failed to produce evidence to substantiate the charges that Japan built military fortifications, naval installations, or stationed troops in the mandates prior to

15 Chatfield, A.F.M. "It Might Happen Again" pg 60-61.
16 The pre-war German colonies granted to Japan as mandates at Versailles in 1919.
17 Suetsugu was Vice-Chief of Naval Staff during the 1930 London Naval Treaty crisis. He was appointed Commander of the Combined Fleets in 1932 and later rose to be Home Minister in the Konoe Cabinet in 1937.
18 Byss, H. "Government by Assassination" pg 352.
19 Thorne, C. "The Limits of Foreign Policy" pg 67.
20 Grew, J.C. "Ten Years in Japan" pg 82.
1939.\(^{22}\) Although the I.J.N. began extensive improvements to the mandates which possessed military potential,\(^{23}\) by the end of 1939 only one airfield (on Saipan) and four seaplane ramps had been completed. There were no fortifications, guns or troops to defend these. If these developments had any effect on the strategic situation, then that effect was cancelled out by American violations of Article XIX. In April 1935 Roosevelt began secret military improvements on three small island groups in the central Pacific,\(^{24}\) in the same year a Pan American Airways air base was established at Guam - which the Navy admitted could have a military use in wartime - and in 1936 the United States government began to build seaplane bases at Wake and Midway.\(^{25}\) The importance of these incidents can, however, be overrated and this is borne out by the fact that neither side indulged in frenzied construction once Article XIX formally lapsed on December 31st 1936. The question of possible illegal fortification of the mid-Pacific islands certainly helped aggravate the worsening relations between Japan and the United States during the thirties, but because of the very limited nature of the construction that actually took place and the fact that no power ever chose to pursue the matter as a crucial part of naval limitation, I have largely excluded the mandates question.


\(^{23}\) Airfields, harbour improvements, oil storage facilities at Saipan, Palaus, Truk and Panape, plus airfields at Tinian and Pagan.

\(^{24}\) P.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 523.

\(^{25}\) Burns, pg 453-459.
Thus it is the object of the following work to explore a previously neglected area of Great Power history between the wars. Where, with the exception of Pelz, previous historians have attempted some brief analysis of the topic they have generally, probably because they failed to make any in-depth study, carried over an Anglo-American bias arising out of the Pacific War. This work is not intended as an apologia for Japan, but it is hoped that some measure of objectivity can be attained. It will, therefore, examine the basis of the positions taken up and the proposals put forward by the three Pacific naval powers during the period 1932-36 and attempt to explain why this led to the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East. In this way the "propaganda of the victors" should be avoided and those factors which influenced the naval position in the Pacific during this period placed in their proper perspective. However, any study of the breakdown of naval limitation would be pointless without examining the history of naval limitation before 1932. It is therefore proposed to provide a brief outline of the system of naval disarmament which was set up during the period 1922-1930 before examining the causes of its collapse.
The European dreadnought race which had begun in 1906-07 did not end with the internment of the German Fleet in 1918, but simply shifted to the Pacific Ocean. The American drive for "a navy second to none" during the 1914-18 war meant that by the close of hostilities it was potentially the greatest naval power in the world. This created an atmosphere of tension between the United States and the two other Pacific naval powers, Great Britain and Japan. By 1921 the pre-war Anglo-German naval race appeared only as a curtain raiser for the real test of strength which was yet to come. Given this situation, the 1921-22 Washington Conference was a very real success. The Five Power Washington Treaty brought the impending battleship race to an end through the establishment of a fixed balance of naval strength; the 5:5:3 ratio, while the Nine Power Treaty provided a firm political settlement for the whole Pacific and Far Eastern area. The Washington settlement gave each of the Pacific naval powers security in its own waters and regulated American-Japanese relations, especially with regard to China, thus removing the prime causes of the naval race.

The Washington Conference was not, however, an unqualified success. The 5:5:3 ratio was applied only to battleships and aircraft carriers, leaving all other

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26 H.M.S. "Dreadnought" was laid down in October 1905, the battlecruiser H.M.S. "Invincible" in February 1906 and the German "Nassau" class battleships in July and August 1907.
categories unrestricted. The 1920's were therefore a period of intense Anglo-American naval rivalry, as these two powers squabbled over the meaning of parity in the unrestricted categories. This obscured the real issue which the 1922 Conference had left unresolved: i.e. had the Five Power Treaty established, as the Japanese contended, the principle of security for each power in its own waters, or, as the Americans argued, the ultimate extension of the 5:5:3 ratio to all categories? By the time the First London Naval Conference convened in January 1930, the Anglo-American powers had solved the parity dispute and the real issue, the dangerous ambiguity of the Five Power Treaty, came to the fore. At London the Japanese retained the reality of security in their home waters until 1936, but conceded the principle. On September 19th 1931 the Mukden Incident exploded upon the world and the period of Japanese expansion had begun. From this point on, neither Britain, the United States nor Japan was prepared to concede either reality or principle once the 1922 and 1930 naval treaties expired on December 31st 1936. Thus the Washington system contained within itself the seeds of its own decay.

During the First World War the United States emerged as a great naval power. However its naval expansion, as in the huge proposed 1916 construction programme, bore "little or no relation to possible American involvement in the current struggle". Rather it was designed to meet a number of, in actual fact, unlikely contingencies, including the possibility of the United States having to face a hostile Japanese-German coalition, possibly with Russian acquiescence, or the "terrifying combination" of a hostile Anglo-Japanese
alliance. These fears led to an unprecedented expansion of the United States Navy and, as a consequence, since the American expansion generated its own fears in its neighbours, to the possibility of a new naval arms race in the Pacific once the European war was finished.27

At the beginning of the war the I.J.N. had established its strength at a level approximately equal to that of the United States. Although the Japanese naval authorities had correctly concluded from the lessons of Jutland that Japan need maintain a naval strength equal to only seventy per cent of that of the United States to maintain a superiority over an attacking American fleet in the West Pacific,28 the extent of the American naval expansion was such that Japan, though certainly unprepared for a naval arms race, had little option but to extend her own navy. In the winter of 1915-16 the Diet fixed the strength of the main fleet at eight battleships and four battlecruisers. This "eight-four" programme was increased in the 1918-19 season to an "eight-eight" programme, with provision for the laying down of numerous light cruisers, destroyers and submarines.29 Thus "by 1921, Japan was caught in the whirlpool of an imminent armament race with the world's richest and most industrialised nation" and her naval budget had risen from 83,260,000 yen for 1914 to 483,589,000 yen for 1921.30

At the same time, the United States officially became Japan's "potential enemy No.1". At the close of the 1914-18

27 Braisted, W.B. "The United States Navy in the Pacific 1909-1922".
28 Crowley, J.B. "Japan's Quest for Autonomy" pg 25.
29 Bywater, H.C. "Sea Power in the Pacific" pg 150.
30 Crowley, pg 26.
war the threat of Russian imperialism was considered to have been considerably diminished by the Bolshevik revolution and in the new Imperial Defence Policy adopted in 1918, that power was accordingly relegated to the position of "potential enemy No.2". First place was awarded to Japan's wartime ally - the United States. With the rise of Soviet power in the Far East the Army soon revised its estimates and again began to view Russia as Japan's principal enemy. The end result was a "dual standard preparedness policy" which would stretch Japan's resources in any armament race and, during the thirties, produce considerable inter-service rivalry as to the direction Japanese expansion should take. Nevertheless from 1918 onwards, in opposition to the views of the army, the I.J.N. advocated a policy of southern advancement and instructed its future officers that such a policy would produce a clash with the United States. It was that power which was regarded as Japan's principal enemy.31

The internment of the German High Seas Fleet at Scapa Flow in November 1918 constituted another important change in the balance of world sea power and shifted the naval centre of gravity from Europe to the Pacific. Since the inception of the Anglo-German naval race, Britain had steadily reduced her strength in the Mediterranean and increasingly relied upon the Anglo-Japanese Alliance for the defence of her Far Eastern interests. With the removal of the German threat, Britain was free to "reorganise her naval policy on lines more in harmony with the requirements

31 M. Fuchida and M. Okumiya "Midway" pg 39-40.
of Imperial, as opposed to local, defence". If this in itself was not the cause for an American navy "second to none", further justification could be found in the proposed division of the German Fleet among those who had done most to defeat it and the Big Navy enthusiasts gained ground at the Paris Peace Conference when Wilson threatened to build the world's biggest navy, should the European powers refuse to accept his League of Nations Covenant without significant alteration. However the defeat of the U.S.N's second three year programme in March 1919 and the scuttling of the German Fleet at Scapa Flow in the following June removed major points of contention between the Anglo-American powers. Also, the Great War in Europe and the failure of the Siberian expedition produced among the popular masses in Britain, the United States and Japan a feeling of revulsion for the militarism responsible for those disasters. This, coupled with the post-war economic problems, produced a public desire for disarmament. Meanwhile, suspicions of Japan arising from the twenty-one demands, the Pacific Mandates, Shantung, and then the Siberian intervention, coupled with the British policy of retrenchment, (to avoid, if possible, an Anglo-American naval race) meant that by 1920 Japan had replaced Britain as the most likely post-war enemy of the United States.

32 Bywater pg 1-2.
33 In which case the British would have got the lion's share: Braisted pg 415.
34 Roskill, S. "Naval Policy Between the Wars" pg 89-90
35 Jellicoe's proposal for a Far Eastern Fleet which would re-establish the two-power standard was rejected on grounds of economy.
36 Braisted, pg 468.
Britain's retrenchment policy was, however, untenable in the long run unless some form of naval accord could be reached with the Pacific Powers. As the United States contrived to push its 1916 programme towards completion, the Japanese were left with a dilemma. If they were to maintain their seventy per cent ratio they had to continue building, but if they did so, at some point they would force Great Britain into the naval race and possibly into an Anglo-American alliance if she were to be able to protect the Australasian Dominions. In 1920 the Board of Admiralty began to push for a resumption of capital ship construction, for if Britain continued to observe her naval holiday alone, then by 1925 the battlecruiser "Hood" with its 15-inch guns would be Britain's only post-Jutland capital ship, while the United States would have twelve new capital ships and Japan eight; all post-Jutland and all armed with 16-inch guns.

Both Britain and Japan were reluctant to engage in a race in naval armaments, but some attempt had to be made to keep up with the United States which could "not only pass them in the race, but could maintain and increase her lead after she had won it". Fortunately for the former two powers, a movement opposing navalism was gaining strength in the United States. Faced with the insinuation made by the Japanese delegate at Geneva, that the United States was obstructing naval disarmament by avoiding League membership,

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37 Crowley, pg 27.
38 Including four new super "Hoods" to be laid down in 1921 and four more in 1922. Hunt pg 50.
39 Roskill pg 220-1.
40 Survey 1920-23 pg 491.
Senator W.E. Borah, on December 14th 1920, submitted a resolution calling upon the President to confer immediately with Britain and Japan to secure a fifty per cent reduction in the naval building of all three powers during the next five years. Aided by the passage of this six months later, the pressure for disarmament and reduced defence spending among the American public, the split in Navy circles over the relative value of battleships in an age of improved submarines and military aviation, and the desire to forestall a rumoured British proposal to call a conference on Pacific and Far Eastern Affairs, the State Department, in July 1921, issued invitations to Britain, Japan, France and Italy to participate in an arms limitation conference at Washington. By the time this conference opened the British had resigned themselves to the acceptance of a one Power standard as the basis of Imperial Defence and the Japanese were prepared to "seek some type of diplomatic and naval accommodation with the United States which would, in one fashion or another, confirm Japan's existing superiority in the Western Pacific".

The various agreements and treaties concluded at the Washington Conference may well have been, as Stimson observed ten years later in his famous Borah letter, "interrelated and interdependent", but it is beyond the

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41 Borah became chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations sub-committee in 1924 and from that position exercised a powerful isolationist influence on policy making.

42 Braisted pg 493.

43 Roskill pg 300.


45 Crowley pg 27.

46 Stimson and Bundy "On Active Service in Peace and War" pg 23.
scope of this work to attempt an outline of the significance and development of all those agreements except in so far as they concern the course of naval disarmament. At the opening session of the conference on November 12th 1921, Secretary of State Hughes sprang a comprehensive programme for naval limitation upon the assembled delegates. This embraced four main principles: (1) that all construction of capital ships should be stopped, (2) that the reduction thus achieved be carried further by the scrapping of old ships, (3) that there should be regard for the "existing naval strength" of the Powers concerned and on this basis a ratio of relative strengths could be worked out and (4) that the agreed capital ship tonnage would then be used for the proportionate tonnage limits of other classes of warship. Hughes also proposed that, in order to achieve these principles, the United States would scrap 30 capital ships considered too old or still under construction, the British Empire would scrap 23 ships and Japan 17. This would leave the U.S.N. 18 capital ships with an aggregate tonnage of 500,650, Britain 22 with an aggregate tonnage of 604,450 and Japan 10 with an aggregate tonnage of 299,700. Replacement of the ships left would be delayed for a period of ten years; the maximum replacement tonnage would be 500,000 tons each for the United States and Great Britain and 300,000 tons for Japan; no capital ships would be replaced until they were twenty years old and then not by ships exceeding 35,000 tons.

The other delegates agreed in principle to this plan, but the Japanese raised objections on two points, one being the proposed scrapping of their finest ship, "Mutsu", on
the grounds that it was still incomplete (this was in fact technically true - "Mutsu" was only ninety eight per cent complete), the other concerning the 5:5:3 ratio Hughes had computed, which would, if established by treaty, deny Japan the seventy per cent ratio required by her naval authorities.  

In order that "Mutsu" might be retained, the proposed aggregate tonnages were altered. The United States, Britain and Japan still kept 18, 22 and 10 capital ships respectively, but the British tonnage was reduced to 580,450 and that of the Japanese raised to 301,320. Britain and the United States were also to be allowed the right to complete two new capital ships each, upon the condition that once these were completed the United States would scrap two and Britain four of their existing capital ships.  

Japan's conception of her security in the face of a sixty per cent ratio presented a more complex problem. This was eventually solved through the conclusion of a Four Power Treaty between France, Japan, Britain and the United States, in which each power agreed "to respect their rights in relation to their insular possessions and insular dominions in the region of the Pacific Ocean". More important, in Article XIX of the Five Power Treaty (Britain, the United States, Japan, France and Italy), the three former powers agreed to fortification limits on their Pacific possessions, which left Britain and the United States with no major defensible potential naval bases closer to Japan than Singapore and Pearl Harbour.

47 D.B.F.P. Series I Vol XIV No.484.
48 Survey 1920-23 pg 495.
49 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 24.
Thus protected, Japan felt able to accept the other provisions of the Five Power Treaty signed on February 6th 1922.\textsuperscript{50} Chapter I embodied, with little real alteration, the first three principles advanced by Hughes at the opening of the conference. Japan, Britain and the United States agreed to scrap all capital ships built or building other than those specified after the "Mutsu" compromise. This, in effect, established the 5:5:3 ratio from which the agreed replacement tonnages (in capital ships: 525,000 tons each for Great Britain and the United States, 315,000 tons for Japan and 175,000 tons each for France and Italy, and in aircraft carriers: 135,000 tons each for Great Britain and the United States, 80,000 for Japan and 50,000 each for France and Italy) were derived. It proved impossible to implement Hughes' fourth principle, which called for an extension of the capital ship ratio to all auxiliary classes of warship, mainly because of the attitude of the French delegates,\textsuperscript{51} but certain qualitative restrictions were achieved. Maximum tonnages of 35,000 tons for capital ships and 27,000 tons\textsuperscript{52} for aircraft carriers were fixed, with maximum gun calibres of 16 inches and 6 inches respectively. Furthermore the possession of warships exceeding 10,000 tons, or with guns exceeding 8 inches in calibre, was precluded unless such vessels were classed as capital ships or aircraft carriers, thus affecting the tonnage quota for these categories. Chapter II

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ibid} Ex 24.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Survey} 1920-23 pg 495-6.

\textsuperscript{52} In order to enable the signatory powers to convert half-completed capital ships, each contracting power was permitted to build two aircraft carriers of less than 33,000 tons displacement.
of the treaty concerned itself mainly with definitions and
Chapter III with the provision that, although the treaty
would remain in force until December 31st 1936 (Article XXII)
the United States would call a new conference within the
next eight years "to consider what changes, if any, in the
treaty may be necessary" (Article XXI).

The French refusal to accept the extension of the
battleship ratio to auxiliary vessels, while drawing most
of the onus for the failure of the conference in this
respect, saved Britain and the United States from an open
split on the subject of submarines. Britain advocated
their complete abolition but the other four powers argued
that the submarine was in fact a legitimate weapon if used
for scouting purposes or against other warships. As the
French would only accept the limitation of capital ships
and aircraft carriers and because the French submarine
quota was considerably higher than anything the United
States or Britain would accept, the British were saved
the embarrassment of having to argue that if submarines
were not abolished she "must have entire freedom in
building anti-submarine craft". Nor was it necessary to
raise the spectre of a greater absolute British cruiser
figure which was to haunt subsequent Anglo-American
naval relations. For even at the Washington Conference
Great Britain was only "prepared to accept the 5:5:3 ratio
for numbers of cruisers for fleet purposes provided our
claim is admitted to a substantial surplus for the defence
of the Empire trade routes". The only restrictions placed

53 Braisted pg 633-7.
on submarines arose out of three resolutions presented by Elihu Root\textsuperscript{55} on December 28 1921 condemning the illegitimate use of submarines in warfare. The principles were incorporated in a Five Power Treaty signed on February 6 1922 which, in view of the recent German U-Boat campaign, "no delegation dared reject",\textsuperscript{56} but which was never ratified.

The Five Power Treaty was an emphatic rejection of the U.S.N's ambitions and from this time on it was to devote its energies to the building and maintenance of a "treaty navy", while acquiring the means of extending its power to the Western Pacific within the bounds of that treaty. But the United States Government could feel justly proud of its achievement, having successfully halted the impending battleship race, gained international recognition of "a navy second to none" and, through the Nine Power Treaty,\textsuperscript{57} of the "Open Door" and the "territorial and administrative integrity of China, while avoiding the foreign entanglements which had become anathema to the American people. The British Empire failed to gain the two-hemisphere navy of its needs,\textsuperscript{58} but it had already resigned itself to a one-power standard\textsuperscript{59} and to a financially exhausted nation the removal of a naval building race in capital ships was a considerable asset. If the battleship restrictions "all ran counter to professional naval thinking"\textsuperscript{60} and Britain had failed in her submarine proposals, she retained her

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{55} Root, Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State 1905-1909 and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize 1912, was by this time one of America's leading Elder Statesmen.
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\textsuperscript{56} Braisted pg 637.
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\textsuperscript{57} I.M.T.F.E. Ex 28.
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\textsuperscript{58} Richmond "Statesmen and Seapower" pg 290.
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\textsuperscript{59} See above page \textsuperscript{57}
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\textsuperscript{60} Hunt pg 55.
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freedom to build as many anti-submarine and commerce-protection vessels as she deemed necessary. Neither of the Anglo-Saxon Powers had conceded anything vital at the Washington Conference and both had reason to be pleased with the agreements reached, although in terms of security it was Japan who had gained the most. Despite their complete failure at times to understand the proposals of their rivals, the Japanese delegates to the Washington Conference attained the "major strategic objective" of their government. The Japanese may well have considered that "from the standpoint of armaments" the Washington Treaty "did not fix fair strengths for the powers concerned", but the non-fortification clause more than compensated. "Unattackable" is a dangerous absolute, but the Washington Conference did assure Japan of a position of naval hegemony in the Western Pacific and security in her own waters - something which would have been denied her in an unrestricted naval race with the United States.

Even so, in spite of the obvious strategic advantages of the Five Power Treaty, the Japanese delegates did see fit to raise the point that acceptance of the 5:5:3 ratio "would be a grave problem affecting Japan's prestige." This contention gained credence from surrounding events. The Japanese certainly did not view, as did Balfour, the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as the removal of an "outworn and unnecessary agreement", but rather as

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61 Braisted pg 607-14.
62 Crowley, pg 29.
63 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 7.
64 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol IX No.239.
65 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex I.
Britain's abandonment, seemingly at American dictation, of a proved ally of twenty years standing. Moreover the Japanese had failed to insert a declaration of racial equality into the Treaty of Versailles. The stigma they attached to this was only heightened by the Emergency Quota Bill of 1920, restricting the entry of Asians, including Japanese, into the United States, which was to achieve permanence when it hardened into the Immigration Act of 1924. When seen in conjunction with these events, the 5:5:3 ratio appeared as just another attempt to impose an inferior status on Japan and the question of prestige was to assume considerable importance in Japanese naval demands during the thirties. In view of the strategic advantages Japan received from the Washington Conference it could not be considered the "first class diplomatic defeat" which Lindley, the British Ambassador in Tokyo, was to give as the Japanese view of it ten years later. Yet Lindley was right in that during the thirties many Japanese the post war period had "been a period of disillusion and humiliation relieved only by the acquisition of the Pacific Mandates".  

Despite the very real success of the Washington Conference, subsequent attempts during the twenties to further the process of naval disarmament proved a dismal failure. The Rome Conference of Naval Experts which met under League auspices in February 1924 to extend the Five Power Treaty to non-signatories, came to nothing. By this time the gaps in that treaty were beginning to make themselves felt. With firm limits fixed on aircraft carriers

and battleships, the temptation was present to augment one's naval strength by building in those categories left unrestricted at Washington. Inherent in this was the danger of a new building race unless some limitation of auxiliary categories, satisfactory to the major naval powers, could be agreed upon.

Article XIX of the Five Power Treaty had effectively terminated the U.S.N's ambition to build great fortified bases at Guam and the Philippines and the question which faced that navy after 1922 was how it should equip itself so as to be able to carry an offensive into the West Pacific from its Eastern Pacific bases. As part of the answer the Navy favoured larger naval units to meet the increased requirements of endurance and speed. In the thirties this was to explain the reluctance of the United States to accept any great reduction in the size of capital ships; in the twenties it manifested itself in their desire to have no qualitative limits set on cruisers beyond those fixed at Washington. The problem when it came to disarmament was that the biggest ship and the heaviest gun permissible inevitably became the standard.68 If the United States built 10,000 ton, 8-inch cruisers, as the Navy Board said she must, then Britain and Japan had also to build such vessels or allow their lighter cruisers to be outclassed, on a ship to ship basis, by those of the United States.

The situation becomes more complex when one considers the desiderata of Britain, the United States and Japan as regards numbers of cruisers. The Americans had never

68 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 3.
abandoned Hughes' fourth point: i.e. that the 5:5:3 ratio should be extended to all categories of warship. On this point the Japanese were not prepared to grant the United States anything better than a 10:10:7 ratio, but the Anglo-American dispute over parity, apparently settled so amicably in 1922, overshadowed the Japanese issue until 1930. The Americans assumed that Britain had accepted the principle of Hughes' fourth point by accepting parity, while the British assumed they had made clear their view that the 5:5:3 ratio could only be applied to cruisers serving with the fleet and that, for the protection of Imperial lines of communication and trade routes, she would require additional numbers of cruisers for which her rivals would have no use. 69 If, as the Americans intended, a strict interpretation was to be placed upon the principle of parity, then Britain would be forced to reduce either the size or the number of the cruisers she deemed vital for Imperial Defence. This was the problem of "large numbers of small ships versus small numbers of large ships" which plagued Anglo-American relations until it was partially, and for the British unsatisfactorily, finished at London in 1930.

After the close of the Washington Conference the British and the Japanese steadily increased their strength in heavy cruisers and, from 1926 on, Coolidge faced increasing pressure from Congress to answer with a large American heavy cruiser programme. 70 By 1927 the threat of a new naval race, this time in the unrestricted categories,

69 Survey 1927 pg 40-41.
70 Ibid pg 30-34.
seemed to be fast translating itself into reality. In an effort to forestall this, mindful of the fact "that few issues have more general popular appeal than that of the limitation of armaments" and reluctant "to see these (naval) problems discussed at a general conference under League auspices", Coolidge on February 10 1927 issued an invitation to Britain, France, Italy and Japan to extend the success of the Washington Conference to cruisers, destroyers and submarines. The French and the Italians declined to attend, expressing the opinion that naval disarmament could not properly be dealt with in separation from the disarmament question as a whole, but the other three powers decided in March 1927 that a Three Power Naval Conference was better than none at all. When this opened in Geneva on July 20 1927, there had been no preparatory talks to determine what lines the discussion would follow and each of the Anglo-American powers assumed the other say eye to eye with it on the related questions of cruisers and parity.

At the first session all three delegations put forward sets of proposals. Those of the United States amounted to an extension of the 5:5:3 ratio to cruisers, destroyers and submarines, with total tonnage and replacement age limits for each category. Cruisers comprised one category: 3,000 to 10,000 tons displacement and a maximum gun calibre of 8 inches, for which the proposed total tonnage limits would be 350-300,000 tons each for the United States and Great Britain.

71 Dulles, A.W. "The Disarmament Puzzle": Foreign Affairs Vol.9 No.4, July 1931, pg 608.
and 150-180,000 tons for Japan. Japan also proposed total tonnage limits for the above three categories and drew the dividing line between cruisers and destroyers, as the Americans had, at 3,000 tons. The Japanese tonnage limitations were computed on a different basis from those of the United States (taking existing strength combined with present building programmes as a base line) but, like those of the United States, they were seen by the British as totally inadequate for their requirements. 72 Britain's proposals were an attempt on her part to reconcile naval disarmament with that level of strength which Gibson, the chief American delegate, had conceded to be necessary in his opening speech, i.e. "the lowest level compatible with national security". 73

The British programme 74 differed from those of the other two powers in two important aspects. Firstly, it proposed further limitation of capital ships and aircraft carriers, involving reductions in unit size in both displacement and gun calibre and secondly, it attempted to solve the British "big ships v small ships" dilemma. The Admiralty estimated that whereas the United States required 47 cruisers and the Japanese 21, the British Empire needed 70 cruisers. 75 As most of these were required for commerce protection there was little need for them to displace 10,000 tons unless there was a danger of their being outclassed by the corresponding vessels of rival navies. The British

73 Ibid No.399.
74 G.B.P.P. Cmd 2964.
75 D.B.F.P. Series IA Vol III No.388.
therefore proposed to divide the cruiser category in two, placing quantitative limits on the first subdivision and qualitative limits on the other. The Japanese and the Americans effectively shelved the proposals on the capital ships until some later date, but whereas the former agreed in principle to the proposed reductions, the latter postponed discussion until "after the objects for which the Conference had been convened had been attained".\textsuperscript{76} As it turned out this discussion never took place as the conference foundered on the cruiser question.

The British planned to draw a dividing line between light and heavy cruisers at 7,500 tons, with the maximum gun calibre for the lower category to be fixed at 6 inches. For heavy cruisers, viewed as useful for fleet duties, the British proposed an extension of the 5:5:3 ratio, but light cruisers, useful for trade protection purposes, would remain numerically unrestricted. Naturally Japan and the United States saw little reason for accepting restrictions on heavy cruisers so as to enable the British to devote themselves to outbuilding them in a class which had little practical application to the needs of her rivals. If a cruiser race could not be avoided, then neither Japan nor the United States saw any reason for not building those vessels most useful to them.

The British programme was not accepted. Both of her rivals supported the principle of total tonnage limitation and the Americans introduced it "on every point and at every stage of the discussions".\textsuperscript{77} With the Japanese it proved

\textsuperscript{76} Survey 1927 pg 50.
\textsuperscript{77} D.B.F.P. Series IA Vol III No.410.
possible to compromise and an elaborate Anglo-Japanese programme was presented to the Conference on July 18, rejected by the United States and presented again with slight modifications on July 28. In their final form the Anglo-Japanese compromise proposals provided for a combined total tonnage of cruisers, destroyers and submarines to be fixed at 590,000 tons each for the United States and Britain and 385,000 tons for Japan, with the provision that each power could retain a further 25 percent of these tonnages in overage vessels. 10,000 ton cruisers were to be strictly limited - 12 each for the United States and Britain, 8 for Japan - but apart from quantitative tonnage restrictions on submarines and destroyer flotilla leaders, and lower qualitative restrictions on light cruisers (6,000 tons displacement with 6-inch guns maximum), the total tonnage allocation was "to be used as each power thinks best". American Secretary of State Kellogg told the press that these proposals "were even worse than the original ones" and they were again rejected. A final attempt at compromise was made by the Japanese government on August 1, when they presented proposals that Britain and Japan confine construction to building programmes already authorised until 1931 and that the United States agree not to exceed British strength in auxiliary vessels during that period. The British would have discussed this proposal if the Americans had accepted it, but on August 3 Gibson definitely rejected it. The following day the Conference closed with a joint declaration in which the three powers gave their respective views and agreed "to submit the problem for the

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78 Ibid No.473.
79 Ibid No.476.
80 Survey 1927 pg 69.
further consideration of their governments". 81

At Geneva the Japanese had "honourably participated as a good neighbour to both parties". 82 A clash would have occurred had an attempt been made to apply a 5:5:3 ratio in all categories, but this problem never arose due to the failure of the Anglo-American Powers to find an acceptable "yardstick" by which to determine the relative value of light and heavy cruisers and thereby arrive at parity. The British had maintained throughout the conference that they needed a minimum of seventy cruisers, that their proposals reduced offensive and strengthened defensive capacity 83 and that they would not "voluntarily surrender the right to live". 84 On the other hand, the Americans, in their own words were unable:

"to reconcile the conception of absolute naval needs with the negotiation of a treaty to fix limitations on the basis of mutual concessions". 85

In the words of the British they:

"would neither state their demands nor explain what their needs were. They clung to the twin shibboleths of parity and total tonnage limit without any attempt to justify their demands in either respect by argument". 86

Had there been preliminary discussion the Geneva Conference might have been more of a success, or it might never have been held: in the event it achieved nothing. The failure dealt a severe blow to Anglo-American relations and greatly
increased the possibility of a new naval race between the Pacific Powers.

However the nadir of Anglo-American relations had yet to be reached. In September 1926 both France and Britain had submitted draft disarmament conventions to the League Preparatory Commission for Disarmament which revealed totally different conceptions of how naval limitation could best be achieved.\(^{87}\) The British plan divided warships into separate classes (cruisers were to constitute a single category) and proposed that definite, although in the draft unspecified, quantitative and qualitative limits be imposed on each category. In contrast, the French plan recommended a limited total tonnage which the contracting parties should "be free to distribute and allocate" in the manner they considered best suited to their security. The gap between the plans appeared too wide to close, but on July 30 1928 Sir Austen Chamberlain informed the Commons that, following negotiations, an Anglo-French Naval Compromise had emerged and would be submitted to the other Powers.\(^{88}\)

The proposals\(^ {89}\) placed quantitative limits on some classes but left others - 6-inch cruisers, destroyers and submarines under 600 tons - unrestricted. Japan, possibly because she considered the unrestricted categories suitable to her needs, was prepared to support the plan: Italy and the United States would not. In rejecting the compromise the Americans hinted that an agreement along the lines of the original French proposals of 1926 would be acceptable to them.

\(^{87}\) G.B.P.P. Cmd 3211.

\(^{88}\) H.C.D. Vol 220, pg 1837.

\(^{89}\) D.B.F.F. Series IA. No.428.
for the United States had no objection to "permitting any of the powers to vary the percentage of tonnage in classes within the total tonnage, a certain percentage to be agreed upon": it simply expected "similar consideration for its own needs". This, in effect, suggested that the 1926 French plan - the Paul Boncour proposal - be re-examined.\footnote{90 G.B.P.P. Cmd 3211.}

However, to a nation which seemed to regard the Anglo-French Compromise "only in relation to Anglo-American parity",\footnote{91 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 7.} the 1928 proposals were only those of 1927 "presented in a new and more objectionable form".\footnote{92 D.B.F.P. Series IA Vol V No.428.} As a result, Anglo-American naval relations sank to their lowest point and the demands of the American "Big Navyites" became almost irresistible.

Congress had authorised the construction of eight 10,000 ton cruisers in December 1924, but appropriations for, let alone the laying down of, these had been considerably delayed. The apparent determination displayed by Britain at Geneva in 1927 to deny to the United States that equality she had conceded in 1922 transformed the situation. By the end of 1927 construction of all eight cruisers was proceeding and a bill was before Congress which called for the construction of seventy one vessels (including 25 light cruisers and 5 aircraft carriers) at a total cost of $725,000,000. In proposing this gigantic programme the Big Navyites had overplayed their hand. On February 28 1928 the "seventy one ship bill" was replaced.

\footnote{93 G.B.P.P. Cmd 3211.}
by a "fifteen cruiser bill", which called for the construction of fifteen 10,000 ton cruisers and one aircraft carrier. Even this ran up against considerable opposition, but indignation at the Anglo-French Compromise and a steady flow of Big Navy propaganda increased support for the bill, which was duly passed by the Senate and signed by Coolidge in February 1929. Completion of all twenty-three American heavy cruisers would have considerably altered the balance of naval power, unless Japan and Britain initiated retaliatory construction programmes. The Anglo-American dispute over parity and the Japanese insistence on a 10:7 ratio, obstructed an extension of naval limitation to cruisers, but if a solution could be found to the former problem, then a serious attempt could be made to deal with the latter. The need for a parity "yardstick" had become more pressing.

1929 witnessed the accession of Hoover to the Presidency in the United States and the victory of the Labour Party under MacDonald in Britain. Hoover, a Quaker, was as concerned as his predecessor to secure a disarmament success, concerned about the state of Anglo-American relations, and spoke publicly of finding a "rational yardstick". MacDonald was a dedicated Pacifist and committed, as was the whole Labour Party, to disarmament. Furthermore, neither "suffered from the taint of failure which had characterised

95 Hoover took office on March 4 and MacDonald on June 5.
96 Wheeler, G.F. "Prelude to Pearl Harbour" pg 157.
97 Roskill pg 61.
their predecessors".98 A solution to the first obstacle now seemed possible.

Craigie, the British Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had urged after the failure of the Anglo-French Compromise that future negotiations with the United States be informal, verbal, and at first almost unofficial, so that any hope of agreement would not be dashed by the objections of professional servicemen.99 Initial Anglo-American negotiations in 1929 took this form and proved so successful that on July 24 1929 MacDonald was able to announce to the Commons the suspension of two cruisers and the cancellation of two submarines and a submarine tender. Hoover replied in kind by suspending construction on three cruisers the same day. The reason behind these concessions was that the two governments had agreed that "a measure of elasticity can be allowed so as to meet the peace requirements of the two nations" without "departing from the conditions of parity". Further to this, they had agreed that technical points would not be allowed "to override the great public issues involved".100 This was important and D.C. Watt ascribes the settlement reached at the subsequent 1930 London Naval Conference to the fact that the political leaders were prepared to override their naval advisers.101

98 Rappaport pg 124.
99 D.B.F.P. Series IA Vol V No.477,492. Craigie claimed that Castle, the American Assistant Under-Secretary of State, agreed with him on this.
101 Watt, D.C. "Personalities and Policies" pg 40.
From the 4th to the 15th October 1929 MacDonald visited the United States and at the Presidential camp on the Rapidian he and Hoover thrashed out their main points of difference. Full agreement proved impossible. Hoover pressed for twenty one heavy cruisers, but the Japanese, seeking a 10:10:7 ratio, especially in heavy cruisers, had already stated that they would base their building on American figures.\footnote{102} As Britain could not allow Japan to pull away from her in heavy cruisers, either the United States had to be content with eighteen, or Japan, and therefore Britain, had each to build two more.\footnote{103} But, as Craigie later said, the purpose of the Rapidian meeting was to narrow differences so "as to render improbable any breakdown for the coming 1930 conference on a purely Anglo-American issue. In this it was successful".\footnote{104} Only the second obstacle, Japanese insistence on the 10:10:7 ratio, which had always been obscured by the parity dispute, remained.

Britain issued invitations to a Five Power Naval Conference on October 7 1929\footnote{105} to which, a month later, she added the request that the delegates should not be technical experts.\footnote{106} This reflected the belief of MacDonald and Hoover, which in the light of subsequent events may well have been correct, that politicians could agree where servicemen could not. Although it would prove as

\begin{footnotes}
\item[102] D.B.F.P. Series 2, Vol I No.29.
\item[103] Crowley, pg 41.
\item[104] Craigie, R. "Behind the Japanese Mask" pg 14.
\item[105] D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol I No.75.
\item[106] Ibid No.85.
\end{footnotes}
difficult as ever to fit France and Italy into a comprehensive limitation scheme, it was obvious that the Japanese desiderata presented the main stumbling block to any agreement between the Pacific Powers. Japan had stated that if the United States settled for eighteen heavy cruisers, then she (Japan) would require fourteen, or 126,000 tons in lieu of the twelve (108,000 tons) she already possessed. Japan also claimed the right to 80,000 tons of submarines and an overall 10:10:7 ratio in auxiliary craft. Japan was prepared to forgo some light cruiser or destroyer tonnage, if by retaining 80,000 tons of submarines she exceeded her seventy per cent limit in that category.\textsuperscript{107} The Americans would not accept this, as they had not yet abandoned the fourth proposal put forward by Hughes in 1921 and felt that Japanese claims "would necessitate counter-building on the part of America".\textsuperscript{108} The British assumed that if the number of American heavy cruisers could be reduced to eighteen, Britain could be content with fifteen and Japan with twelve.\textsuperscript{109} As these figures would give her a 10:7.4 ratio vis a vis Japan, they could not allow Japan to build two more heavy cruisers. Yet Hamaguchi's government was justified in asking for an absolute 10:10:7 ratio in auxiliary vessels, especially in heavy cruisers. Without this Japan was not assured of that degree of security she had obtained in 1922.\textsuperscript{111} Thus, the whole London Naval Conference hinged not upon the Japanese demand for a 10:10:7 ratio, but upon what this issue represented.

Which principle had been established at Washington in 1922: the 5:5:3 ratio or Japanese security in the Western Pacific?

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{110} Hamaguchi, Prime Minister July 1929-April 1931, suffered an attack by an assassin in November 1930 which forced his resignation in April 1931 and cost him his life the following August.
\item \textsuperscript{111} Crowley, pg 46.
\end{itemize}
When the First London Naval Conference opened on January 21 1930\textsuperscript{112} the Japanese were in the enviable position of being able to effect an absolute reduction of their existing fleet strength should their proposals be accepted, while those of the Americans, in fact, required that the British and the Japanese "accept a moratorium on naval construction while the United States engaged in a major programme of expansion".\textsuperscript{113} Nevertheless the British had already indicated that they considered a Japanese quota of fourteen heavy cruisers a greater threat than the proposed American building programme. Thus when, at the first Round Table meeting of January 23, the Americans revealed their acceptance of the figure of eighteen heavy cruisers,\textsuperscript{114} it was obvious that the last important point of difference between the Anglo-American Powers had been removed and that Japan faced the possibility of a united front. At that same meeting the Japanese insisted that the acceptance of the 5:5:3 ratio in capital ships and aircraft carriers had only been made possible by the non-fortification clause and if the same ratio was applied to auxiliary vessels "they could not defend the country". Stimson remained unconvinced that this was Japan's last word.

The Japanese made the first attempt to bridge the gap when they suggested that Japan could accept the figure of eighteen American cruisers if the United States would defer the construction of these until after 1935, thus granting

\textsuperscript{112} The British, American and Japanese delegations were headed by MacDonald, Secretary of State Stimson and Wakatsuki respectively.

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Crowley}, pg 47.

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{D.B.F.P.} Series 2 Vol I No.147.
Japan a de facto seventy percent in heavy cruisers inside formal acceptance of the 5:5:3 ratio. This proposal, although rejected, provided the basis for the compromise put forward by the American delegate, Senator Reed, on March 8, in which the United States would grant Japan her de facto seventy percent but on terms more advantageous to herself; i.e. construction of the last three cruisers would be deferred until 1934, 1935 and 1936. The subsequent amendments proposed by the Japanese delegate Matsudaira, designed to remove the American advantages, led Stimson to adopt a tough line. At a meeting of delegation heads on March 12, Stimson threatened Wakatsuki with an Anglo-American accord if the compromise of March 8, to be subsequently known as the Reed-Matsudaira Compromise, was not accepted in its original form. 115

The following day Reed presented Matsudaira with this "final" American programme, which granted Japan parity in submarines and a 10:10:7 ratio in all surface vessels for the duration of the treaty, although in formal terms Japan received only a 10:10:6 ratio in heavy cruisers. On March 15 Henderson, the British Foreign Secretary, was able to report that "a tentative arrangement" had been reached on this basis. However the Reed-Matsudaira Compromise violated two of the "three Great Principles" enunciated by the Japanese Naval General Staff:

(a) a 10:7 ratio vis a vis the United States in heavy cruisers,
(b) an overall 10:7 ratio in the other auxiliary categories and
(c) retention of Japan's existing 78,000 tons of submarines

115 Crowley, pg 52-54.
Built or building. The grant of parity in submarines, when both Britain and the United States had originally proposed the abolition of this category, appears as a considerable concession on the part of those two powers. But since the level for this parity was to be set at 52,729 tons, it fell well short of the third "Great Principle". Hamaguchi's government still had to overcome considerable opposition within Japan.

Upon learning of the Reed-Matsudaira compromise, the Japanese naval staff countered with its own propaganda. This culminated in the press interview given by Vice Chief of Naval Staff Suetsugu on March 17 in which he affirmed that the Navy Staff adhered to those two principles which had been abandoned by the government. In its efforts to neutralise this stand on the part of the navy, the government was fortunate in having the support of Admiral Okada, Secretary of the Supreme War Council. With his aid, and that of Prince Saionji, the last surviving Genro, the government mustered support for the acceptance of the American offer. On March 24 the Supreme War Council agreed that if the security of the empire would not be fatally affected by the Reed-Matsudaira Compromise, then it should be accepted and Takarabe, the Navy Minister attending the conference, cabled his support for this line from London. Hamaguchi thus had the backing he required and new instructions, allowing for the acceptance of the American offer, were

116 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol I No.156.
drafted. On the morning of April 1 these received the cabinet's approval: by 3.00 in the afternoon the Imperial sanction had also been obtained and the instructions were then cabled to London. The following day the three Pacific Powers resumed their technical discussions on the basis of the Reed-Matsudaira Compromise and by April 10 a tri-Power agreement which embodied this, as well as extending the limitations on capital ships and aircraft carriers, had been completed. All three governments had overruled their technical advisers, but Hamaguchi still had to face the constitutional crisis resulting from this action.

Under the conditions of the Meiji Constitution the Services Chiefs were directly responsible to the emperor. Article XI of the constitution stated that the emperor "has the supreme command of the Army and Navy" and Article XII that the emperor "determines the organisation and peace standing" of those services. Consequently, once the Hamaguchi cabinet had approved the revised instructions for the delegates in London, the Naval General Staff still had one last card to play - its right to consult directly with the emperor. On April 1 Chief of Naval Staff Kato applied for an audience with the emperor, citing his rights under Article XI. The audience could not be denied Kato, but it was postponed until the following day. Thus, while Kato was presenting his case to the emperor, the London delegation was already proceeding with the instructions the

120 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol I No.175, Appendix II.
121 I.M.T.F.E. Judgement Chp IV pg 90.
emperor had ratified the previous day. Outmanoeuvred, the Naval General Staff then raised the complaint that the Minseito government had usurped the emperor's "Right of Supreme Command" and the right of the navy to advise the emperor on matters pertaining to national defence. 123 This became the issue at stake. Hamaguchi eventually secured ratification of the treaty, but in doing so he opened up a rift between the Cabinet and the Privy Council and between the Cabinet and the Naval General Staff. 124

The First London Naval Treaty was to be the last triumph of disarmament in Japan. Maxon claims that "the end result of the naval controversy ... (was) a vigorous assertion of the overriding authority of the Navy Minister for the preservation of discipline". 125 However the authority of the government over the Navy Minister had not been established during the crisis; Takarabe had co-operated with, not been overruled by, the government. By the end of 1930 "every ranking naval officer who supported the Three Powers Treaty ... had been cashiered". This meant that future Navy Ministers would be men who supported the General Staff's concept of basic security requirements and would therefore be unlikely to align themselves with the government. 126 At the April 1 Cabinet meeting, Vice Naval Minister Yamanashi had stated that it was essential that Japan maintain her treaty quotas in

124 I.M.T.F.E. Judgement Chp IV pg 133.
125 Maxon, Y.C. "Control of Japanese Foreign Policy" pg 78.
126 Crowley, pg 79-80.
warships and strengthen her air force. These recommendations were embodied in the special supplementary naval budget presented on July 21 to the Supreme War Council by the Naval General Staff. This Hamauchi, although not legally bound, verbally agreed to. The I.J.N. then proceeded to reinforce its position; first, with a memorial to the throne in which it advised that the government in 1936 should stick to the original objectives proposed in 1930 and, second, with an intensification of its propaganda campaign. The 1930 London Naval Treaty controversy had severely weakened civilian rule in Japan and never again would the government be able to force its will on the Navy, but for the moment all classes of warship were covered by limitation treaties.

All five Washington Powers were signatories to Parts I and II of the First London Naval Treaty signed on April 22, 1930. These two parts, inter alia, prolonged the life of capital ships a further five years, extended the aircraft carrier restrictions agreed on at Washington to vessels under 10,000 tons and reduced the capital ship numbers of

128 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 35.
129 In an attempt to evade the total tonnage restrictions on aircraft carriers, the I.J.N. had laid down in November 1929 an aircraft carrier "Ryujo", intended to displace only 8,000 tons. However, in order to equip the vessel with enough aircraft to make it an effective fighting unit, an extra hangar deck was added, with the result that "Ryujo" when finally completed in May 1933 displaced 10,600 tons, a fact "not revealed at the time to the Treaty authorities". Even then "Ryujo" proved top heavy and unstable. In March 1934 the torpedo boat "Tamadzuru" capsized for these same reasons. As a result further modification was considered necessary for both "Ryujo" and the "Tamadzuru" class torpedo boats. Design mishaps such as these provided the I.J.N. with yet another argument as to why Japan should rid herself of the naval restrictions imposed by the existing treaties. A.J. Watts and B.C. Gordon "The Imperial Japanese Navy" pg 177-8, 275-79.
Great Britain, the United States and Japan to 15, 15 and 9 respectively (by scrapping or converting to training ships all excess tonnage). The remainder of the treaty was simply a Tri-Power agreement. France, whose proposed global tonnage level had been rejected, remained as intractable as in 1922. Consequently both France and Italy, which refused to bind itself if the French would not, remained unrestricted in auxiliary craft. Part III of the treaty was, in effect, the Reed-Matsudaira Compromise and affected only the Pacific Powers. As the United States would ultimately gain three more heavy cruisers than Britain, Britain's total light cruiser tonnage allocation was fixed at a point 50,000 tons higher than that of the United States. Similarly, to compensate for their heavy cruiser concessions, the Japanese ratio vis a vis the United States was in excess of the seventy per cent Japan had sought as he second "great principle". Part IV of the treaty involved restrictions on submarine warfare, as the agreement reached at Washington eight years earlier had never been ratified.

The Treaty was to remain in force at least until December 31, 1936 and Britain was to convene a new conference within one year of its expiration date. Two years notification were necessary if the treaty was to be wound up and, if this notice was not given, then the treaty remained in force indefinitely.

130 The tonnages to be divided among the various categories as each power saw fit.

131 Originally signed by Britain, Japan and the United States, Part IV of the First London Naval Treaty was ratified by France and Italy on November 6, 1936 and subsequently by Germany, the Soviet Union and eight minor powers.
Although the U.S.N. had failed to attain a solid 10:10:6 ratio, the United States had successfully extended this ratio to heavy cruisers and achieved parity in cruisers with Britain. The British Admiralty fell well short of its desired seventy cruisers (the figure on which agreement had finally been reached was fifty), but what Roskill designates "the era of Anglo-American antagonism" had ended with a definite numerical limitation on heavy cruisers. Moreover, even if the Japanese naval staff has failed to gain the acceptance of two of its "Three Great Principles", the I.J.N.'s command of the Western Pacific remained intact until the next naval conference, when Japan would have the chance to reverse the decision of 1930. None of the Pacific Powers gained all it wanted from the London Naval Conference; neither the American nor the Japanese interpretation of the 1922 Five Power Treaty was fully accepted. But if the technical experts in Japan, Britain and the United States were all disgruntled over the results of the First London Naval Conference, none of the governments concerned had reason to be dissatisfied.

In January 1931 Elihu Root stated that "the idea was started at the Washington Conference and continued in the recent London Conference, that each country should appropriately and properly consider not merely its own specific naval needs, but also what is fair and reasonable towards maintaining the peace of the world". The comment, although perhaps idealistic, was not altogether an unfair one. In 1922 Britain agreed to share with the United States

132 Root, E. "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy" Foreign Affairs Vol 9 No.2. Jan 1931 Supplement pg VI.
that position of naval supremacy she had so jealously denied Germany before the 1914-18 war. The United States, in return, had curtailed her massive capital ship programme and abandoned her navy's dream of huge fortified bases in the Eastern Pacific. This concession enabled Japan for her part to accept a relative balance of strength in capital ships and aircraft carriers which would have been impossible without Article XIX. Attempts during the next eight years to complete the work of the Washington Conference failed until in 1930 the Governments of Britain, Japan and the United States had all been prepared to ignore those demands put forward by their technical experts as minimum defence requirements. The United States had given up three of her proposed heavy cruisers and postponed the construction of three more in order to reach agreement. Britain reduced by twenty that number of cruisers the Admiralty had deemed absolutely necessary since the war. In comparison, Japan's concessions seem slight. The 1930 London Naval Treaty secured her naval hegemony in the West Pacific at least until 1936, and the concessions made were compensated for to a large degree by the supplementary budget of July 21. Nevertheless, no disarmament treaty which did not guarantee security could be expected to survive and, in accepting less than the I.J.N's basic demands, Hamaguchi's government "had compromised the principle of Japanese naval hegemony in Japan's own waters".133 Root could not have been more wrong when he predicted that "the world will not, in our time at least, get back to thinking about navies in the same way in which it thought of them a few years ago".134

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133 Crowley, pg 66.
134 Root, pg VI.
months later the Kwantung Army was to set in motion the train of events which, by the time of the 1932 General Disarmament Conference, would place the control of Japan's Defence requirements more firmly in the hands of the armed services and ultimately lead Japan, in her quest for an autonomous national defence, to abrogate that system of naval limitation which had been built up since 1921.
(C) THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE PACIFIC: 135

JANUARY 1932

The theory of the disarmament agreements arrived at in 1922 and 1930 differed considerably from the reality involved. In the Reed-Matsudaira Compromise the Hamaguchi government agreed that Japan should, in theory, be limited to a 10:6 ratio in heavy cruisers: in practice she retained a 10:7 ratio in this category. However the divergence between theory and reality was far greater than this. The Washington and London Treaties had fixed maximum quantitative limits, but naturally enough entailed no obligation on the part of the signatory powers to build up to those limits. The Anglo-American Powers knew that they did not possess a 10:6 ratio in 1930. The Mukden Incident forced them to face the fact that they did not even possess a 10:7 ratio, and in January 1932 the Japanese were to push the lesson home at Shanghai. The British realised they could do little to change the situation. In effect they had admitted Japan as an equal in the Pacific as early as 1902, certainly by 1905. By 1932 they knew themselves to be her naval inferior in Far Eastern waters. On the other hand, the Americans, when confronted with their impotence, attempted to close the gap between theory and reality by building up to their full treaty allocation. This left the Japanese two alternatives: (a) to watch passively those treaty limits they had agreed to come into force and accept all the restrictions on foreign

135 For an extensive breakdown on the strategic position in the Pacific in September 1931, see C. Thorne "The Limits of Foreign Policy" pg 27-77.
policy that implied, or (b) secure the raising of her own
theoretical limits. Japan chose the latter - the result
was the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East.

This work deals primarily with the theoretical limits
within which the Pacific Powers were prepared to work; not
with the actual strengths and the factors governing these.
Nevertheless, Stimson was to learn that Japanese policy
was governed by reality and Roosevelt was to act upon his
experience. Thus some discussion of the real strategic
position in 1932 is necessary, as the American realisation
of their position, just as much as Japanese dissatisfaction
with the First London Treaty, was the basis of the Japanese
decision to transform the terms of naval disarmament or
abandon it altogether.

Despite its insistence on a paper parity with Great
Britain, the United States, through its lack of new
construction during the twenties, greatly augmented the
naval strength of Japan. From 1920 until 1933 the U.S.N.
remained static, with an average warship tonnage of about
one million tons. During this time Japan built its
naval forces up to full treaty limits, so that by January
1932 its real strength was well in excess of the treaty
ratio, especially vis a vis the United States, as can be
seen from the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fleets in Being: Jan 1932</th>
<th>Gt. Britain</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>Japan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battleships and Battlecruisers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft Carriers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruisers</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroyers</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submarines</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

136 Morison, S.E. "The Two-Ocean War" pg 9.
137 G.B.P.P. Cmd 4005.
Japan's position becomes even more favourable when one considers that the last four of her twelve heavy cruisers were due to be delivered in 1932, only eleven American battleships were in full commission¹³⁸ and that all but twelve of the American destroyers were over age (only twenty five Japanese destroyers were over age). The Royal Navy was better off both in numerical strength and in the age of her vessels, for although her capital ships and aircraft carriers were generally older than those of either the United States or Japan, since 1924 Britain had steadily advanced her construction of cruisers, destroyers and submarines.¹³⁹ Yet, in fact, the Royal Navy represented less of a threat to Japan than the U.S.N., for Britain was handicapped even more than the United States by those geographical circumstances which in January 1932 rendered Japan virtually impregnable.

Britain in 1932 still possessed that numerical 40 per cent superiority which the I.J.N. had judged to be the essential minimum strength for an attacking fleet if it was to have any chance of success. "The superiority over Japan, however, would exist only if the entire British fleet could be sent to the Far East, without leaving any force in the European seas". This, of course, was virtually impossible. As Admiral Richmond states, the forces Britain could deploy "would be no more than mathematically equal to those of the actually and potentially hostile powers together .... Mathematical equality is far from strategical equality and still further from that strategical superiority

¹³⁸ Thorne, pg 72.
¹³⁹ Roskill, Appendix C.
on which security at sea depends". If Britain were to deploy her naval forces against Japan, her fleet would be operating far from its sources of supply, with long exposed lines of communication - lines which the Admiralty would have difficulty in protecting with its cruiser quota cut to fifty - while the Japanese fleet would suffer from none of these disadvantages. These problems were, however, relatively academic: in January 1932 there was considerable doubt as to whether Britain was capable of deploying her fleet in the Pacific at all.

By 1932 the British Empire did not "possess a single base which was capable of meeting the needs of the squadrons which would, in time of war, depend on them." Much of the blame for this lay with the "wet blanket" which was the Ten Year Rule - "a godsend to the Treasury's parsimony". Once the British government had rejected the bulk of the Jellicoe Report and accepted Article XIX of the Washington Naval Treaty, Singapore had become the naval pivot of British strategy in the Far East. Yet in January 1932 this pivot, due to government economies, was incomplete and poorly defended. Singapore was 4,927 miles from

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140 Richmond, pg 290.
141 Roskill, S. "The Strategy of Sea Power" pg 146. Collier, B. "The Defence of the United Kingdom" pg 22, observes that at the beginning of the thirties there was not a port in the Empire whose guns were not outranged by those of a modern 6-inch cruiser.
142 During the period 1919-1932 British defence policy, and therefore expenditure, was based on the theory of "no major war for ten years."
144 For the changing fortunes of the Singapore Naval Base see W.D. McIntyre "The Strategic Significance of Singapore 1912-1942", Journal of South East Asian History Vol.10, No.1, March 1968.
Suez, more if the fleet refuelled at Trincomalee, but only 2,428 miles from the Japanese naval base at Sasebo. Thus the British Admiralty had estimated that while the Japanese fleet could arrive off Singapore within ten days and destroy the facilities there, it would take the British main fleet thirty eight days, assuming conditions in Europe allowed it to be sent at all. All Britain possessed to plug the twenty eight day gap was the China fleet: 1 aircraft carrier, 5 cruisers, 9 destroyers, 6 sloops and 11 submarines. The British had little hope of holding Singapore and no alternative war plans, yet if they failed to hold Singapore intact "then the heavy units could not advance beyond India". Therefore in January 1932 all Britain's possessions and interests in the Far East, even Australia and New Zealand, lay ultimately at the mercy of Japan. Britain's numerical strength counted for nothing in the face of the geographical obstacles which confronted her - by herself she was helpless, with little chance of improving her position.

Although, like Britain, the United States had both Atlantic and Pacific naval commitments, in 1932 she was, in terms of home defence, in a much better position. Control of the Panama Canal enabled her to concentrate her naval forces in either ocean; the size and range of American resources ruled out the danger of a long range blockade; the logistic problems posed by the surrounding oceans secured the continental United States against any feasible

145 Figures from Thorne, pg 64,69-70.
146 Thorne, pg 70.
attack, and the possibility of an enemy-controlled Hawaii remained remote. However in terms of Far Eastern defence the United States was little better off than the British Empire. American possessions included the Philippines and various small islands in the West Pacific. Furthermore, although the commercial and financial stake of the United States in China was far smaller than that of Britain, Chinese markets remained in American eyes a vast potential source of wealth. But the very logistic advantages which made the continental United States virtually invulnerable made these possessions and interests practically indefensible in the short run. In accepting Article XIX of the Washington Naval Treaty, the United States had denied itself a single fleet base west of Hawaii, 3,400 miles from Tokyo. 147

Under these circumstances the fifteen American capital ships were indeed as "useful as a street tramp", 148 although Braisted argues that Article XIX was possibly beneficial to the U.S.N. in that after 1922 its war plans were formulated on the basis of the material it was likely to have. 149 Yet in January 1932 plan "Orange" 150 envisaged a dash to the West Pacific and the Manila base from which offensive operations would then be conducted. This plan was, if anything less workable than the British trek to

148 Matsuo "How Japan Plans to Win" pg 38.
149 Braisted, pg 688.
150 American War Plans were designated according to a colour code: "Orange" for Japan, "Red" for Britain, "Black" for Germany and "Green" for Mexico.
Singapore. The feeble and badly maintained United States Asiatic Fleet: 1 cruiser, 18 destroyers and 7 submarines, stood even less chance of holding the entrances to Manila Bay than the British China Fleet did of saving Singapore. If, however, the main American fleet was denied a base upon arrival in the West Pacific, then the distances involved in a retreat would mean the loss of any ships disabled during operations and future operations would be seriously hampered. Like the British, the Americans in January 1932 had little real hope that their war plans against Japan would succeed, but also like the British, they had no viable alternative.

Even a united Anglo-American front would not have removed the problems of geography. As the Japanese were to demonstrate during the opening phases of the Pacific War (when the Americans had considerably improved their relative naval positions), they could effectively strike simultaneously at the weak links in both the British and the American strategic plans. In May 1933 Grew was to venture the opinion "that Japan probably has the most complete, well-balanced, co-ordinated and therefore powerful fighting machine in the world today. Relative to strength which could conceivably be brought against it", Grew considered "Japan's fighting machine immeasurably stronger than any other" and for a "quick hard push" without an equal, although it "probably could not stand a protracted severe war". This was the Anglo-American problem. Hoover's

151 Figures from Thorne, pg 73.
153 Grew, Joseph C. United States Ambassador to Japan Feb 1932-Dec 1941.
military advisers felt that the United States could win a protracted war, given four to six years, or two if the British put their entire fleet under joint command. However, the cost of the initial Japanese "quick hard push" made the price of another total war too high. Hoover's advisers admitted that the United States would lose the Philippines for the duration\textsuperscript{155} and Britain was aware that her Yangtze trade and Hong Kong were "hostages in the hands of Japan".\textsuperscript{156}

The Washington and London Treaties had conferred strategic supremacy in the Far East upon Japan. Only if the Anglo-American powers were prepared to pay the price involved could they challenge that supremacy.

Quite apart from these unfavourable circumstances, there was little possibility of a combined Anglo-American challenge to Japan in January 1932. Britain, ill equipped for a war with Japan, had no intention of fighting one by herself if that could be avoided. Following the Mukden Incident Britain would not allow the League of Nations to push her into imposing military or economic sanctions on Japan, for, as the United States was not a member of the League, Britain as the major naval power, would bear the greatest responsibility for enforcing those sanctions and therefore incur the greatest risk of Japanese reprisals. Alone, the British realised they were "incapable of checking Japan in any way" unless the Japanese ended by "kicking in the United States too".\textsuperscript{157} Britain would not

\textsuperscript{155} Hoover, \textsc{H}: Memoirs "The Cabinet and the Presidency" pg 367-8.

\textsuperscript{156} "Round Table". "Power Politics in the Pacific" Vol 25, No. 97, Dec 1934, pg 10.

\textsuperscript{157} D.B.F.P. Series 2, Vol IX, No. 238.
move until the United States offered some commitment and this meant more than just brave words on the part of Stimson. The British were aware that Hoover would not participate in military or economic sanctions\textsuperscript{158} and even if he had wished to, isolationist sentiment in Congress and the Senate would have prevented it. Furthermore, the post-Versailles system of collective security, even though the Japanese had demonstrated that it did not work, militated against a return to the old system of alliances. "The British had sacrificed their alliance with Japan in order to obtain American goodwill". Despite Stimson's subsequent claims, in 1932 "goodwill was all they got".\textsuperscript{159}

Despite her geographic advantages, Japan was not without her strategic problems. The chief of these was Russia. The Soviet defence services remain technologically backward during the twenties, until in mid 1929 the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party adopted a resolution "on the state of U.S.S.R. defence:. This aimed at the radical reconstruction of the Army, Air Force and Navy and was the basis of the first Five Year Plan to build up the armed forces.\textsuperscript{160} Frontier fortifications and defensive positions were prepared and the mechanisation of the army pushed forward rapidly.

\textsuperscript{158} Hoover, pg 370.
\textsuperscript{159} Barnett, C. "The Collapse of British Power" pg 302.
\textsuperscript{160} Zhukov, G.K. "Memoirs" pg 108.
The ability of the Soviet Union to counter-attack after a Japanese first strike was thus increased, (The Japanese military machine, it should be remembered, was not designed for a protracted war) and this ability was enhanced by the fact "that in the Far East the Soviet Leadership pinned its faith to aviation at an early stage and to a surprising degree". Long range bomber aviation was organised into large air units capable of carrying out operational missions independently and the Soviet Union considered these capable of smashing Japan's wood and paper cities. To the Japanese this was a threat real enough to warrant practice blackouts of Tokyo in the autumn of 1933. The significance of these developments is that Japan, in providing for an autonomous national defence, faced the same problems as Britain: the need to provide for defence on two fronts. Unlike Britain, she had to split her resources fairly evenly between the army and the navy, whereas her two principal potential enemies, the United States and the Soviet Union, were free to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S.S.R. Armament Production</th>
<th>1930-1</th>
<th>1932-4</th>
<th>1935-7</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Aircraft</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>2,595</td>
<td>3,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>3,371</td>
<td>3,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Artillery</td>
<td>1,911</td>
<td>3,778</td>
<td>5,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rifles</td>
<td>174,000</td>
<td>256,000</td>
<td>397,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

161 Erickson, J. "The Soviet High Command 1918-1941" pg 304.
162 Ibid pg 338.
163 Zhukov, pg 109.
164 Dallin, D.J. "Soviet Russia in the Far East" pg 13.
165 Erickson, pg 360.
concentrate their efforts on that service most useful to their own needs. In any naval race with the wealthier Anglo-American Powers, Japan was financially at a disadvantage. The need, after 1929, to reckon with the growing Russian military presence in the Far East stretched her resources still further. The chances of the Soviet Union, excluded from the League of Nations and the Washington Treaty system, allying with the Anglo-American Powers were remote, (the United States was not even to recognise the Soviet Government until 1933) but Japan still had to face the possibility of either Russia or the Western naval powers exerting pressure on her should she become involved in hostilities with the other.

The situation was to become even more complex with the formal creation of a Soviet Far Eastern Fleet in the spring of 1932. Although Soviet naval forces in the Pacific were not and would not become a match for those of Japan, submarines, destroyers and torpedo boats based on the Russian Pacific ports were a definite threat to Japanese shipping and troop transports in the China Sea. Furthermore, the assumption made by the Russians in 1934 that the sinking of one or two Japanese battleships would alter the whole strategic situation in the Far East was equally true two years earlier.

Japan also faced considerable problems in her supply of strategic raw materials, particularly iron ore, rubber, 166 Dallin, pg 13. 167 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3240.
tin and, especially, oil. Although Japan's oil production quadrupled in the period 1923-1934, the proportion of domestic production to total consumption dropped from 34.2% to 8.4%. The Japanese could, of course, build up reserves of those commodities in which the empire was deficient, but in January 1932 her oil stocks were dangerously low. Thus, in the event of a war with either Great Britain or the United States, Japan would have to secure and hold intact the strategic resources of South East Asia. This would increase the vital area to be defended by her navy, greatly lengthen her lines of communication, and consequently diminish, to a certain extent, her geographical advantages. Thus, the Japanese expansionists were placed in the awkward position of always having to go one step further to secure what had already been won.

The problems which the possibility of an Anglo-American naval offensive presented appeared easier of solution. Japanese cities were just as vulnerable to carrier-based aircraft as they were to long range Russian bombers and the National City Bank Incident of September 1932 was an indication of Japanese sensitivity on this point. One observer commented in 1935 that Japan appeared to fear "the United States aircraft carriers more than the whole battle fleet". To judge from the proposals for the drastic

168 See Thorne pg 63.
170 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 844 gives stocks at the end of 1931 as 83,000 Kilolitres (72,000 tons).
171 When publicity photographs taken by the bank were interpreted by the Japanese police as American bombing reconnaissance. See J.C. Grew "Turbulent Era" pg 932-3.
reduction or complete abolition of aircraft carriers made by the Japanese between 1932 and 1936, the comment was not perhaps as extreme as it sounds - certainly the Pacific War justified Japan's worst fears. But in January 1932 the Anglo-American air threat was more apparent than real. The I.J.N. had its advocates of naval aviation, notably Yamamoto who was to direct the carrier-based strike on Pearl Harbour in December 1941. However, in 1932 Yamamoto, like "Billy" Mitchell in the United States, exercised little real influence on naval strategy. The Japanese Naval General Staff still viewed the aircraft carrier only in a support role and considered the main task confronting the I.J.N. to be the defeat of an American battle fleet attacking across the Pacific. This enemy battle fleet would first be reduced to manageable size by submarine attrition and then finished off close to Japan in a Tsushima-type battleship engagement. Working on this basis, Japan's battleships were never designed for trans-Pacific operations, but only for the rough seas surrounding the home islands. To give the Imperial fleet the decisive edge in this projected final engagement, crew accommodation, radius of action, and defensive armament were sacrificed to provide for maximum speed and offensive power. "The goal was to produce ships which would be individually superior to those of the enemy, even by a single gun or torpedo tube, or by a single knot of speed". During the thirties the I.J.N. was to base its policy on the

173 See above. pg 8.
174 Fuchida and Okumiya pg 40-1.
assumption that the Americans would launch this offensive across the Pacific and it was to achieve significant advances in both the attrition stage and in increasing the offensive capability of their battleships - the latter development being incompatible with the existing system of naval limitation.

Japan, in January 1932, had little cause for alarm. Neither Britain nor the United States was prepared to wage a war against Japan which they knew would be protracted and costly. Nor was either power prepared to institute a long range economic blockade, which might precipitate that shooting war they wished to avoid. Also, both powers credited Japan with a greater degree of preparedness than she actually possessed. Russia's attitude would stiffen as her military position improved, but in February 1932 Litvinov, Foreign Commissar 1930-39, said that the Soviet Union would not fight Japan even if she wished to take Valdivostok. Japan's expansion on the Asiatic Continent forced the Anglo-American Powers to consider their strategic positions in terms of fleets-in-being and not theoretical ratios. Faced with the harsh reality of a Japan in arms, both powers attempted to improve their situation. The actions of the United States were to strengthen Japan's resolve to alter the Washington and London ratios.

175 Thorne, pg 67.
CHAPTER I

(A) THE AMERICAN NAVAL THREAT I: STIMSONS POLICY OF BLUFF

The Manchurian Incident at first seemed to present no immediate threat to British or American interests in the Far East. Initially both nations treated the crisis as a temporary aberration and calmly waited for the liberal elements to reassert their supremacy. But by October 1931 Stimson found himself forced to the conclusion that "the Japanese government which we have been dealing with is no longer in control."\(^1\) Wakasuki admitted as much when his cabinet resigned in December of that year. Stimson, a self-confessed expert on the "oriental mind" then adopted what was in effect an elaborate bluff, convinced that if treated firmly the oriental would recognise his superiors and retreat before them.\(^2\) However in late January 1932 the Japanese demonstrated once again, this time at Shanghai, that their policy was based on reality. Unlike Manchuria, Shanghai was for Britain a vital economic issue. The British, therefore, drew sensible conclusions from the situation as they saw it, and based their Far Eastern and defence policies upon those conclusions. Stimson, on the other hand stepped up his bluster policy, basing this upon American naval strength. In their assessment of this the British and the Japanese were closer to the mark, at least

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1 H.L. Stimson "The Far Eastern Crisis" pg 72.
2 W.L. Neumann "America encounters Japan" pg 191.
at first, than Stimson. Yet, until Roosevelt took office, Stimson maintained the pretence of an American naval threat in the Pacific. His policy, openly disavowed by his President, was used by the I.J.N. to strengthen its domestic arguments, and committed the United States to an untenable naval stance. This chapter is an investigation of the differing British and American responses to the increased Japanese aggression, and of the ongoing consequences of Stimson's naval bluff.

Stimson, in proclaiming his non-recognition doctrine on January 1, 1932 believed\(^3\) that much might be accomplished in moderating the appetites of the Japanese if it could be clearly demonstrated that the unified opinion of the world was definitely and strongly opposed to their course.\(^4\) Stimson had hoped that other signatories to the Nine Power Treaty would join with the United States in endorsing the non-recognition doctrine. However as Sir John Pratt, Foreign Office Adviser on Far Eastern Affairs 1925-1938, later remarked, Britain saw non-recognition as "a peculiarly American technique" and "attached little importance" to it.\(^5\) The British in their answer declined to send a note on non-recognition to Japan and merely noted Japanese assurances to the League regarding the territorial integrity of China and the "Open Door".\(^6\) Unfortunately the Foreign Office communique released to the press on January 9\(^7\) "read like

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3 In his non-recognition note Stimson stated that the United States "cannot admit the legality of any situation de facto, nor does it intend to recognise any treaty or agreement" entered into between China and Japan which impaired American treaty rights, including those relating to the "Open Door" and to the territorial and administrative integrity of the Republic of China. F.R.U.S. pg 76.
5 J. Pratt "War and Politics in China" pg 226.
6 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol IX No.66.
7 Ibid No.66 n2.
a rebuff to Mr Stimson and was certainly so interpreted by the Japanese.\textsuperscript{8} Since Britain did not back Stimsons policy, neither did the other European Powers. As a result, the non-recognition doctrine "was a unilateral demarche by the United States and not a joint announcement with other powers such as Stimson had first envisaged".\textsuperscript{9} This might well have encouraged the Japanese to deliver their somewhat sarcastic reply of January 16 in which they thanked the Americans for their "additional assurance" that they "could always be relied on to do everything in their power to secure the full and complete fulfilment in every detail of the Treaties of Washington and the Kellogg Treaty".\textsuperscript{10} Certainly the non-recognition doctrine "proved in practice a complete fiasco".\textsuperscript{11} Stimson in his search for an effective policy "was finally driven to a double course; a bluff of force, and a strong restatement of principles." The principles failed to effect any change in Japans policies and "the bluff was not a very good one".\textsuperscript{12} Moreover Stimson had little hope of British co-operation. The action of the I.J.N. at Shanghai in late January convinced the British that they could not afford to bluff.

Shanghai was the centre of Britains Yangtze trade and therefore compelled more attention than Manchuria.\textsuperscript{13} However instead of provoking a determination on the part of Britain not to be pushed any further the Shanghai crisis "stripped

\textsuperscript{8} Pratt pg 227.
\textsuperscript{9} R.N. Current "The Stimson Doctrine and the Hoover Doctrine": American Historical Review Vol 59 No.3 April 1954 pg 524.
\textsuperscript{10} F.R.U.S. pg 76.
\textsuperscript{11} Pratt pg 273.
\textsuperscript{12} Stimson and Bundy pg 87.
\textsuperscript{13} For the value of Britains Shanghai trade, and her China trade in general, see D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol IX No.239 n8.
naked the reality of British power in the Far East .... and the lesson was learned that Britain could not act alone against Japan and perhaps not even with American support". 14 Both the British and the Americans sent naval reinforcements to Shanghai 15 but in comparison to the forces Japan could deploy against them these were not the "substantial additions" Stimson later claimed they were. 16 Stimson intended that the possibility that these naval forces might intervene should impose some restraints upon the Japanese. Unfortunately for his plans, the I.J.N. was well aware of its overwhelming strength in Chinese waters and "simply refused to be frightened by the bogey the secretary had raised". 17 Moreover the British knew that "the state of America's defences would have precluded Stimson's taking any course calculated even remotely to involve the use of force", 18 and a Foreign Office memorandum concluded that the Five Power Treaty had given Japan "the power to do what she liked in China". 19 Britain's Far Eastern policy was predicated on such assumptions.

On February 1 Pratt submitted a memorandum on the Shanghai crisis in which he blindly stated that "if Japan continues unchecked the British will have to retire altogether from the Far East" and that this "might well be the prelude to a retirement from India". 20 The problem was easily stated —

14 K. Middlemass and J. Barnes "Baldwin" pg 726.
16 Stimson and Bundy pg 85.
17 A. Rappaport "Henry L. Stimson and Japan 1931-3" pg 121.
18 Ibid pg 34.
19 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol IX No.239.
20 Ibid No.238.
the solution was a little more difficult. Vansittart, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in minuting this memorandum noted that "we are incapable of checking Japan in any way if she really means business and has sized us up as she certainly has done" and that "by ourselves we must eventually swallow any and every humiliation in the Far East". Vansittart could see that "if there is some limit to American submissiveness this is not necessarily so" but he also knew that "it is universally assumed here that the United States will never use force". 21

The success of Britain's Far Eastern policy and the prosperity of her economic interests were "largely dependent on Japanese goodwill". Britain stood to lose this goodwill if she backed Stimsons policy of bluff. Nevertheless if the Americans were prepared to offer a closer association with Britain in Europe the Foreign Office could see that "there might be something to be said for risking (British) Far Eastern interests which by comparison are of far less importance". 22 But the Foreign Office could also see the strength of isolationism and pacificism in the United States and were aware of the opinions held by Hoover and other members of his administration.

Consequently, rather than risk Simons dilemma: that Britain might fall between two stools 23 the British cabinet followed a safe, unadventurous, course. They accepted the recommendations of the Chiefs of Staff Committee that work on Singapore be speeded up and that the ten year rule be

21 Ibid No.238 n2.
22 Ibid No.239.
23 Ibid No.153.
abandoned.24 They also maintained a naval force at Shanghai but did not share Stimson's view of its purpose. Furthermore whereas Stimson proposed that a settlement of the Shanghai crisis should be linked to a comprehensive settlement of the whole Manchurian dispute,25 the British were more concerned with bringing hostilities to an end in that area where their main economic interests lay. The British realised that they had "nothing to gain and much to lose by antagonising Japan: and to associate in pressure from America would definitely have this effect."26 Thus although Stimson continued his policy of bluff, as he was unable to offer Britain a quid pro quo, he was forced to pursue his policy alone.

On February 9 Stimson began to push for what was, in effect, "a restatement of the non-recognition doctrine",27 this time in the form of a joint declaration by the Anglo-American powers of their continued adherence to the Nine Power Treaty. He received some encouragement from Simon, in a telephone conversation on February 11,28 who agreed "in principle.... subject to thinking it over" that the British government would "be glad to stand side by side with the United States", as both powers wanted to support the Nine Power Treaty. However when thinking it over, the British cabinet concluded that Stimson's proposal for Anglo-American co-operation went no further than a joint remonstrance and that should this produce an adverse reaction, Britain

24 Ibid No.635 n8.
26 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol IX No. 239
27 Current pg 529
might well find herself left to face the music alone. After several telephone conversations with Stimson, Simon finally informed him on February 15 that Britain would like to continue the scope of the declaration to Shanghai and "do it .... through, or in connection with, the League of Nations". The British were unwilling to associate themselves alone with Stimson's démarche for fear of being later pitted in single combat against an enraged Japan.

Despairing of British co-operation in the manner he desired Stimson then hit upon his idea of an open letter to Senator Borah, now Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This, when published on February 23 contained an unmistakeable element of threat. Stimson put forward the thesis that all the treaties and agreements entered into at the Washington Conference "were interelated and interdependent" and that

"the willingness of the American government to surrender its then commanding lead in battleship construction and to leave its positions of Guam and the Philippines without further fortifications, was predicated upon, among other things, the self-denying covenants contained in the Nine Power Treaty..... One cannot discuss the possibility of modifying or abrogating those provisions of the Nine Power Treaty without considering at the same time the other promises upon which they were really dependent."

The implications were obvious: if Japan did not abandon its continental expansion the United States could consider itself

29 Ibid No.455. For a good account of the whole episode see C. Thorne "The Limits of Foreign Policy" pg 253-260.

30 For the full text see Stimson "The Far Eastern Crisis" pg 166-175.
to be no longer bound by the provisions of the naval limitation treaties, especially Article XIX of the 1922 Five Power Treaty.

All Stimson achieved with the Borah letter was the belated adherence of the League to the principle of non-recognition on March 11. Safe within the anonymity of the League, Britain avoided the risk of being left in the lurch by the United States while not committing herself as a League champion enforcing sanctions against an aggressor. For the moment Britain remained safe on the tightrope she had been walking since September 1931 and refusing to let either Stimson or the League entice her into taking a false step. Lindley, the British ambassador to Japan, assumed the Borah letter to have been intended for home consumption but Stimson later claimed he intended it as a warning to Japan - as such it was a mistake on Stimson's part. The letter received a very hostile reception in the Japanese press and governing circles and was used to influence an "already dangerously excited" public opinion. The threat implicit in Stimson's posture was a hollow one in view of the relative strengths of the Japanese and American navies but the minor war scare it unleashed in Japan strengthened the domestic position of the I.J.N. Stimson had questioned the validity of the existing naval treaties - "Japan's naval leaders concluded that the Washington Conference Treaties could no longer be viewed as an adequate guarantee of the empire's naval security".

31 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol IX No.590.
32 Stimson and Bundy pg 91.
33 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol IX No.590.
34 Ibid No.590 n2.
35 J.B. Crowley "Japan's Quest for Autonomy" pg 165.
Parallel to his note-writing policy of "international nagging" Stimson provided an apparently more concrete naval threat by stationing the United States battlefleet in the Pacific. Stimson stated on January 26 that he "realised the importance of having Japan fear this country" and that he was glad "the fleet was going to have its battle practice this time off Hawaii". Thus in the middle of the Shanghai crisis the American fleet arrived at Oahu. Stimson was operating beyond his military capabilities but had, as yet, to realise this. After consulting Admiral Pratt about the relative states of preparedness of the American and Japanese navies, Stimson found the situation to be "more unequal" than he had thought and confessed that he was "much alarmed about the present situation of the Navy". Nevertheless, although no longer under any illusions as to the strength of his hand, Stimson convinced Hoover that the fleet should remain stationed at Oahu after completion of its exercises.

Although the naval manoeuvres had been planned the previous summer, i.e. prior to the Mukden explosion, their coincidence with the Shanghai crisis and the Borah letter did create genuine alarm among the Japanese public. Yet Stimson's position was undermined by the public pronouncements of Hoover. At a cabinet meeting on January 29 Stimson urged "that there should be no talk or action by anyone which should indicate that we are not going to use any weapon we might have". Only a few days later, Hoover,

36 Neumann pg 206.
37 Stimson Diary Jan 26 1932: cited Current pg 527.
39 Head of U.S. Naval Operations Sept 1930-June 1933.
40 Stimson Diary Mar 10 1932: cited Current pg 532.
41 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol X No.11.
42 Stimson Diary Jan 29 1932: cited Current pg 527.
after proposing that neutral observers be present at
direct Sino-Japanese negotiations over Shanghai "spoke out
to show that it was not intended as a means of bluffing or
coercing Japan".\textsuperscript{43} Hoovers position became even more
explicit in May 1932 when he had Under-Secretary of State
Castle make two public addresses in which the use of
economic or military sanctions against Japan was ruled out.
The rug had been pulled out from under Stimsons feet. In
terms of naval strength Stimsons bluff had never been
a strong one - now the public split in American diplomacy
made it even weaker. The problem was a fundamental
difference in approach on the part of Stimson and Hoover.
Stimson may well have thought he "realized the importance
of having Japan fear this country" but Hoover "held that
one who brandishes a pistol must be prepared to shoot".\textsuperscript{44}
Neither Hoover nor the great bulk of the American public
was prepared to shoot and there was some uncertainty as to
whether the pistol could be fired effectively.

Despite this Stimson remained imperturbable. The
United States fleet remained where it was until Roosevelt
shifted back to the Atlantic in November 1933, and on
August 8 1932 Stimson delivered a speech to the Senate
Committee on Foreign Affairs which, in effect, attacked
Japan. Although Stimson spoke of nothing stronger than the
use of public opinion and non-recognition to enforce the
Kellogg-Briand Pact, he did imply that Japan, as a violator
of that pact, should be denounced as a lawbreaker.\textsuperscript{45} The

\begin{footnotes}
\item[43] Current pg 528.
\item[44] H. Hoover "Memoirs".
\item[45] H.L. Stimson "The Pact of Paris: Three Years of
Development". "Foreign Affairs" Vol 11 No.1 Oct 1932:
supplement.
\end{footnotes}
Japanese government chose to interpret this "as a specific charge of guilt" and the Foreign Office "used the speech deliberately to pour fuel on the temporarily quiescent flames of public animosity against the United States". To Grew this and similar incidents constituted an attempt on the part of the Japanese government to build up a public war psychology". 46

If a war phycosis was the aim of the Japanese government then Stimsons blustering only made the situation worse. Whether the Japanese Naval High Command took the American naval threat Stimson had presented seriously is a moot point for when Roosevelt transferred the fleet back to the Atlantic the High Command was quick to point out that the transfer had no significance. 47 However the American posture did produce a genuine war scare among the Japanese public. Throughout Stimsons term in office "anti-American propaganda, formed by the Foreign Office and the military was steadily intensified .... and every effort was made to persuade the public that the United States, especially with the Atlantic fleet of the American Navy temporarily retained in the Pacific Ocean was a potential and warlike enemy". In February 1933 Grew informed Stimson that propaganda had led "a large section of the public" to believe eventual war with the United States, the Soviet Union, or both to be inevitable. 48 The Japanese position of Geneva in 1932 must be considered in the light of the public demand for an increased naval ratio, sparked off by government propaganda and fanned into a blaze by Stimsons actions.

47 J.C. Grew "Turbulent Era" pg 952.
48 Ibid pg 934,940.
With the inauguration of Roosevelt as president on March 4, 1933, American-Japanese relations underwent a change for the better. Stimson’s policy of bluff had achieved little but his many public pronouncements had inevitably shaped Roosevelt’s future policy towards Japan. For one and a half years, Stimson had been denouncing Japan as an international lawbreaker and aggressor and through his letter to Borah linked Japanese expansion on the Asiatic continent with the naval limitation treaties. Roosevelt could not abruptly reverse this and consequently his freedom of action with regard to American-Japanese relations in the future was to a large degree confined to the course Stimson had charted in the previous eighteen months. As president-elect, Roosevelt had made it clear that in his view "American foreign policies must uphold the sanctity of international treaties." But, having said this, the Roosevelt administration saw no point in endlessly reiterating its position through a continuation of Stimson’s "international nagging." Similarly, although the Japanese naval manoeuvres held in the East Pacific in August 1933, were matched by the October manoeuvres of the United States fleet in the West Pacific, Roosevelt’s transfer of the fleet to the Atlantic in November of that year showed a firmer grasp on the realities of power in the Far East. Like his uncle, Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke softly but his naval construction programme was soon to show that he too, intended to carry a big stick.

50 Survey 1933 pg 543.
(B) THE GENEVA GENERAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

The 1930 London Naval Treaty, although a triumph for civilian government, did leave the Japanese Naval High Command with a legitimate grievance. The 5:5:3 ratio had not been rigidly applied to all classes but it had been extended to heavy cruisers and it was in this class that the High Command had hoped to redress the imbalance of the battleship ratio. Also, despite the fact that Japan had obtained a concession of parity in submarines, the important point contained in the High Commands third "Great Principle" was not a fixed relative tonnage but an absolute one. The level at which submarine parity was set was 52,700 tons - thus the absolute figure the I.J.N. had sought was reduced by over 25,000 tons. In terms of grand strategy the heavy cruiser ratio further tipped the scales against Japan in a possible battlefleet engagement with the U.S.N., while the submarine restrictions reduced Japans choices of compensating for her numerical disadvantage through submarine attrition while the American fleet crossed the Pacific. In securing the fact of naval supremacy in her own waters until 1936, Japan had conceded the principle. If the Americans built up to full treaty strength so that theoretical and real strength became one and the same, and if the principles established in 1930 were continued in 1936, then Japans position in terms of naval defence would have deteriorated badly. The Japanese Naval High Command was determined not to let this happen. The supplementary naval budget of July 1930 further increased
Japans real strength inside the existing treaty ratios. However these measures amounted to shutting the stable door after the horse had bolted. The High Command, realising this, then devoted its energies to recapturing the horse. The first step was the mobilisation of public opinion.

From the time the 1930 treaty was ratified, the Japanese naval leaders insisted, as they had in their memorial to the throne, that at the next naval conference Japan must demand a great increase in relative strength. "Freedom of the press had always been limited in Japan" but the Minseito government had no wish to aggravate the "right of supreme command" issue by clamping down on the Navy's propaganda. Nevertheless this issue and the 1930 London Naval Treaty controversy in general considerably diminished the government's ability to deal with the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident. Thus the Mukden explosion was not just "an isolated outburst of military exasperation" but the "establishment in power of the military and big business elements favourable to an expansionist policy". After 1931 the security police kept watch "on everybody who opposed the policy of the government in power". Increasingly this meant simply the policy of the Army or Navy as their constitutional right to withhold or withdraw a War or Navy Minister gave them the ability to bring down any government.

51 Under the provisions of the 1925 Peace Preservation Laws the Police Bureau imposed a fairly severe censorship on "every form of public expression". In addition there was a security police force created in 1928 to watch subversive elements of the extreme left and right. I.M.T.F.E. Judgement Chp IV pg 151-2.
52 W.N. Medlicott "British Foreign Policy since Versailles" pg 109-11
53 I.M.T.F.E. Judgement Chp IV pg 152.
54 G.A. Craig and F. Gilbert (editors) "The Diplomats" Vol II J. Huizenga "Yosuke Matsukata and the Japanese-German Alliance" pg 615.
Consequently after September 1931 "the political ideology of the Japanese people as a whole underwent a radical transformation". The result was a snowball effect. The Navy sincerely believed that Japan's security was compromised by the existing treaties and they possessed the means to silence the opposing point of view. The I.J.N's propaganda campaign intensified. In this the Navy was aided by the fact that the mathematical inequality of the ratio made Japan's position look even worse than it was and seemed to reflect on Japan's international standing. The young naval officers involved in the May 15 Incident and the assassination of Premier Inukai were motivated by a desire to revenge themselves on the liberal leaders who had usurped the emperors prerogatives and betrayed the nation in 1930. The aftermath of this incident saw the end of party government, and thereby strengthened the grip of the armed services, while the wide publicity simply made the witness stand a national soapbox for Inukai's assassins. Thus the Navy successfully "built up a feeling among the people of resentment and contempt for anything connected with the London Treaty". The result of its effort was the creation of "a universal demand for the revision of the present naval ratios". It was in this atmosphere that Japan made her first request for an increased ratio at the 1932 Geneva General Disarmament Conference.

55 M. Royama "Foreign Policy of Japan 1914-1939" pg 10.
56 Inukai: Tsuyoshi Premier Dec 13 1931-May 15 1932 headed the last party (Seiyukai) government of the thirties. His government was succeeded by Admiral Saito: Makoto's non-party "Government of National Unity".
57 T. Kase "Journey to the Missouri" pg 29.
58 F.R.U.S. pg 250.
Paradoxically, Japan's concern over the theoretical strength of the Anglo-American powers, especially of the latter, was the primary motivation behind her demand for an increased ratio; yet much of her hopes were based on her favourable existing relative strength. Since Japan in 1932 was well on her way to parity with the United States in terms of fleets in being her naval leaders reasoned that if the Americans could be induced to recognise the real situation then Japan might possibly attain an increased ratio at Geneva. The conference opened on February 2, 1932. Unfortunately for the I.J.N.'s ambitions the actions of Admiral Shiozawa at Shanghai four days earlier had strengthened Anglo-American determination to preserve the existing ratios.

The opening speeches delivered by the British, American, and Japanese delegates on February 8, 9, and 10 respectively indicated that naval differences between the three powers had not been satisfactorily settled in 1930. The Anglo-American "large ships v small ships" dispute reappeared in the difference of emphasis each power placed on naval limitation. The British professed themselves willing to cooperate with any method of agreed reduction in the size and maximum gun calibre of warships. The United States advocated "proportionate reductions" from the tonnage limits imposed by the Washington and London Treaties. The Americans were prepared to accept quantitative reductions but not qualitative reductions as their lack of defensible

bases west of Hawaii committed them to the big ship. Britain would not accept quantitative reduction unless this was achieved through qualitative reduction. Eyres-Monsell, First Lord of the Admiralty Nov 1931-June 1936, stated the British case in the Commons a month later. If Britain didn't limit the size of cruisers she would be "bound to ask for more cruiser tonnage than (she) would otherwise seek". Britain wanted small cruisers but "plenty of them". The cruiser problem had surfaced yet again and no solution was to be found in 1932. Despite this the Anglo-American powers did agree on two points, first; that submarines should be abolished, and second; that naval disarmament should be continued on the basis of the Washington and London Treaties. Reference to either of these points was noticeably absent from Matsudaira's opening speech of February 10. Like Britain he proposed qualitative reductions on capital ships but the bulk of his suggestions for naval reduction applied to aircraft carriers.

Matsudaira proposed the reduction of the tonnage allotted to aircraft carriers or their complete abolition, the prohibition of landing platforms on other classes of warship, and the prohibition of aerial bombing of cities and towns. As the United States had said it would "join in formulating the most effective measures to protect civilian populations against aerial bombing" and Britain

60 H.C.D. Vol 262 pg 1494,1503.
61 D.I.A. 1932 pg 166.
62 D.I.A. 1932 pg 166.
had suggested the prohibition of this form of warfare, some agreement on aircraft carriers along the lines proposed by Japan should have been reasonably simple as the carrier was at this time seen only as support vessel. But as the British embassy in Tokyo pointed out the Japanese had "themselves been pretty active in the way of bombarding towns from the air in the last couple of months" and were "thinking primarily of themselves rather than humanity". For it was "precisely in an air attack from sea that Japan's only point of vulnerability" lay.\(^\text{64}\) Japan had not yet raised the question of an increased ratio but the differences between her approach to naval disarmament and that of the Anglo-American powers was already apparent.

The British had claimed at Geneva five years earlier that their naval proposals were designed to "reduce and limit offensive capacity"\(^\text{65}\) and Simon in his opening speech in 1932 suggested "that special attention should be directed to such prohibitions or limitations as will weaken the attack and so remove temptations for aggression".\(^\text{66}\) Gibson, once again heading the American delegation, expressed the same sentiment when he stated that "the abolition of aggressive weapons" constituted "a first and essential requisite" for armament reduction and the establishment of security.\(^\text{67}\) This lofty ideal was embodied in the resolution adopted by the General Commission on April 22 in which it declared its approval of qualitative disarmament:

\(^{64}\) D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol X No.129.
\(^{65}\) D.B.F.P. Series 1A Vol III No.395.
\(^{66}\) D.I.A. 1932 pg 159.
\(^{67}\) Survey 1932 pg 217.
"i.e. the selection of certain classes or descriptions of weapons the possession or use of which should be absolutely prohibited". 68 In applying this principle those weapons should be selected "whose character is most specifically offensive". 69 The Japanese were also in full agreement with this resolution and were to quote it later in the year when presenting their own set of proposals. Thus the Pacific naval powers found it easy to agree in principle to the abolition of offensive weapons - agreement in practice proved impossible.

On February 25 the General Commission of the Conference set up special commissions to deal with separate topics. Among these was a Naval Commission which following the resolution of April 22 faced the problem of defining those naval weapons it deemed "offensive". Naturally each individual power designated as aggressive only those categories of warship which it considered a menace to itself. Britain and the United States agreed that only the submarine was definitely an aggressive category. Japan classified the submarine as purely defensive and the aircraft carrier as offensive. All three Pacific Powers defined the battleship as a defensive weapon but the Americans found themselves alone as the only power not prepared to accept qualitative limitations in this category. No power was prepared to make any real concessions and the debate on offensive weapons achieved nothing. The report of the Naval Commission 70 submitted to the General Commission on May 28 was nothing more than "a record of the divergent opinions which had been expressed during the discussion". 71

71 Survey 1932 pg 228.
The central issue of qualitative limitation had been sidestepped. Without some qualitative agreement Britain and the United States could not adopt a common approach to quantitative limitation and the Japanese had yet to record formally their increased demands in this field. The United States, Britain, and Japan were all to present comprehensive disarmament plans during the next six months but these contained, barely disguised, the main propositions already presented by those powers before the end of May.

This must be borne in mind when one considers Hoover's efforts to "cut through the brush and adopt some broad and definite method of reducing the overwhelming burden of armament". On June 22, Hoover in Washington and Gibson in Geneva, simultaneously announced a comprehensive set of proposals for disarmament, subsequently to be known as the Hoover plan, with the aim of reducing the arms of the world by nearly one third. The plan was "a breath of fresh air" for the conference and it did have a "definite and simple character" but in fact as regards naval forces it did little more than reiterate the already expressed American view of the form disarmament should take.

The American proposals suggested that the total treaty tonnage of battleships and submarines should be reduced by one third and that of aircraft-carriers, cruisers, and destroyers by one quarter. To conform with its proposals the United States would have to scrap 300,000 tons of naval vessels already built. This concession, and the American

72 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol.III Appendix V.
74 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol.III Appendix V.
departure from its earlier call for the abolition of submarines, appeared to indicate willingness to achieve a settlement. But the Americans had ignored the question of qualitative reduction. Moreover their "sacrifices" were somewhat dubious as their proposals upheld the very existing ratios unacceptable to the Japanese. They also entailed considerable expense for Britain. The Hoover plan in effect requested the British to scrap 120,000 tons of cruisers and 14,000 tons of aircraft carriers and Japan to scrap 77,000 tons of cruisers and 8,000 tons of carriers. The United States on the other hand would remain free to build 33,000 tons of cruisers (as no distinction was drawn between light and heavy cruisers the United States could presumably devote all this tonnage to heavy cruisers) and 9,500 tons of aircraft carriers. The United States might almost attain the theoretical 1922 and 1930 treaty ratios at her rivals expense.

Britains cruiser figures would have dropped still further, Japan would have to trust in a paper prohibition of aerial bombardment despite the continued existence of aircraft carriers, but the United States would be bound by no qualitative restrictions on the size of battleships and cruisers beyond those already in existence. Only in destroyers would the United States scrap more, considerably more, than her rivals, yet the United States had more destroyers than she could effectively use and most of those were overage. Furthermore the American submarine 'concession' involved limiting that category to no more than 35,000 tons.

75 Figures from M.D. Kennedy "The Estrangement of Great Britain and Japan 1917-35" pg 280-1.
or forty units, i.e. having chopped 25,000 tons off the I.J.N.'s third "Great Principle" in 1930 the United States now proposed to remove yet another 17,000 tons from that already reduced figure. The Hoover plan appeared as an idealistic attempt to bring about drastic, but fair and self-sacrificing, armaments reduction. In practice the United States stood, on the subject of naval limitation, exactly where it had stood at the beginning of the Conference - firmly committed to the ratios and qualitative limits established in 1922 and 1930.

Not surprisingly the Hoover plan, when first presented, received little more than polite non-committal answers from Japan and Great Britain. The Japanese government made its position clear at the beginning of July when its delegation at Geneva was instructed that the Hoover plan was not regarded as a practical basis for discussion.76 Baldwin's views on July 7 in the Commons on the Hoover plan, presented simultaneously at Geneva, were a set of counter proposals.77 These, so the British were quick to point out, would, if accepted ultimately effect a greater reduction. However like the American proposals the approach adopted was a strictly partisan one and as unlikely of acceptance.

Britain argued that numerical reduction had already been applied on a large scale to the Royal Navy and that it was "not practicable" to cut the number of units down below a certain point. On the other hand, "the present treaty limits of size and gun calibre" were "far too high". Future capital ships and aircraft carriers should be restricted

76 Survey 1932 pg 243 n1.
77 G.B.P.P. Cmd 4192.
in size to 22,000 tons and cruisers to 7,000 tons. The calibre of the guns mounted on capital ships would be lowered to 11-inches and those on the other two categories to 6.1-inches. These proposals provided for drastic reductions but just as the United States ignored the British demand for a large number of units so had Britain ignored the American demand for big ships capable of operating at long distances. Furthermore the British plan did not provide for the removal of aircraft carriers (the proposed 22,000 ton limit did not clash with any carriers then building or projected) and like the Americans they offered nothing more than a paper guarantee against aerial bombing. Finally the British still demanded the abolition of submarines and made the reduction of destroyer tonnage contingent upon this. Yet the British had admitted that they recognised "that Powers which possess fewer of the larger vessels of war regard the possession of submarines as a valuable weapon of defence" and they knew that neither the Japanese nor the French would accept the abolition of this category. The only alternative Britain offered was a restriction of 250 tons on the unit size of submarines, which made ocean-going submarines impractical. As the United States depended on submarines with trans-Pacific range operating in Japanese waters to buy the main fleet time, and Japan on submarines capable of whittling down the size of an attacking American fleet before it reached Japanese waters, this alternative was realistic. The British counter-proposals were not the guidelines for a workable disarmament programme but, just as the Hoover plan favoured the U.S.N., an attempt

78 G.B.F.P. Cmd 2964.
to reconcile British strategic problems with the ideal of naval limitation.

While Britain and the United States differed on the fundamental principles of their approach to naval disarmament, Japan had little cause to be enamoured with either. Moreover it had proved impossible to reconcile France and Italy to Section III of the first London Naval Treaty or to the claims of each other. No solution was in sight by the time the General Commission in its resolution of July 23 left the major naval powers to "confer together and .... to make arrangements for determining the degree of naval limitation they are prepared to accept". 79 This "embodied little more than hope". 80 The subsequent private discussions and public proposals of the naval powers were to do little to justify this hope.

A deadlock on qualitative naval disarmament had in fact already been reached and Japanese proposals on this subject failed to break it. On October 5 Matsudaira proposed to Craigie 81 the reduction of capital ship gun calibre to 14-inches and their displacement to 25,000 tons, cruisers with 8-inch guns to 8,000 tons and cruisers with 6.1-inch guns to 6,000 tons. Once again Japan desired the abolition of aircraft carriers but "remained absolutely opposed" to the abolition of submarines. When Craigie wanted "something more arresting .... than a reduction by two inches in the calibre of the capital ship gun" and argued that Britain could not build capital ships mounting 14-inch guns without a

79 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol.III Appendix VII.
80 Thorne pg 306.
displacement in excess of 30,000 tons, Matsudaira countered that Japan had gone further in its qualitative restrictions on light cruisers. While these proposals represented a purely Japanese point of view, they did to some extent steer a middle course, at least as far as capital ships and cruisers were concerned, between the positions taken up by her rivals. During his conversation with Craigie however Matsudaira had postponed discussion of actual naval strength until a "later stage". Japan's proposals on relative strength were to provide an even greater obstacle than the question of qualitative limits.

Matsudaira had earlier informed Craigie that "Japan had accepted the position created by the London Naval Treaty for the strictly limited period of six years and could not agree to prolong beyond 1936 the relative strength there laid down". 82 Britain and the United States were opposed to any increase in Japan's relative strength and the Japanese were well aware of this. But the effects of the I.J.N's propaganda campaign and the increased power of the military, meant that the non-party "government of national unity" of Admiral Saito was committed to a revision of the existing ratios in Japan's favour and determined to resist Anglo-American pressure. Consequently Craigie "detected a greater rigidity" in Matsudaira after the conversation of October 5 than he had in previous conversations extending over a number of years. 83 As previous proposals "contain certain points with which the Japanese Government cannot associate

82 Ibid No.625.
83 Ibid No.733 n5.
themselves", Japan, on December 5, put forward her own naval proposals which were also based on her own naval desiderata. Like her rivals she was to display little inclination to budge from them.

Japan claimed that their plan was designed to reduce offensive forces as the General Commission resolution of April 22 required and to meet the problem of disarmament whilst "giving due consideration to the geographical situation and special circumstances of the various countries, so that the sense of security may not be impaired". To put these worthy ideals into effect the Japanese proposed a general agreement and a series of special agreements. The general agreement provided for qualitative limitation of all categories of naval vessels, the numerical limitation of capital ships and A class (heavy) cruisers, and the fixing of maximum tonnages for B class (light) cruisers, destroyers and submarines. Quantitative limits were then to be applied to the latter three categories in special agreements which divided the world into four groups: European, Atlantic, Pacific, and South American. Each power could then work out what percentage of the agreed maximums in auxiliary vessels they needed through negotiation with the other powers which were related to the same regional group.

At first sight the above appears a possible workable compromise between the British and American view. But Japan had made several bland assumptions which ignored the realities

84 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 12.
85 Ibid.
86 A resolution passed by the General Commission on April 20 had required that this be done I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 8.
of the situation. True "the most important point unanimously agreed upon was the principle of qualitative limitation which was adopted with the basic idea in mind of strengthening defensive power by weakening offensive power". However they ignored the fact that no agreement had been reached on which categories were in fact "offensive" and advanced yet again their own views. Although the United States favoured strict limitation of submarines and Britain their abolition, the Japanese claimed that these vessels were considered defensive by a "large majority" of the naval commission and tonnage should therefore be determined "solely by the geographical situation and defensive needs of each country". Similarly Japan proposed the abolition of aircraft carriers, against the Anglo-Saxon Powers wishes, and claimed that this category was considered "most offensive" - this time by a "great majority" of the technical commissions. The Japanese also assumed that the weakening of offensive power "necessarily demands a larger sacrifice on the part of larger navies" for "to apply the same percentage of reduction to both large and small navies alike would naturally impair the sense of national security of countries with lesser navies". The implications for the Washington and London ratios were obvious. From the Anglo-American viewpoint the Japanese assumptions were undesirable but the concrete proposals which followed were considered even more objectionable.

Japanese qualitative limits on capital ships and cruisers were those Matsudaira had given Craigie in October. Destroyers were to be limited to 1,500 tons, submarines to
1,800 tons, and the maximum gun calibre for both was to be set at 5.1 inches. The proposed size of battleships and cruisers was thus well below the American figures, the submarine size well above the 250 tons the British regarded as the only alternative to abolition. Even more controversial were Japan's quantitative proposals: new ratios of 11:11:8 in capital ships and 12:12:10 in A class cruisers. (France and Italy were each to have three quarters of Japan's total tonnage in these categories.) This meant that although under the Japanese plan, Japan would have to scrap two heavy cruisers she gained the right to build another capital ship while each of the Anglo-American Powers sacrificed four capital ships, Britain three heavy cruisers, and the United States six. All the signatories to the Five Power Treaty were to be subject to the same maximum tonnages for B cruisers, destroyers and submarines. Furthermore the proposed maximum for submarines; 75,000 tons, was nothing less than the third "Great Principle" of 1930. The British and the Americans could not accept such a great increase in Japan's relative strength as the Japanese proposals went well beyond their starting position at London in 1930. The Anglo-American Powers were not prepared to scrap the existing treaties which would have been the practical result of accepting the Japanese naval plan. Consequently no progress had been made by December 14 when the Geneva Conference adjourned until Jan 31 1933. The Japanese had probably held out little hope for their proposals. Their plan had been presented not as a compromise but as their "point of view" and although it was quickly rejected it had served
notice of the Japanese intention to revise the Washington and London Treaties.

Thus by the beginning of 1933 each of the three Pacific naval powers had presented disarmament programmes which provided for substantial reductions in naval armaments if their rivals would only make the greater sacrifices. Instead of breaking the Anglo-American deadlock the Japanese had simply made it more complex by adding their own demands. The League's condemnation of Japan on February 24 only strengthened her determination to gain an increase in her relative strength. Further naval limitation seemed destined to wait for the 1935 conference but on March 16 1933 MacDonald made one last attempt to end the impasse.

The MacDonald Plan, less spectacular than the 1932 plans, realistically posed only as a five year interim solution, and covered only those limited areas in which it seemed likely that agreement could be reached. The unambitious naval section proposed only to extend all the provisions of the first London Naval Treaty to France and Italy, and to stabilise the naval situation on the existing basis until the 1935 Conference met. The plan also called for a common upper limit in aircraft - something the United States would not consider as she had not built the U.S.N. up to its allotted limits in naval tonnage and looked to "American superiority in aircraft" to balance the situation to a certain

87  G.B.P.P.  Cmd 4279.
88  D.I.A. 1933  pg 146.
93. Nevertheless the Americans were aware that in view of the definite warnings that Japan has given the Conference that she desires an increase in armaments, it is clear that a universal treaty reducing armaments becomes a virtual impossibility". Therefore in the message on disarmament Roosevelt sent to the Conference on May 16 he urged the adoption of the MacDonald Plan as the "first definite step towards .... the complete elimination of all offensive weapons".

The Japanese did not accept the draft convention quite as readily as the Americans. Article 23 provided that the signatories to the Washington and London Treaties remained subject to the limitations imposed by those treaties. The Japanese found themselves unable to "share the view that it

89 D.B.F.P. 2nd Series Vol V No.83. This American assumption created its own problems. The American aircraft carriers possessed a larger complement of aircraft than their British counterparts. e.g. In 1934 the United States had 355 aircraft embarked: 234 of these in four carriers. Britain had 164 aircraft embarked: 130 of these in five carriers. Part of this discrepancy was explained by the fact that while the Royal Navy filled only the hangers on its aircraft carriers, the U.S.N. kept a number of planes permanently stationed on its flight-decks as well. (A. Hezlet "Aircraft and Sea Power" pg 126) If the Americans placed large numbers of their aircraft on their carriers, as they intended, the British Admiralty would immediately demand parity in seaborne aircraft. (D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol V No.83) To do this within a common upper air limit would drastically weaken the home country's defence against the German air threat. In fact, to a certain extent, the American assumption was fallacious. Japan also looked to air power to improve its naval strength. (D.B.F.P. 2nd Series Vol X No.30). In July 1932 the British Embassy in Japan informed Simon that the Japanese Naval Air Service had "very greatly improved" since the 1930 London Naval Conference and estimated that Japanese factories were capable of turning out 1,000 aircraft annually.

90 F.D.R. (F.A.) I pg 69.

91 Franklin D. Roosevelt: Public Papers and Addresses 1933 pg 187.
is desirable to establish a new agreement on the basis of the existing agreements. They therefore proposed that Article 23 be deleted as it would "be both more practical and more equitable to make no mention in the future convention of the provisions relating to the tonnages previously allotted to the Powers concerned". The British and the Americans interpreted this as a move towards a Japanese demand for parity and vigorously opposed it. The Japanese also attempted to remove the articles pertaining to the 1930 Treaty for a separate agreement, but eventually on June 7 the MacDonald plan was adopted by the General Commission as "the basis of the future convention". When MacDonald had presented his draft convention he had stated that "an adjournment, pure and simple, would be the most heartbreaking confession of failure that this conference could indulge in". This was the rationale behind the acceptance of the MacDonald plan. The naval provisions did nothing more than recognise what was already established as the status quo until 1936. The differences between the naval powers remained unresolved.

The principle causes of the failure of the Geneva General Disarmament Conference were European security problems but with the acceptance of the British draft convention the naval powers admitted that further naval limitation would

92 D.I.A. 1933 pg 165,167.
93 Survey 1933 pg 285.
95 Survey 1933 pg 291.
96 Ibid pg 252.
97 On June 8 1933 the Japanese announced that they would not accept Article 34, which prohibited bombing from the air, unless aircraft carriers were also abolished. Survey 1933 pg 291.
have to wait until 1935. The programmes submitted by the United States, Britain, and Japan in 1932 had provided clear statements of the viewpoints of these countries, but none had the appearance of a workable compromise. The Hoover Plan and the British counter-proposals marked the reappearance of the "big ships v small ships" controversy and the Japanese proposals of December 1932 indicated that Japan was not prepared to accept the existing ratios after 1936. The Geneva Conference had provided clear expressions of the conflicting demands of the Pacific naval powers but eventually they had only agreed to disagree until 1935.
ROOSEVELTS DRIVE FOR A TREATY NAVY

After Stimson had seemed to denounce Japan as an aggressor, Roosevelt could not reverse the decision without appearing to tacitly accept or even condone Japan's new expansionist policy. But Roosevelt also faced Stimson's problem of having no force to support his public position. Consequently, upon entering office, Roosevelt set about securing a "treaty navy", i.e. building the U.S.N. up to full treaty limits. In doing this he managed to avoid most of the domestic odium such a course entailed by incorporating naval expansion into national reconstruction, and the New Deal. The international repercussions proved a little more problematical. Roosevelt's naval programme involved the construction of 10,000 ton, 6-inch, cruisers which naturally made the Anglo-American cruiser dispute even more complex. American construction also seemed to justify the I.J.N.'s worst fears and during the course of 1933 the naval authorities began to talk openly of abrogating the Washington and London Naval Treaties. By the beginning of 1934 the prospect of further naval limitation in the Pacific seemed remote: the United States was engaged in a new round of naval expansion, the British were planning a new class of cruisers they did not really want, and the Japanese cabinet had arrived at a national policy consensus which entailed the possession of a navy freed from the restrictions of the Washington system.

Between the close of the Washington Conference and the inauguration of Roosevelt, the United States laid down 44 warships with a total tonnage of 205,000 tons. During the
same period Japan laid down 150 totalling 400,000 tons. 99

Thus upon taking office Roosevelt discovered to his "dismay" that the U.S.N. "had not been kept up to treaty provision" and was "actually inferior to the Japanese Navy". 100 On inauguration day the U.S.N. was at about 65% of treaty strength while the I.J.N. was at 95% of treaty strength. 101 In terms of fleets in being Japan had achieved parity.

Roosevelt and his new Secretary of the Navy: Claude B. Swanson, immediately set about rectifying the situation. 102

Three days after he took office Swanson held his first press conference in which he bluntly outlined his policy to build the Navy up to treaty limits as quickly as was possible. 103 On May 1 Swanson provided something a little more concrete with his announcement that $46,000,000 of the Public Works Appropriation was to be allocated to the Navy, effectively cancelling Navy economies previously ordered as part of the general cutback in federal spending. 103a

Thereafter the American determination to possess a treaty navy really became obvious. On June 13 Swanson announced that during the next three years the United States would build 32 new naval vessels: 31 of these in a new programme and one cruiser which had been authorised in 1929 but for

99 Figures from T.V. Tuleja "Statesmen and Admirals".
100 F.D.R. (F.A.) I pg 370.
101 C. Hull "Memoirs" Vol I pg 287.
102 Swanson, a former Chairman of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs was a firm supporter of large naval appropriations.
103 Neumann pg 203.
103a Survey 1933 pg 541.
which appropriation had only been made in 1933. In addition to this the regular naval appropriation for 1933 provided for five more vessels, making a total of 37. In short, the biggest naval construction programme since 1916.104

Such a programme involved considerable expenditure for a nation still attempting to pull itself out of the great depression. Moreover it hardly appeared consistent with Roosevelt's professed desire for world disarmament. As a result it clashed with a large section of American public opinion which manifested itself in a powerful Congress faction allied with church groups and peace societies. Roosevelt sidestepped this opposition by building the proposed naval construction into the economic recovery programme. On June 16 Roosevelt put his signature to executive order no.6174 which allocated $238,000,000 of the $3,300,000,000 National Recovery Appropriation funds to the naval construction programme.105 (The same order allocated $400,000,000 for highway construction.) As 84% of the total cost of shipbuilding went on labour, and as the materials used were drawn from every state in the Union,106 Roosevelt could claim that "the effect of this appropriation in relieving unemployment and 'spreading' work is obvious".107 The effect the naval programme would have on the balance of power in the Pacific was equally obvious.

104 Franklin D. Roosevelt "Public Papers and Addresses" 1933 pg 215.
105 Ibid pg 250.
106 Tuleja pg 86.
107 Franklin D. Roosevelt "Public Papers and Addresses" 1933 pg 251.
The desire of the Roosevelt administration to attain full treaty strength was not unreasonable. Roosevelt felt, quite understandably, that "the whole scheme of things in Tokyo "did not "make for an assurance of non-aggression in the future". His programme not only kept within the American treaty quotas but also, as Roosevelt pointed out, would barely suffice to keep the United States "almost up to the ship strength of the Japanese Navy and still, of course far below the British Navy".108 The problem was that having secured the principle of treaty ratios the United States government had failed to build up to them. While Britain and Japan had maintained their navies at near full treaty strength the U.S.N. had remained static for over a decade.

Thus the Roosevelt construction programme, although within treaty limits, constituted, from a British or Japanese viewpoint, a new threat to what they had come to regard as the naval status quo. In October and December of 1931 the Japanese had laid down the first two of a projected 8,500 ton, 6-inch four "Mogami" class of cruisers.109 In answer to this the Americans planned to include four 10,000 ton 6-inch "Brooklyn" class cruisers in their new building programme. These cruisers when built "combined light but strong construction with rapid loading giving them a volume of fire far greater than any other light cruiser then .... in existence".110 The British, always touchy about the size of cruisers, were naturally worried by the

110 E.J. King "U.S. Navy at War" pg 6.
American decision and on September 11 Simon informed the British Embassy in Washington of the cabinets alarm. Simon claimed that although the proposed action of the United States was legal within the terms of the 1930 Treaty Stimson had told MacDonald and Alexander (First Lord of the Admiralty June 1929 - November 1931) "that in practice it was very unlikely that the United States would actually build 6-inch gun, 10,000 ton cruisers". As the Japanese had already hastened the construction of the two "Mogami" class cruisers she had building, Simon was of the opinion that "we are in fact witnessing the first steps in competitive building in a new type in which we shall be compelled to follow suit. .... "A new expensive type of cruiser will thus become actually established and the prospects in regard to future naval limitation will be gloomy in the extreme". Simon therefore requested that the Embassy put this argument to Hull, draw his attention to the fact that the Geneva Conference was still exploring the question of qualitative limitation, and find out whether the United States would forgo its programme until 1935 if Japan could be induced to do the same.111

Hull adroitly faced the difficult diplomatic problem. In his memoirs he claims that

"we were in fact starting to build a bigger navy, simply because we were dangerously below treaty limits .... but we had to be careful neither to antagonize the isolationists at home, nor to discourage those nations abroad which still strove for disarmament".

Therefore in his answer Hull cited twelve million unemployed as the reason for the American building programme and assured the British that the United States had no intention of starting a naval race. Nevertheless, the United States would not abandon its "Brooklyn" class cruisers. As it had "never sought to question Great Britain's desire to build as large a number of cruisers within her tonnage maximum as she deemed necessary "the United States" felt it could not legitimately be criticised for wishing to build cruisers of a size more closely adapted to its special needs". The opinion Stimson had expressed in 1930 was viewed as one of personal expectation "rather than a statement of considered policy". As for the disarmament conference the British had rejected the Hoover plan while their own plan left "existing tonnage untouched". Informal Anglo-American talks had failed to reconcile the two points of view - now the United States felt constrained to strengthen its existing tonnage. Furthermore "even the recent belated programme would still leave the United States in 1936 more than 150,000 tons short of treaty limits. Put this way the American case was not unreasonable and the United States government did not see its way clear "to alter its delayed naval construction programme or suspend the laying down of the four cruisers under reference". There for the time being British objections rested. Nevertheless it was obvious to the British that although they had secured the numerical limitation of 8-inch cruisers

112 Hull pg 288.
113 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol V No.408
in 1930, the Anglo-American cruiser problem had now assumed another form. The British felt they could not ignore the situation and Standley, the Parliamentary and Financial Secretary of the Admiralty, cited the appearance of large 6-inch cruisers in the American and Japanese navies as the reason behind the three new 9,000 ton 6-inch "Minotaur" class cruisers (subsequently to be renamed the Southampton class) projected in the Admiralty estimates for 1933-4.\(^{114}\)

The Japanese reaction and apprehensions were even stronger. On June 29 1933 Swanson issued another declaration of naval policy in Washington\(^{115}\) in which he advanced the idea that the United States should maintain a navy second to none, capable of defending both the continental United States and its overseas possessions. If, from the Japanese point of view, this was not bad enough, Swanson stressed two tactical points which seemed specifically aimed at Japan. Firstly, the United States should strive for "great radius of action in all classes of fighting ship" and secondly "develop national aviation primarily for operations with the fleet". The threat to Japan was taken seriously and during the weekend of September 2-3 Tokyo announced that the American programme "had stimulated Japan to accelerate her own naval construction".\(^{116}\) However those warships Japan had building or projected in September 1933 did not balance the Roosevelt programme. The

\(^{114}\) H.C.D. Vol 287 pg 152.

\(^{115}\) Kennedy pg 282.

\(^{116}\) Survey 1933 pg 542.
Japanese naval leaders used this as a lever to extract a supplementary naval budget from the government. On December 4 1933 the Japanese government announced that a further 22 naval vessels were to be constructed over the period ending in the financial year 1937-8. This would bring the I.J.N. up to full treaty strength: further expansion would require revision of the Washington and London ratios.

The I.J.N. had meanwhile been working towards this end and was becoming more outspoken in its opinions. In mid-1933 Vice Chief of Naval Staff Takahashi had said quite frankly that Japan was going to the 1935 Conference with a demand for parity and if this was rejected the delegation would return home.\textsuperscript{117} Early in September the government convened a commission to discuss measures to meet the situation when the existing naval treaties came up for revision in 1935.\textsuperscript{118} Presumably this advocated an increased Japanese ratio, for on September 15, Osumi, the Minister of Marine stated in a press interview that Japan no longer considered the Washington Naval Treaty "adequate to guarantee the security of this empire". Consequently Japan was "not satisfied with the present arrangement" and would "demand the change of ratios at the next conference".\textsuperscript{119} On October 19, Shigemitsu; Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs outlined the situation in a private conversation. Shigemitsu stated that

\textsuperscript{117} I.M.T.F.E. Judgement Chp IV pg 136.
\textsuperscript{118} D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol V No.285.
\textsuperscript{119} F.R.U.S. pg 251-2.
"the Navy is demanding equality in armaments: it is stressing the fact that should this demand be denied it will abrogate the Naval Disarmament Treaty. In other words (the Navy) is demanding equality in the sense of receiving the right to maintain a basic minimum of armaments absolutely necessary for national defence and by "abrogation of the treaty" seemed in other words to wish to insert the words "we are prepared to risk a rupture". 120

Shortly afterwards the Saito cabinet officially accepted this as a fixed axiom of Japanese foreign policy.

In October 1933 Hirota, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, presented the Saito Cabinet with an assessment of Japan's diplomacy. On the 20th of that month this was formally accepted by the inner cabinet. 121 With this decision the Saito cabinet agreed that Japan must acquire an autonomous national defence capable of meeting any potential strategic threat. To this end the cabinet concluded "we must demand an increase in our naval ratio" at the 1935 conference. To prevent a clash at that conference Japan would cultivate "friendly reactions" with the United States and Britain, and since American-Japanese tension would disappear "if the United States were to acquire a profound comprehension of our sincere wish to establish permanent peace in the Far East by means of our

120 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 2774.

121 This "the ultimate decision-making group" consisted of the Premier, and the War, Navy, Foreign, and Finance Ministers. See Crowley pg 192, Maxon "Control of Japanese Foreign Policy" pg 96.
national power "Japan would have to educate the United States to this end.\textsuperscript{122}

The decision of October 20 was an attempt to provide Japan with an integrated foreign policy\textsuperscript{123} but the service ministries continued to emphasise those areas which most concerned them. Early in November Araki, the War Minister, presented an "Outline of Inner Policy" which stressed the development of Manchukuo and suggested that Japan "should seek defensive security in a manner that will avoid breaking up the next conference on naval limitations". The Navy Ministry refused to have its own priorities ignored and countered with its own "Amendments", in which it claimed that at the 1935 conference "Japan must acquire sufficient defensive forces and become free of the disadvantageous restrictions imposed by the Washington and London Treaties". Finally on November 30 Araki presented another set of amendments which produced a new foreign policy consensus. These, like Araki's earlier "Inner Policy" stressed Japan's continental objectives but this time recognised abrogation of the present naval limits as a necessary precondition for the attainment of those objectives. As abrogation would produce an "international crisis" in 1936 the War Ministry proposed that rather than attempt to educate the American public the government should "guide public opinion in Japan to an awareness of the attitudes necessary to surmounting the crisis". The


\textsuperscript{123} Maxon pg 96.
Navy felt this scheme gave sufficient consideration to its own strategic preoccupations and the November 30 amendments duly became the foreign policy of Japan. Thus by December 1933 the Japanese government was committed to a policy which proposed to neutralize the influence of the Soviet Union, Nationalist China, and the Anglo-American sea-powers "by a diplomacy rooted in the efficacy of Japan's military forces".

As the Japanese took their decision to free themselves from their treaty restrictions the Roosevelt administration moved closer to the Treaty Navy it desired. On December 2, 1933, two days after the Japanese foreign policy consensus, and two days before the official announcement of the Japanese supplementary estimates, Swanson's annual report on the U.S.N. was published. In this Swanson recommended the construction of 101 new ships over the next three years, in addition to those already authorized. Swanson's recommendations were soon translated into reality. In January 1934 the Vinson-Trammel Bill for the expansion of the navy was introduced into the House of Representatives. This was duly passed by both the House and the Senate and on March 27 received Roosevelt's signature. The bill provided for the construction of 102 new ships by the end of 1942 at an estimated cost of $570,000,000. It also

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125 Crowley. pg 195.

126 Survey 1933 pg 542.
"expressly authorised the president "to procure the necessary naval aircraft ... in numbers commensurate with a treaty navy". The United States would only gain this treaty navy if all the projected ships and aircraft were built and Roosevelt upon signing was quick to point out that the Vinson Bill was "not a law for the construction of a single additional United States warship". Since the bill appropriated no money for construction the word "authorization" could only be interpreted as "a statement of the policy of the present Congress". Whether the bill ever became more than this was dependent "on the action of future Congresses". As it happened, future Congresses were prepared to carry through the Vinson-Trammel Bill. In addition to the 37 vessels already building under the original Roosevelt appropriations, funds were made available to commence construction on 24 vessels in 1934, another 24 in 1935, and a further 20 in 1936. Having used the remainder of their treaty allocation to meet the 1933 expansion of the U.S.N. the Japanese now faced a new naval threat in the Vinson-Trammel Bill and although they had decided that the Washington and London Treaties must be abrogated they remained bound by them until 1936.

127 Franklin D. Roosevelt "Public Papers and Addresses" 1934 pg 172.
128 Ibid pg 173 n.
CHAPTER II

(A) THE JAPANESE DILEMMA

In September 1933 Grew reported on the "quandry" the Japanese naval teachers found themselves in as a result of the 37 ships authorised by the new Roosevelt administration. In March 1933 "as the Japanese Navy approached the American Navy in effective tonnage" the Japanese naval leaders had hoped to achieve "parity or near parity" with the United States and "expected to have everything their own way at the conference in 1935 with their own navy built to the limit and the American Navy hardly 75% effective". Roosevelt had dashed these hopes. Thus in September 1933 the I.J.N. faced "the unenviable task of deciding whether to abrogate the (naval limitation) treaties .... and start a hopeless competition with the wealthier nations for naval supremacy, or else to accept a continuance of the present ratios and to face an outraged public". The passage of the Vinson-Trammel Bill in early 1934 only tipped the scales further against Japan. Yet the I.J.N. could not hesitate for "no Japanese government which agreed to the .... 5:5:3 ratio could survive and no Japanese delegates who signed such a treaty could return to Japan and live". The naval High Command therefore had to solve its problem in a way which would satisfy the public demand created by its

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2 J.C. Grew "Turbulent Era" pg 966.
own propaganda. The naval leaders adopted a double approach to the problem: the first was an attempt to gain the voluntary adherence of the United States to the pre-Roosevelt situation, the second an attempt to revolutionise the existing concepts of sea power through technological advances.

On April 17 1934 a Japanese Foreign Office spokesman; Annau Eiji issued an unofficial statement on China to foreign news correspondents, subsequently known as the "Amau statement". In this the claim was put forward that there was "no country but China which is in a position to share with Japan the responsibility for the maintenance of peace in East Asia". Japan might well consider it her "duty" to "even act alone" on her "own responsibility" and opposed "any joint operations undertaken by foreign powers even in the name of technical or financial assistance" as these were "bound to acquire political significance". The Amau statement may have been a deliberately raised ballon d'essai or simply an international faux pas on the part of Amau. Either way it aroused the suspicions of the western powers and foredoomed any possibility of a Japanese–American understanding. Although Hirota was at pains to point out that the statement had been made "without his

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3 Decisions were by this time firmly in the hands of the naval authorities. In September 1933 revised naval instructions were promulgated which gave the Chief of Naval Staff the final say as to the naval requirements of the empire. Thus even should a Navy Minister support a move which the Naval General Staff did not approve of, he could never again (as Takarabe had in 1930) overrule it. M.D. Kennedy "The Estrangement of Great Britain and Japan" pg 283.

4 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 935.
knowledge or approval and the world had received a wholly false impression of Japanese policy", the basic premise was never officially denied. The reason for this was simply that the statement did reflect very closely the governments view of the Far Eastern situation.

On May 16 Saito, the Japanese ambassador in Washington, presented Hull with an eight point memorandum which suggested a possible solution to Japanese-American differences along the lines implied in the Amau statement. Saito's memorandum opened with the words; "these are entirely my own thoughts", but Hull interpreted it as a demonstration of "the narrow thinking of his Government." Certainly Saitos government cannot have been kept unaware of his actions yet never saw fit to repudiate them. Saito first outlined the mutual fear and suspicion existing between the United States and Japan and asked that each credit the other with peaceful intentions. He then proposed a joint declaration to co-operate for the promotion of trade to their mutual advantage, to make secure the principle of equal opportunity in the Pacific area, to "reaffirm the pledges of each to respect the territorial possessions and the rights and interests of the other", and to restate the determination of the two countries to maintain a relationship of peace and amity. With a rigid definition of terms this might have been acceptable to Hull but Saito went on to suggest that

5 Ibid Ex 936.
7 C. Hull "Memoirs" Vol I pg 281.
"both governments mutually recognise that the United States in the eastern Pacific regions, and Japan in the western Pacific regions are the principle stabilizing factors, and both governments will exercise their best and constant efforts so far as lies within their proper and legitimate power to establish a reign of law and order in the regions geographically adjacent to their respective countries".

This last clause simply presented the Amai statement in the more objectionable form of a request for American support of it. If the United States accepted Saito's memorandum then it voluntarily renounced the Washington Treaty system and recognised the whole of the Far East as a Japanese sphere of influence. From the naval point of view this would have been disastrous. The United States would have acceded to a declaration which superceded the existing basis of naval limitation and the Japanese could then claim an increased naval ratio to protect those increased responsibilities which the United States had recognised. Stimson had made the point that the Washington treaties were interdependent; if the United States invalidated one it could be claimed that she had renounced the lot. Saito was obviously not unaware of the naval implications of his proposed declarations for he pointed out that if it were made "all war talk" would "immediately be silenced". Similarly if all suspicion and fear was removed "the impending naval disarmament problem" could be "most happily .... approached".

Hull did not immediately reject the eight point programme but when Saito called for an answer on the 19th Hull
informed him that his proposal was quite unacceptable. At a further meeting ten days later Hull explained that the American people had "always been adversely disposed toward the theory and the practice of political alliances" and rather dryly noted "that for the regulation of relations between Japan and the United States" there were "already in effect .... a number of agreements". With that the subject of Saito's joint declaration; "a modern Tordesilles" was dropped.

Although a plan such as Saito's did not emerge again, the episode does have an important bearing upon the subsequent breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East. The Washington Naval Treaty was a success because it was linked to a comprehensive settlement for the Eastern and Pacific area. By 1934 Japan sought a new political settlement along the lines laid down in the Amariu statement and Saito's eight point memorandum which was to eventually re-emerge in the guise of Japan's Asiatic Monroe Doctrine. Japan also desired a relative naval strength commensurate with this political settlement. As Britain and the United States remained committed to the Nine Power Treaty and the Open Door they could not grant Japan an increased naval ratio without running the risk of Japan imposing her political desiderata upon the Far East without reference to the Anglo-American powers. Yet once Hull had rejected Saito's plan, Saito "stated that in any preliminary naval negotiations that might soon take place his government would be opposed to

8 F.R.U.S. pg 233-6, Hull pg 283.
9 F.R.U.S. pg 238.
10 T.V. Tuleja "Statesmen and Admirals" pg 114.
discussing any Far Eastern political or similar questions or conditions and that only the purely naval side should be taken up". In other words Japan wished to treat the subject of naval limitation in isolation. This simply could not be done. While Japan continued to flout the Nine Power Treaty, the Anglo-American powers would not grant her hegemony in China waters. Unfortunately Japanese hegemony in China waters meant Japanese security in home waters and vice versa. Japan would not sacrifice its security in home waters especially since when Saito had presented his memorandum to Hull, Hull had taken the opportunity to remark on Japan's increased vulnerability to air attack. Continued Naval limitation in the Far East seemed unlikely in the face of the Japanese-American failure to reach political agreement.

Despite the fact that the United States would not grant the Japanese a political overlordship in the Far East and was, therefore, unlikely to voluntarily accept the increased ratios she had suggested at Geneva in December 1932 the Japanese raised their naval desiderata to a demand for full parity with the Anglo-American powers. This had been hinted at in May 1933 when Matsudaira raised objections to that article in the British draft disarmament convention which provided for the continuance of the limitations imposed by the Washington and London Treaties. Later Vice Chief of Naval Staff Takahashi stated quite bluntly that Japan

11 F.R.U.S. pg 236.
12 Hull pointedly observed that whereas England had previously "felt herself isolated and secure" behind the Channel, a fleet of 2,000 bombing planes could probably "blow London off the map" within a few hours. Hull Vol I pg 282.
13 See above pg 93-4.
would go to the 1935 conference with a demand for parity and if this was not accepted the delegation would simply return home. There was still the hope that this posture constituted only an initial bargaining position. However the report of the British ambassador in September 1933 that Japan would accept "inferior though increased" ratios only in battleships and 10,000 ton cruisers indicated that the Japanese parity demand was stiffening. With the introduction of the Vinson Bill into the House of Representatives in January 1934 the Japanese attitude became even more rigid. A Disarmament Investigation Study Committee was set up "to study Japan's position and policy at the next naval conference "and these were to be examined "with a view to drafting a new disarmament plan based on the spirit of equality in armament right by giving up the present pact". In mid-April Osumi gave a press interview in which he stated that Japan was "firmly determined to defeat "the ratio principle in favour of the establishment of the right of equality in armaments, and that one proposal being considered was that of a "common upper limit" in total tonnage. Prestige, and the problems which technological

16 F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 8-10.
17 Survey 1936 pg 54.
18 S.K. Hornbeck, Head of the Far Eastern Division of the United States State Department commented in a memorandum on Japanese foreign policy in April 1934 that "the strategy which the prominent Japanese (in or out of office), inspired statements in the press, ballons d'essai of one type or another, various "hands across the water gestures" etc., intended to implant certain ideas in the minds of officials and of the public abroad and to elicit indications of public thought (and intent) and of public opinion abroad especially in the United States and Great Britain". F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 57.
advances in naval aviation and the cruising radius of warships presented were generally advanced as the reasons for Japan requiring parity. However on June 20 1934 the Navy Ministry touched upon the real issue when it claimed the added responsibility which the defence of Manchukuo entailed as another reason for an increase in relative naval strength.\(^\text{19}\) The I.J.N. could demand parity, indeed because of its internal propaganda it could hardly not demand it, but in view of the political situation the Anglo-American powers could not be induced to grant this. So while the naval authorities advanced their parity demand, they had also to consider how to augment their relative naval strength if and when the Anglo-American powers rejected this demand.

Parallel to these developments the Japanese government had been stepping up its internal propaganda. As it remained bound by the public opinion it had created, the government had no choice but to continue shaping this opinion to its own ends. The Japanese people were exhorted to prepare themselves for the "crisis of 1936" when Russia's mechanization programme would be near completion, China would be legally entitled to purchase the South Manchurian Railway, and the naval limitation treaties would expire. "The word "encirclement" had not yet been imported from Germany, but the notion itself was persistently held before the public". The people were urged to "satisfy the navy's demands at all costs" for "the solution to the Pacific problem and our success in China depend on naval strength".\(^\text{20}\) Although the phrase "crisis of 1936" was dropped upon the

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19 Survey 1936 pg 55.
resignation of War Minister Araki in January 1934 and the emphasis switched to "national defence", i.e. the need for economic planning and national mobilisation for any future war, the problem remained in its essentials the same. On October 12 1934 the government approved "The Method and Main Points of Enlightening Public Opinion on the Preliminary Negotiations re 1935 Naval Limitations Conference". This was to convince the public that "it is the national right of every country to hold sufficient military forces in order to stabilize her own national defence: at the same time for our empire it is a necessary duty in order to secure the peace of East Asia" and that although the empire denounces the Washington Treaty "she hopes to conclude an appropriate treaty as a substitute". Propaganda to this effect was to be pushed through the internal media and a special study was to be made concerning the control of foreign newspapers and magazines inside Japan. In addition the foreign policy consensus of November 30 1934 stressed the importance of guiding public opinion "to an awareness of the attitudes necessary for surmounting "the crisis which the 1935 conference represented." Such a campaign provided backing for the parity demand and convinced the Japanese people of the fundamental righteousness of their governments naval arguments. Conversely it tied the governments hands and reduced still further the prospects of ongoing naval limitation after 1936.

On September 17 1934 Hirota informed Grew of Japan's intention to abrogate the Washington and London Naval Treaties before December 31 1934. If the Japanese did this,

21 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 912.
and no new treaty was negotiated, then naval limitation would officially come to an end on December 31 1936. Japan would thereafter be free to build as many ships as she wished with no qualitative restrictions. Therefore, in theory, if the Anglo-American powers denied Japan parity at the 1935 conference she would still be free to achieve this through unrestricted building after 1936. The problem was that not only by December 1936 the Roosevelt building programme would have removed most of Japan's existing advantages but also that once the treaties lapsed the United States would be equally free to retain the ratio system through unrestricted building. The Roosevelt administration did appear just as resolute as the Japanese naval authorities. There was no pause in the American naval expansion and Japan's professed intention to abrogate the naval treaties was answered by the transfer of the United States fleet back to the Pacific in November 1934. In presenting her parity demand the Japanese had to count the cost of a possible all-out naval race with a United States as firmly committed to retaining the Washington and London ratio as Japan was to abrogating them.

In January 1934 the naval attache to the United States embassy in Tokyo reported that the Japanese naval authorities "would not mind the breakup of the (1935) conference and the armament race that would follow it "as they believed

24 Hull Vol I pg 289: Roosevelt's transfer of the fleet to the Atlantic in 1933 had produced no counter concession on the part of Japan. On December 4 1933, the same day as she announced her supplementary naval budget, Japan announced that her annual naval manoeuvres of Aug-Sept 1934 would be held in the Western Pacific between the home islands and the equator.
they could "get what appropriations are necessary to build the number and type of ships they require and that the Japanese navy yards and private plants are fully capable of turning out first class ships". In this the naval attache concurred but noted that the real question facing Japan was "how long the increasingly mounting budgets for the Army and Navy with ever increasing taxes can be borne". This was the Japanese dilemma - the possibility of an unrestricted naval race contained the threat of an economic crisis. Under the strain of the world depression Japan had cut her appropriations for new warships back from $40.4 million for the year 1930-1 to $26.9 million for the year 1932-3. The $100 million supplementary naval budget of December 1933 ruined all this, and the service proportion of the total Japanese budget climbed from 27% in 1930 to 45% in 1933. The Japanese also had to provide for national defence against Russia whose mechanisation programme had made her a far more formidable adversary in 1934 than she had been in 1932. The belated American recognition of the Soviet government in November 1933 did nothing to make Japan feel easier about its continental position. Japan therefore had to meet steadily increasing demands on the part of her army - her economy could not also bear the burden of a naval competition with the wealth and industrial power of the United States. If Japan was to provide herself with a naval strength equal to that of the

26  W.L. Neumann "America Encounters Japan"  pg 203.
United States she had to find an alternative to ship for ship competition with the Americans.

If the United States remained determined to keep the Washington ratios intact Japan could not hope to compete with her on a quantitative basis. Nevertheless the Japanese naval authorities remained adamant. Baron Harada, Secretary to Prince Scionji, claimed that on September 7 Hirota and Premier Okada informed him that Japan was "taking an unconditional stand on the subject of the Washington Treaty and would abrogate it "no matter how much the other powers agree to our proposals". In view of the fact that it had already been publicly stated that included in Japan's proposals was a demand for parity, such a statement is curious. It may well be that Harada was simply what Tojo later called him: "a high class gossip-monger". On the other hand the naval authorities may have judged that they could best achieve naval security by radically altering the existing concepts of naval strength.

In his 1934 report the American naval attache had noted that should the 1935 Conference fail the Japanese would "begin at once a regular, systematic, though perhaps modest programme of submarines, torpedo boats, destroyers, small cruisers, and aircraft; in other words ships of small cost, in order to complete her defensive armaments and make her position in the Far East as secure as possible at as small a cost as possible." Such a step was a logical one as these were the vessels which the Japanese would find most useful during the attrition stage of their two-part

30 F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg.10.
grand strategy and the I.J.N. continued to strive for qualitative superiority in these classes. S.E. Morison asserts that "the most original Japanese efforts in warship construction are seen in their destroyers" and that "the Fubuki class (completed 1928-32) led the world's navies in design and armament." But of far greater significance were the Japanese innovations in submarine design. In accepting a total tonnage limit for submarines 25,000 tons below the I.J.N.'s third Great Principle, the Hamaguchi government had greatly increased the possibility of an attacking American fleet slipping past Japan's submarine defences and arriving in Japanese waters in sufficient strength to defeat the Imperial battlefleet. In order to offset its quantitative disadvantages the I.J.N. began to experiment during the mid thirties with midget submarines. The first model produced in this class (Type A) displaced only 46 tons and carried only two torpedos. These could be carried by mother ships or larger submarines and launched on attacking missions deep in enemy territory yet in terms of total tonnage took up only a small proportion of Japan's submarine quota. At the same time in order to spread their submarine net wider the Navy developed several types of large ocean-going submarines filled with reconnaissance seaplanes and launching catapults, thus removing much of the hit or miss character the attrition stage had previously possessed. This was to be taken one step further in 1937 when the Navy produced sophisticated control submarines.

31 S.E. Morison "The Rising Sun in the Pacific" pg 22.
capable of co-ordinating the attacks of groups of submarines.32 The Japanese had thus managed to substantially improve their chances of wearing down any American fleet attempting an offensive across the Pacific - a situation enhanced by the technical superiority of Japanese torpedoes.33 But paradoxically these technological advances added weight to the argument that a rejection of all quantitative and qualitative restrictions on submarines could only improve Japan's defensive position.

Japan's preparation for a non-treaty situation while the naval limitation treaties were still in force did not end with submarines. During the thirties the Japanese modernised all of their capital ships. Japan's two "Fuso" class battleships had been laid up in 1930 for modernization. These were followed between 1933 and 1935 by the four "Ise" and "Mutsu" class battleships and the three "Kongo" class battlecruisers - all of which underwent extensive reconstruction from which the latter class "emerged as high speed battleships". The strength of the Japanese battle-fleet thus became somewhat deceptive in terms of age as all its capital ships had been modernised, and in some cases virtually rebuilt from the keel up.34

The I.J.N. also stole a march quantitatively on the Anglo-American powers by making use of the merchant marine.


33 As a result of research between 1928 and 1933 the I.J.N. perfected first an oxygen-enriched torpedo and then a completely oxygen fueled torpedo. As a result whereas the best American torpedo at the outbreak of the Pacific war had a speed of 46 knots for 4,500 yards, the Japanese possessed a torpedo capable of 49 knots for 22,000 yards. Morison pg.23.

34 Watts and Gordon pg 40-61.
Direct government subsidy had a long history in Japanese shipping dating back to the 1896 Shipbuilding Encouragement Act but when the government instituted its first "scrap and build" programme in 1932 to bolster up a sagging strategic industry, the influence of the I.J.N. becomes noticeable. Under the terms of this act the government met about 20% of the construction cost of new shipping but the subsidy was confined to ships displacing over 4,000 tons and capable of more than 13.5 knots. For every ton of subsidised shipping that was built two tons of shipping over twenty-five years old were scrapped. This act and two further "scrap and build" programmes initiated in 1935 and 1936 led to the scrapping of 500,000 tons of old shipping and its replacement by 48 new ships displacing a total of 300,000 tons. Thus "by 1937 Japan had a steam and motor fleet of 4 million tons, of which 3 million represented vessels over 3,000 tons. Half of the larger vessels were capable of 14 knots or better. With more tonnage under five years than any other national fleet, the Japanese merchant marine was thus handsomely refurbished to .... serve the Army and Navy in the great war which soon followed".

Most of these vessels were equipped for wartime roles such as transports, seaplane tenders, or oilers. Of greater strategic significance were those commercial or naval support vessels designed for rapid conversion to aircraft carriers. By the close of the Pacific War the Japanese were to have acquired no less than seventeen fleet or escort

35 G.C. Allen "A Short Economic History of Modern Japan" pg 83,92,123.
36 W.L. Lockwood "The Economic Development of Japan" pg 548.
37 Morison pg 22.
carriers in this manner. However like the advances in submarine technology, or the modernisation of the battlefleet, this use of the merchant marine did not in itself necessitate the abrogation of the naval treaties. But the I.J.N. was also investigating another possible answer to Japan's quantitative inferiority - the development of non-treaty "inbetween" types. This could not be reconciled with the existing system of naval limitation.

The division of warships into various categories, and the restriction of their tonnage and gun calibre, meant that the construction of vessels outside these regulations such as the German pocket battleship (10,000 tons with 11-inch guns) upset naval tactics calculated on the basis of existing treaty restrictions. The danger involved in having no qualitative limits on warships was that when building new ships naval powers attempted to go one better than their rivals producing a situation like the dreadnought race which preceded the 1914-18 war. Nevertheless the Japanese decided they could run this risk and in October 1934 the Naval Staff requested its Bureau of Naval Construction to prepare studies for a new non-treaty class of battleships. It has been suggested that by doing so the Japanese violated "the spirit of the naval treaties still in force". If so, then the Americans were considering the same sin. In November 1934 Swanson informed Roosevelt that the U.S.N. was in need of ships outside the treaty categories, and on December 17 Roosevelt requested that Swanson "discuss

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38 Watts and Gordon pg 184-205.
with the proper officers the advisability of immediate studies looking to the development of possible new types of ships on the theory that the Washington and London Treaty restrictions may be entirely removed within the next two years". The types Roosevelt suggested included "a heavy cruiser type larger than 10,000 tons ..., a pocket battleship type, larger than the German design, ..., (and) new aircraft cruiser types designed to operate with fast cruiser squadrons at distant points" and for such studies he "would be willing to approve a small appropriation". The difference between the Japanese and the Americans was that the Japanese thought big.

In designing their new class of battleship the Japanese proposed to hurdle their approaching qualitative problem with "a double jump up the evolutionary scale of size". The projected battleship would displace between 68,000 and 70,000 tons (the first completed: "Yamato" which gave its name to the class, displaced 70,000 tons fully laden) and carry a main armament of nine 18-inch guns each capable of firing a 3,200 lb shell (1,000 lb more than a 16-inch shell). Protected by 16.1-inch main armour and 7.8-inch deck armour the battleship would be impervious to anything less than a favourably-placed 18-inch shell or a 2,200 lb armour-piercing bomb. In addition the vessel would be equipped with extensive anti-aircraft and anti-submarine protection and a complex damage-control system: The battleship was also originally intended to be able to reach a speed of 31 knots but this figure eventually proved

40 F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 322-3.
too ambitious and was lowered to 27 knots. The risk of retaliatory building was not high; if secrecy could be maintained by the time the Yamato class become impossible to hide the Anglo-American powers would have fallen years behind. Even then the Japanese reasoned that the size of the Panama canal locks would impose an upper limit of 35,000 tons on American battleships while in 1937 the British were to encounter difficulties just building 35,000, 16-inch battleships. Thus each Japanese super battleship would be able to outgun any vessel then afloat and compete on equal terms with any group of enemy warships. The "Yamato" was to be, as Padfield says, "the ultimate development of the battleship, the largest, most powerfully-armed leviathan ever conceived."

Having made the super battleship decision the Japanese pressed ahead with the design and by March 1935 the first blueprints were ready. Hull resistance and advance experiments were carried out and armour plats expanded so as to be able to produce 16.1-inch armour plates (each weighing 68 tons). Although "Yamato" was not laid down until November 1937 these developments meant that the I.J.N. was rapidly reducing the possible courses of action open to it. The Naval High Command knew that it could not possibly hope for the Anglo-American powers to accept a battleship which displaced twice the existing maximum tonnage. Thus although the Japanese were not actually conducting a policy

41 Padfield pg 262.
41a See below pg 240
42 Watts and Gordon pg 68.
43 Padfield pg 262.
of dual diplomacy after October 1934 their development of
the Yamato class meant that they could gain no advantage
from qualitative limitation schemes except those which
they were to propose themselves.

Since it had built up a vociferous public demand for
treaty revision the Japanese government found itself out
on a limb once the Roosevelt administration began its
drive for a treaty navy. Unable to back down, the
Japanese put forward a scheme designed to secure the
voluntary return of the United States to the situation
which had existed in March 1933. This involved a new
comprehensive political settlement which encompassed, indeed
disastrously exposed, all Japan's ambitions in the Far East.
When Hull naturally rejected this the Japanese attempted
to divorce naval limitation from politics and presented a
demand for parity, basing this on the international
prestige connotations of an inferior ratio and the
claim that technological advances had substantially altered
the strategic situation which had existed in 1930. But
naval strength could not be separated from its political
significance and it seemed unlikely that the United States
would abandon its opposition to Japan's parity claim.
Although the I.J.N. did improve its quantitative position
through the merchant marine it was obvious that Japan
could not hope to compete in a quantitative naval race.
The Japanese therefore attempted to improve their position
through qualitative superiority. Advances in submarine
technology reinforced Japan's mid-Pacific defences and
offset to some extent Japan's failure to attain its third
"Great Principle" in 1930. Parallel to this the Japanese
began an extensive programme of battleship modernisation which provided their battlefleet with an effectiveness out of all proportion to its age and which hopefully would give each vessel a decisive margin of superiority on a ship to ship basis when matched against their enemy counterparts. In October 1934 the I.J.N. carried this concept one step further when it initiated development of the Yamato class superbattleship which would revolutionise existing battlefleet tactics. Thus the Japanese had arrived at a possible solution to the quandry which Grew had reported in September 1933. In terms of naval security it gave the naval leaders a second string to their bow, but weakened the first as the naval staff had substantially limited Japan's freedom of movement with regard to future naval limitation.
(B) THE BRITISH DILEMMA

During 1934 the problems of global defence strategy facing Britain produced a profound split in the ranks of the government. The debate centred on whether Britain, in 1934, should devote her resources to defence against the immediate potential enemy: Japan, or the greater potential enemy: Germany. Obviously neither could be completely ignored but in view of the nature of the two threats—defence against Japan implied building up Britain's naval strength in the Pacific while defence against Germany implied expansion of the home country's air force—concentration on one meant the relative neglect of the other. For the earlier part of 1934 the argument involved the recommendations of a Defence Requirements Committee set up in November 1933. No decision had been reached either way when American intransigence at the Anglo-American naval conversations of June and July 1934 over British cruiser demands breathed new life into the idea that Britain was unable to rely on American aid in the Far East, should therefore guard her interests there through a diplomatic settlement with Japan, and concentrate on the German threat. During the latter part of the year this somewhat nebulous idea of a diplomatic settlement assumed the more concrete form of an Anglo-Japanese non-aggression pact which could be used to promote a naval settlement. In fact the conflicting desiderata of the British and Japanese governments made such an agreement impossible but to one section of the British government it presented a very real alternative. The
idea of an Anglo-Japanese non-aggression pact was to be scrapped as unrealistic by the end of 1934 but in October 1934 when the preliminary naval conversations resumed with Japan as a full participant the split over British defence policy remained unresolved.

In 1922 Britain had accepted a one-power standard of naval strength. By 1934 she faced the strategic problem of using this to defend a two-hemisphere empire menaced simultaneously by Japan's aggressive stance and naval strength in the Far East and by German rearmament in Europe. Furthermore the German threat necessitated some strengthening of Britain's military and air defences. The ten year rule had been abandoned but more positive action had yet to be taken on this decision for by 1934 it was obvious that rearmament in all three services could not be postponed much longer. However the British public remained firmly committed to disarmament. The landslide Labour victory in the East Fulham by-election of October 1933 "showed how strongly the pacifist tide was running — and running against the government". This was because the government "instead of attempting to educate the public to the realities of the situation and exposing the delusions of the pacifists (had) professed its devoted belief in these delusions and had no effective answer to the demand, which it had itself helped to create, for their translation into

44 For a fuller discussion of the cabinet split and the debate over rearmament see K. Middlemass and Barnes "Baldwin" pg 718-795, A. Trotter "Britain and East Asia 1933-1937" pg 51-60, 88-114, and D.C. Watt "Personalities and Policies" Essay 4 "Britain, the United States, and Japan in 1934". 
reality".\textsuperscript{45} Such electoral losses continued and the Conservatives\textsuperscript{46} attributed the situation "to the fear on the part of the public that the Conservatives might adapt a warlike policy which the British people as a whole seem determined to avoid".\textsuperscript{47} With Germany and Japan out of the League and becoming increasingly bellicose, rearmament by 1934 was a vital, but unwanted and unpopular necessity. Some sections of the government thought the blow could be softened by diplomacy.

Concerned with the prohibitive cost of providing an effective defence in both the Far East and Europe the British government considered the idea that Britain should attempt to secure her Far Eastern interests through a diplomatic settlement. If this were done Britain would be free to concentrate her attention on Europe, notably on her air defences to meet the German air threat. But the idea of a Far Eastern diplomatic understanding involved some type of understanding with Japan. If Britain did this she forfeited the goodwill of China, abandoned all hope of American co-operation on any other question, and placed her trust in a Japan whose record since September 1931 showed scant regard for treaty obligations. Moreover since it seemed likely Japan would demand parity after 1936 on Anglo-Japanese rapprochment implied acceptance of a smaller

\textsuperscript{45} L.S. Amery "My Political Life" Vol III pg 151.
\textsuperscript{46} Middlemass and Barnes pg 745-6, 764. MacDonalds Labour Ministry had resigned on August 23 1931 but MacDonald himself emerged the next day at the head of a National Coalition Government. The National Government embraced sections of both the Liberal and the Labour Parties, but it was the Conservatives who in fact held most of its seats and therefore wielded the most power.
\textsuperscript{47} F.D.R. (F.A.) I pg 510.
relative naval strength vis a vis Japan. Britain was not satisfied with the present naval ratios: since the failure of the 1932 Geneva Conference the Admiralty had returned to its 1927 demand for seventy cruisers, yet she had no desire to see Japan gain an increased ratio and on Anglo-American alignment in 1935 seemed the best way to prevent this. However isolationist America would not commit herself to any defence of British interests. Therefore if she aligned herself with the United States, Britain might incur the wrath of Japan, receive no American support and thus jeopardise all her Far Eastern interests. During the Shanghai crisis, Lindsay, the British Ambassador in Washington had ventured the opinion that: "within a few days His Majesty's Government will be faced with the necessity of deciding whether their policy in the Far East is to be inclined towards Japan or towards America". Lindsay was wrong in this - two years later the British had still not committed themselves irrevocably, but a decision could not be postponed for much longer. The second part of Lindsays prediction still held true: the decision would be "all the more critical" for the fact that once Britain had taken one path it would be "increasingly difficult with the lapse of time to cross over to the other". Consequently the need for a decision and the presence of both views in the British cabinet was to precipitate a major policy crisis.

In 1934 a small but powerful section of the British governing elite was convinced that Britain should attempt some kind of understanding with Japan and concentrate on

defence against Germany. This group was dominated by Sir Robert Vansittart: the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Warren Fisher: Permanent Under-Secretary to the Treasury, and his immediate superior; Neville Chamberlain: Chancellor of the Exchequer and "the ablest and most forceful personality in the National Government".49 Ranged in principle against this group was the majority of the Cabinet—notably MacDonald, Baldwin, Simon—and the Admiralty. The desire of the last to modernise the battlefleet and restore the overseas naval bases naturally provoked Treasury opposition as such schemes involved considerable expenditure; money which the Treasury felt could be better spent on Britain's air defences. The Admiralty also faced an even more formidable task in its desire to increase its cruiser strength to seventy, for this threatened Anglo-American co-operation. "As the Foreign Office were anxious to placate American opinion, and as the fewer the cruisers the smaller the bill, the Naval Staff found ranged against them a formidable opposition".50 The situation became even more complex when on February 18 1934 the Defence Requirements Committee submitted a report which seemed to offer support for each of the opposing points of view.

Although the Geneva General Disarmament Conference was to drag on until 1935 its inevitable failure became obvious long before it was eventually wound up. Accordingly in

49 Watt pg 85.
50 A.E.M. Chatfield "It Might Happen Again" pg 64.
November 1933, the British Cabinet appointed a Defence Requirements Committee (D.R.C.). This chaired by Sir Maurice Hankey, with Fisher, Vansittart, and the three Chiefs of Staff as its other members was to advise the cabinet on how to meet "the worst deficiencies" in national and Imperial defence. The D.R.C. report considered Japan to be the greatest immediate threat to British interests. Britain, it was stated, could not ignore "the danger created by our total inability to defend our position in the Far East". An immediate policy of "showing a tooth" to Japan was approved and to this end the fleet which could be deployed in the Pacific was to be made equal to that of Japan and the facilities which would enable it to operate there made available. Thus Britain would recover much of the prestige she had lost in the Far East. Despite this Britain's approach to Japan would ultimately be quite the reverse of a show of force. Britain was to capitalise on any opportunity to improve relations with Japan and thus get back to her "old terms of cordiality and mutual respect".

A rapprochment was considered advantageous because the Japanese were not credited with any immediate aggressive designs although it was felt they could be tempted by events elsewhere. As "elsewhere means Europe and danger to us in Europe will only come from Germany" the latter country was identified as Britain's "ultimate potential enemy" and it was against her that the D.R.C. (probably because of the presence

51 B. Collier "The Defence of the United Kingdom" pg 23.
52 D.R.C. quotes cited from Trotter pg 40-1.
of Vansittart and Fisher) recommended Britain's "long range" defence policy be directed. With this in mind the D.R.C. recommended that the fifty-two squadrons scheme, approved in 1923, be completed to provide Britain with the necessary defences to deal with the German air menace. The D.R.C. report thus presented the Treasury viewpoint: that ultimately it was Germany which must be guarded against, and that a rapprochement should be sought with Japan: more important, any possibility of a Japanese-German rapprochement must be avoided. Yet before following this course of action Britain was to "show a tooth" by building up her naval strength; in short to accept the Admiralty desiderata. But to secure her naval position vis à vis Japan, Britain had to continue her policy of co-operation with the United States. This was the British dilemma - in 1934 Anglo-American co-operation could not be reconciled with an Anglo-Japanese rapprochement.53

Because it encompassed both views the D.R.C. report suggested substantial expansion in all three services. The capital cost would be £72.2 million spread over nine years, £61.2 million of this being spent in the first five. In addition a naval construction programme would probably average another £13.4 million annually.54 Faced with "the staggering prospect of spending 85 million £ on rearmament" Chamberlain wrote in his diary in March 1934 that Britain "should not refuse in any circumstances to consider mutual guarantees" for "it might be that we could limit our

53 D.R.C. quotes cited from Middlemass and Barnes pg 762-3.
54 Figures from Middlemass and Barnes pg 764.
This conviction revealed itself in June when Chamberlain came forward with "revised proposals, which bring the five years expenditure down from 76 to 50 million, excluding ship-building". Chamberlains proposals constituted not only a reduction in, but also a redistribution of, the funds to be allocated to rearmament. The Army was to bear the brunt of Chamberlains economies but the completion of Singapores defences was to be once again postponed, and the Navy's allocation somewhat reduced (the replacement of capital ships was to be put off for the time being). The R.A.F. was to, in fact receive 80 instead of 52 squadrons but at the same time was he instructed to devote most of its ends to fighter defence. Since the D.R.C.s recommendations were designed only to bring Britains defences up to "the lowest point consistent with national safety" it was obvious that by chopping back the funds earmarked for the Army and Navy Chamberlain was attempting to tailor rearmament to suit his own conviction "that we cannot provide simultaneously for hostilities with Japan and Germany, and that the latter is the problem to which we must now address ourselves. As air defence against Germany was the pre-eminent need "we certainly can't afford at the same time to rebuild our battle fleet". Chamberlain then presented his idea of limited liability through mutual guarantees; this taking the form of a long memorandum advocating an Anglo-Japanese rapprochement.

55 K. Feiling "Life of Neville Chamberlain" pg 252.
56 Ibid pg 258.
57 Middlemass and Barnes pg 764.
58 Feiling pg 255, 258.
result of his activities was a spate of reports around the world that such a rapprochement was being effected or was already an accomplished fact.59

Meanwhile, between the presentation of the D.R.C. report and Chamberlain's revised proposals, that section of the government which favoured Anglo-American co-operation had been pursuing its own preference. On March 8 Eyres-Monsell had informed Bingham, the American Ambassador to Britain, that he thought it "highly desirable for both countries to co-operate in dealing with the whole naval situation and that we could handle the Japanese situation satisfactorily if we handled it together". Eyres-Monsell set forth the British case for fast light cruisers, Bingham countered with the American desire for heavy cruisers, and both agreed that the two nations should be able to carry out their respective programmes along the lines best suited to their own needs "without suspicion, competition, or hostility".60 From this, and a conversation with Simon on the same day Bingham concluded that it was "quite obvious that the British are disturbed over the situation, and are eager to co-operate with us". As this co-operation was to be "as usual, of course, on their own terms" Bingham was of the opinion that the American "strategy should be to stand put until they come back to us, although it may take some

59 Watt pg 91. Such rumours probably began with the D.R.C. report: the German Ambassador in Tokyo reported on March 19 1934 that the Japanese were attempting to reach a rapprochement with Britain through a dynastic approach and that "a constructive and friendly reply" had been received from England: Documents on German Foreign Policy. Series C Vol II pg 640.

60 F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 18-19.
time for them to make up their minds".\textsuperscript{61} However in a conversation with Vansittart two months later Bingham sensed a "change in the British attitude". Bingham was sure that until the Amau statement had been released "the British intended to go along with us in preparation for the coming naval conference as far as they could without giving offence to the Japanese". But at the time of writing he felt that "they expect to co-operate with us ultimately but they are not willing to adopt any Anglo-American policy that might be interpreted as coercian in Japan and solidity the control of the militaristic element". Vansittart believed "the danger was now in Europe and from Germany. .... Meanwhile he saw no immediate danger in the Far Eastern situation and believed any disturbance there was unlikely until and unless Germany precipitated war in Europe". From this Bingham concluded "that the British government has made up its mind to run no risk, so far as the Far Eastern question is concerned, at this time, and to concentrate all of its efforts upon trying to keep peace in Europe".\textsuperscript{62} But Vansittart was putting forward a viewpoint more prominent in the Treasury than in his own department and Chamberlain had yet to impress this viewpoint on the rest of the cabinet.

Chamberlain, in his revised proposals, was prepared to agree to the completion of Singapore but did not envisage any real naval capability in the Far East beyond that. This implied the end of British sea power in the Far East. Consequently his opponents, led by Hankey\textsuperscript{63} returned to the

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid pg 17-18.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid pg 89.
\textsuperscript{63} See Trotter pg 90-1.
attack. Chamberlain's reorientation of British strategy proved too radical for the rest of the cabinet, his proposals were shelved for the moment, the D.R.C. re-established and a new report called for. Thus neither side had yet seen its view of the form British rearmament should take accepted. A solution to the cabinet split, and therefore the actual business of rearming, had simply been staved off for a few more months. British policy was still in this state of flux when the first Anglo-American conversations over the 1935 naval conference took place.

The naval negotiations of June and July 1934 were primarily Anglo-American discussions. After some confusion over which side had first approached the other it was decided that informal negotiations should be entered into prior to the 1935 conference. The British and American governments were able to agree that they should determine "what their respective attitudes would be with regard to the Japanese claim for parity or an increased ratio" and that "among the questions to be dealt with in the contemplated discussions would be the differences of opinion as between the two respective navies with regard to tonnage and future types of vessels, particularly battleships and cruisers, and also whether or not the United States and England should agree to renew the Treaty on the basis of parity between them in case of a failure on the part of Japan to renew on conditions which would be acceptable". While the British could see it was important that the Anglo-American powers should "clear up certain questions before taking up negotiations with Japan" they were also concerned that the

64 B.B. Schofield "British Sea Power" pg 125.
65 Trotter pg 51-2.
Japanese should "not get the idea that we were combining against them". Craigie therefore proposed that invitations be issued in such a way that Anglo-American negotiations would commence several days before Japan's arrival. In the event, Matsudaira, appointed as Japan's representative, began discussions with the British on the same day (June 18) as the Americans. This obscures the reality of the situation. Matsudaira attended the preliminary conversations only to discuss questions of procedure. It was not until June 29 that "the Japanese government wired instructions to Mr Matsudaira to the effect that there would be no objection to his discussing questions of substance also". Even then "not much progress was made in that direction". A.J. Toynbee put it a little more bluntly: "his (Matsudaira's) instructions from his government had apparently laid most stress on the importance of excluding political questions from the discussion, and since Mr Matsudaira was not competent to deal with technical naval problems, he was virtually restricted to playing the part of an observer".

The Anglo-American delegates carried greater authority. The principle American delegates were Norman Davis; who had succeeded Gibson as the head of the United States delegation at the Geneva Conference, Rear-Admiral Leigh; Chairman of the General Board of the Navy, and Bingham. MacDonald and Eyres-Monsell led the British delegation. In

66 F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 73.
67 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 31.
68 Survey 1936 pg 65.
a series of bi-lateral conversations the Anglo-American powers established the fact that they were both opposed to any increase in the Japanese ratio. Although the British refused to give the Americans "any hard and fast understanding" that they would continue to hold to this view, "it was agreed that neither side would depart from its attitude of opposition without previous consultation with the other". Both powers also agreed that they should come to some agreement to regulate naval construction between themselves should any wider arrangement prove impossible. Agreement on the principle of Anglo-American co-operation in naval limitation proved relatively simple: agreement in practice on technical details proved a different proposition.

The Anglo-American naval conversations of June 18 - July 19 1934 failed for the same reasons as the conferences held at Geneva in 1927 and 1932. Britain had returned to its 1927 figure of seventy cruisers as the absolute minimum necessary for the empires naval security; the United States held to the quota of fifty fixed at the first London Naval Conference. Thus the cruiser spectre of the twenties had returned to haunt Anglo-American relations. Tied in with this was the difference in approach to naval disarmament

69 Not only Matsudaira, but also France and Italy attended the 1934 conversations and it was felt that tripartite meetings of the Pacific Powers would offend the latter two (D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.1). Davis expressed concern that bilateral talks would give "the British too much of a chance to act as broker" between Japan and the United States (F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 134) but on the other hand this provided Anglo-American talks without the appearance of a snub to Japan.

70 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.23.

71 This conclusion was apparently "considered too risky to include in the official record": Trotter pg 93.
which had exhibited itself in 1932. The United States still adhered to an absolute quantitative reduction or limitation, whereas the British continued to insist that their forces had already been cut too far back numerically, and that naval limitation could best be achieved through qualitative restrictions. As Craigie pointed out both countries were "in fact prepared for reductions but unfortunately only by methods which for vital strategical reasons would be unacceptable to the other". 72

On April 23 1934 Davis cabled Roosevelt that in his opinion there would not "be any particular difficulty with the British over the technical naval questions themselves". 73 Five days later in a conversation with Davis and Hull, Roosevelt put forward the idea that the United States should propose an all round naval reduction of 20% on the present ratios. If the Japanese refused this, then the United States should propose a continuation of the existing treaties for a further five years and failing that should conclude a treaty with Britain (and, if possible, with France and Italy) "with a provision of parity between the British and ourselves". 74 Considering the oft-repeated objections of the British to their cruiser quota under the existing treaties and their desire to tackle naval limitation through qualitative restrictions Roosevelt's approach seems incompatible with Davis' earlier optimism. Yet Roosevelt's plan of action was eventually adopted as the American policy and throughout the talks of June and July 1934 they refused to budge from this position.

73 F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 71.
74 D. Borg "The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis 1933-1938" pg 103.
Consequently the Americans were appalled by MacDonald's announcement at the first Anglo-American talks that Britain would have to demand an increased cruiser tonnage at the 1935 Conference. The British then sought during the course of the conversations to explain their position. The Americans were presented with a lengthy memorandum in which it was claimed that Britain had accepted a total cruiser tonnage quota of 339,000 tons in 1930 because "it was hoped and believed that no other power would build large 6" gun cruisers of 9,000 or 10,000 tons displacement". This would have left the British free to build smaller cruisers and "during the period of the treaty the small type of cruisers averaging 4,000 to 5,000 tons and designed for North Sea warfare could still be retained in considerable numbers". As these conditions no longer applied Britain would require an increased total cruiser tonnage even if she continued to accept only fifty cruisers. However even this last was considered impossible. In 1930 "the curve indicating the number of British under-age cruisers was at its lowest" and the fourteen cruisers scrapped or due for scrapping under the terms of the first London Naval Treaty could not anyway have been retained as efficient warships. Moreover in 1930 the world was "on the eve of summoning .... a General Disarmament Conference from which much was hoped" and "under the international conditions existing at that time there was a reasonable assurance that there would be more than six years of peace". Since 1930 the naval forces in Europe had "greatly increased" and there had been "a serious deterioration in the international and political outlook". Finally in support of the British case was Article 23 of the
1930 Treaty which explicitly stated that "none of the provisions of the present treaty should prejudice the attitude of any of the High Contracting Parties at the (1935) Conference". 75

Nevertheless the Americans could not see their way clear to an increase in Britain's cruiser tonnage. Having, in their opinion, settled the question in 1930, the apparent volte face on the part of the British, convinced the Americans that Britain was again ready to concede parity in principle but withhold it in practice, and worried them least British naval expansion precipitated retaliatory building on the part of Japan. 76 Furthermore the "live and let live" attitude expressed by Eyres-Monsell in March interpreted itself in the conviction that "Great Britain cannot be expected to replace her existing small wartime cruisers by ships which will be outclassed from the start by those in other navies". 77 Having presented their own figures in the "utmost frankness" the British then repeatedly pressed for the American figures. Davis and Leigh evaded this and simply reiterated Roosevelt's first proposal of a 20% reduction on existing figures, claiming that the proposed British cruiser increases were unacceptable as a basis for negotiation. 78 The British concluded that the United States had ignored Britain's increased strategic problems and based its own proposals only upon matters of prestige.

75 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.2.
76 Ibid No.1 n14.
77 Ibid No.2.
78 Ibid No.1, Tuleja pg 122-3.
The British did offer to bridge the gap with a political settlement. The British argued that whereas in 1930 both Britain and the United States had faced the single problem of Japan, in 1934 Britain also faced "the acute problem of Europe" which was "relatively academic" to the United States. As American policy in the Pacific was considered an "uncertain factor" the British felt they must prepare to face both problems alone. However Anglo-American "differences on technical naval questions would automatically solve themselves" if the two powers "could agree upon a policy of co-operation in the Far East". This policy would have to be "embodied in an agreement ratified by the senate". 79 Such a proposal suggested an Anglo-American alliance and Davis immediately rejected it. 80 But it was obvious that the British would not back down from their cruiser demands and Davis, unable to accept these or offer a viable compromise, advised Roosevelt that the talks had reached a stalemate.

Roosevelt had not yet, however, abandoned hope, and on June 26 cabled Davis with a personal message for MacDonald. In this Roosevelt proposed once again "a renewal of the Washington and London treaties for at least ten years on a basis of a 20% reduction to be accomplished during that ten year period" but declined to explore "technicalities of tonnage or classes or guns at this time because these can be solved if the naval nations agree on the big basic principle". The message, in effect, called for a new Rapidian Agreement for Roosevelt, "well aware of the pressure exercised by Navy Departments and Admiralties" expressed the

79 F.R.U.S. 1934 I pg 279: cited Middlemass and Barnes
80 Borg pg 104.
hope that "those in high authority in government" would work with him for a new naval treaty. 81

Despite this Roosevelt had not modified in any way from his original position. The proposal was precisely that decided upon on April 28 and Roosevelt had once again declined to provide any specific figures. Moreover Davis was to present the proposal as a "deep conviction" and not as a "bargaining position". 82 This time, however, MacDonald was not prepared to override his naval advisers. Chatfield had impressed the importance of an increased cruiser quota upon him, 83 and Roosevelt had not offered a single concession. Therefore on June 29 MacDonald replied that the British problem had "to be brought down to reality". MacDonald stated that he would "be delighted to reduce, ten, twenty, or thirty per cent if risks were reduced in similar proportion" but the level at which British naval strength could be fixed was dependent "solely on conditions" and the present British position was not "a question of desire but of realistic need". 84 Davis had been correct about a stalemate. On July 12 the Japanese decided the issue when, four days after taking office, the new Okada cabinet in Japan notified London that they would need time to consider their position and a naval representative could not now be expected to arrive before October. As the five Washington naval powers had been able to agree on most points of procedure for the 1935 Conference 85 and as, for the time being, further Anglo-American conversations would serve no useful purpose these were suspended on July 19 to be

81 F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 161.
83 Chatfield pg 65-6.
84 F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 161.
resumed in October with the full participation of the Japanese.

With the suspension of the conversations the debate over British policy resumed with renewed vigour. The uncompromising attitude of the United States during the talks, and their refusal, repeated to the point of rudeness, to provide any specific figures strengthened the pro-Japanese group which had always argued that no reliance should be placed on a policy of Anglo-American co-operation. Also during the conversations, Matsudaira had seemed sympathetic to Britain's position and appeared to hold out some hope of a tripartite entente "as a means of relieving the fears of Japanese alarmists and assisting in the solution of the American-Japanese ratio difficulty". 87

The leaders of the pro-Japanese, and pro-American groups in the British government remained the same. Simon remained in the American group although during the conversations he had expressed the opinion "that the only hope would be a preliminary Anglo-Japanese negotiation which fixed the Japanese navy at a reasonable level and then to face the Americans with the prospect of losing this advantage if they do not find it possible to agree on the British level". But at the same time Simon felt there was little chance of securing Japan's agreement - "all of which shows what a delightful job we have inherited in this naval conundrum". 88

The British dilemma persisted. On one hand Vansittart dryly remarked that closer relations with the United States

86 Middlernass and Barnes pg.778.
87 Trotter pg 93.
could only "become possible when America realises that she must have a policy. Hitherto she has thought it possible to dispense with the inconvenience". On the other hand Craigie maintained that any hope of a naval understanding with Japan was "quite illusory" and "politically dangerous". Nevertheless the whole issue of an Anglo-Japanese rapprochement derived new impetus from the arrival of a despatch from Sir Robert Clive, the British Ambassador in Tokyo, on August 7. Clive reported a conversation with Hirota on July 5 in which the Foreign Minister, having expressed Japan's determination to free herself from naval quotas unexpectedly "said that Japan would be ready to conclude a non-aggression pact with Great Britain".

Simon seized upon this. In a letter to Vansittart, Simon was prepared to concede that Japan would not accept an inferior ratio imposed by Treaty but felt this might be got around for "if conceded 'equality of status' as her right, might she not make a voluntary declaration of limits accepted by her?" Such a declaration could then be annexed to any treaty. Simon also felt that a non-aggression pact might "be a valuable buffer against Japanese naval liberty" and, alive to the sentiments of the Treasury group noted that "it would please many people, here and in Japan, to have this much of the atmosphere of the Anglo-Japanese treaty revived". Craigie too saw some merit in the idea of a voluntary declaration as this was "likely to prove more palatable" while "in practice" Britain would "be no worse off

89 Ibid No.5 n5.
90 Ibid No.4.
91 Ibid No.8 nl.
92 Ibid No.8.
than under the present system". Craigie also thought a non-aggression pact "which would in practice involve no further engagement than that assumed under the Kellogg Pact" could be useful as "heavy applications of political camouflage may be necessary if we are to prevent naval limitation from going by the board next year". Orde, Head of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, was less enthusiastic. With regard to voluntary declarations he expressed "the greatest doubt as to the Japanese being willing to make any declaration which would be moderate as to figures and of a tolerably binding character" and the objections to a non-aggression pact he found to be "formidable". Despite Orde's reservations, Clives despatch revived the earlier rumours of an Anglo-Japanese rapprochement, some Japanese pages going so far as to report a new Anglo-Japanese alliance, the projected visit of a British industrial mission to Japan in September being taken as confirmation. The British Foreign Office had meanwhile inclined to Orde's point of view and agreed to issue a memorandum to this effect when Chamberlain once again revived the idea of a non-aggression pact.

On September 1, Chamberlain, convinced that he was at a "crucial point in history" came to "certain conclusions

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93 The 1928 Pact of Paris in which war was renounced as an instrument of national policy.
94 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.8 Appendix I.
95 Orde did not feel that the China problem could be satisfactorily included in any pact unless Britain "should have scored a victory over them, (the Japanese) not given them something of value". He argued that a pact would arouse the resentment of the Americans, the Chinese, and the Russians, and expressed the fear that if "the result of a pact were to encourage Japan to fight Russia, we should see the Russian counterpoise to Germany seriously weakened" D.B.F.P. Series 2 No.8 Appendix II.
97 Trotter pg 98.
which .... would require cabinet authority to carry out".
To this end Chamberlain had prepared a memorandum which he intended to submit to the cabinet, but first he forwarded a copy, and a personal letter, to Simon both as "the Minister most directly concerned" and as a man who whose "cool and analytical judgement" Chamberlain attached "particular weight". In his letter Chamberlain confessed himself "immensely impressed" by Hirota's approach to Clive, and by a semi-official statement on the part of the Japanese Foreign Office which claimed that the Japanese naval representatives would submit a "substitute for the Washington Treaty" which would "render abrogation unnecessary". Chamberlain's letter closed with the hope that Simon would someday be remembered as "the author of the Simon-Hirota Pact".98

In his memorandum Chamberlain outlined again his conception of the dangers involved in a struggle with Germany" with a hostile instead of a friendly Japan in the east". He therefore recommended that Japan be approached immediately to ascertain "whether she is prepared to make a non-aggression pact with us" and "on what terms she would consider such a pact favourably". While doing this "the fullest information and explanations" were to be given to the United States "in order to convince them that the action taken is not against any interest of theirs". If a pact was concluded Chamberlain felt that Britain should then follow it up "with an attempt to reach an agreement with Japan which would in effect supercede the naval conference". This

agreement "would leave each side formally unbound as to numbers and types of ships" but each side would undertake advance notifications of programmes and "every effort" would be made to reach agreement on qualitative limitations. The Americans were to be reminded "that they have found themselves unable to agree to a British programme on which we can make no compromise", and informed that Britain had decided not to further discredit international disarmament "by holding a naval conference already clearly doomed to failure". Thus Chamberlain reasoned Britain could limit her liabilities and allow the Admiralty "very considerable elasticity .... in laying out their programmes".\(^99\) The memorandum was never presented to the cabinet\(^100\) and Orde was at pains to repeat his objections to a non-aggression pact, pointing out that such a move might well strengthen the German menace Chamberlain feared.\(^101\) Nevertheless Orde was overuled. On September 25 Simon, with the cabinet's approval, telegraphed Clive that it "seems desirable to probe this matter somewhat further" although his action was to be "strictly unofficial".\(^102\) Simon had not however forgotten Orde's reservations, nor did Chamberlain appear entirely unaffected. On September 10 Chamberlain had written to Simon again, stating that what he in fact proposed "was to find out how far she (Japan) was prepared to go in renouncing a free hand in return for a bi-lateral pact".\(^103\) Clive was instructed to sound out the

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100 Feiling pg 253.
102 Ibid No.21.
103 Ibid No.19.
possibility of a bi-lateral pact "accompanied by satisfactory assurances of non-aggression in other directions, particularly China". He was also reminded that to "appear to be giving carte blanche to Japan" would be an "impossible position" and that "even the future of the Netherlands East Indies" was a matter of "vital concern".\textsuperscript{104} Clive got an opportunity three days later to ask Hirota exactly what he had in mind with regard to a non-aggression pact. Hirota replied that his government was "very anxious in case (the) naval conference failed that there should be no break in friendly relations with Great Britain and he would like to see some more definite understanding. This might perhaps take the form of a non-aggression pact". When Clive then enquired "whether he anticipated the failure of the conference" and whether the Japanese proposals were likely to prove unacceptable, Hirota replied that the proposals would "perhaps be acceptable to (Britain) .... but perhaps not to the Americans".\textsuperscript{105} Having committed themselves to freedom from an inferior ratio and qualitative limitations, the Japanese had also committed themselves to abrogation of the naval treaties and Hirota had already informed Grew of Japans decision to do this.\textsuperscript{106} His remarks to Clive indicate that he conceived of a non-aggression pact only as a means of softening the impact of that decision. Any hopes the British entertained of restricting Japanese expansion in the Far East or securing a naval policy more in line with their own strategic planning, through a diplomatic settlement, were ill-founded.

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{104}{Ibid No.21.}
\footnotetext{105}{Ibid No.22.}
\footnotetext{106}{See above pg 116.}
\end{footnotes}
Thus the British could not really expect to gain anything of real value from a non-aggression pact as the Japanese were prepared to give little away. Clive was "not even convinced" that Hirota had "a definite idea" of the form an Anglo-Japanese understanding would take.\textsuperscript{107} But Chamberlain was not yet ready to abandon hope. At the cabinet meeting of September 25 it had been agreed that Simon and Chamberlain would circulate a joint memorandum on the subject of a non-aggression pact.\textsuperscript{108} This, when eventually submitted to the cabinet on October 24\textsuperscript{109} repeated word for word, the fears Chamberlain had expressed in his earlier letter to Simon of fighting Germany with a hostile Japn at their back, and presented "the best possible case for a pact, based on apologetics rather than well-grounded calculations".\textsuperscript{110}

The Simon-Chamberlain memorandum reasoned that "in the measure that political appeasement can be introduced, Japanese naval pretensions are likely to abate".\textsuperscript{111} This assumption failed to convince the rest of the cabinet; the Admiralty remained firmly opposed and the Foreign Office retained its doubts. The memorandum concluded however with the thought that any decision, one way or the other, was to be postponed until further information on the Japanese view of a pact, promised earlier by Matsudaira,

\textsuperscript{107} D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.22.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid No.21 nl.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid No.29.
\textsuperscript{110} Trotter pg 106.
\textsuperscript{111} D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.29.
once he had received instructions, arrived. \textsuperscript{112} Despite considerable discussion of the problem the British dilemma remained unresolved when the preliminary conversations reopened in London on October 23. Nevertheless the end to the British policy split was in sight: The Treasury arguments had come to centre upon the idea of an Anglo-Japanese non-aggression pact should it prove possible to arrange this on suitable terms. This would then be used "as a lever for reducing Japan's naval programme". \textsuperscript{113} In the solution of their own dilemma the Japanese had effectively ruled out any chance of such a plan being accepted.

By 1934 it was clear that the British government could not afford to delay rearmament much longer in view of Britain's mounting strategic problems in Europe and the Far East. But the government was split as to what form this rearmament should take. One side argued that Britain should attempt to equip itself with the forces necessary for global defence, particularly through a numerical expansion of the navy. This involved a policy of Anglo-American co-operation which in turn required a settlement of the cruiser dispute - something which the first round of the 1934 preliminary conversations failed to provide. The other side argued that Britain should attempt to limit her liabilities through a diplomatic understanding with Japan, use this to secure a satisfactory naval agreement, and concentrate on defence in Europe. The problem, the British dilemma, was that an Anglo-Japanese understanding

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid No.26.  
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid No.29.
was incompatible with a policy of Anglo-American co-operation. The D.R.C report had only provided support for both points of view and in October 1934 the problem remained unresolved while the domestically unpopular duty of rearmament waited on the result. But a decision could not be long in coming: the argument for limited liability had come to rest on the possibility of an Anglo-Japanese non-aggression pact - something which no Japanese government could conclude on terms favourable to Britain.
CHAPTER III

(A) THE DRESS REHEARSAL

By October 1934 the fate of naval limitation in the Far East had already been decided. The Japanese government had irrevocably committed itself to a demand for parity and its construction plans involved the scrapping of existing qualitative limits on battleships, conditions it knew would be unacceptable to the Anglo-American powers. Meanwhile the United States remained firmly committed to the existing ratios. In an interview with Lord Lothian, editor of the "Round Table" on October 11 Roosevelt stated quite definitely "that in no circumstances would he agree to Japanese parity: that if Japan insisted on parity and denounced the treaties he would ask Congress for 500 million dollars for naval purposes and... that he would have no difficulty getting it".

The lines were firmly drawn and neither the Americans nor the Japanese displayed any inclination to compromise. This in itself was enough to doom any chance of a comprehensive naval settlement. The British, in theory, remained an unknown quantity. They had already reached a deadlock with the Americans regarding the strict application of the ratio system and one section of the government favoured some type of understanding with Japan. In practice the British were already committed to a policy of co-operation with the United States - only the terms remained to be settled. The Japanese position ruled out any possible Anglo-Japanese
understanding which did not entail a complete political, economic, and military surrender on the part of Britain in the Far East. Roosevelt at least was aware of this and informed Lothian that while

"he understood the British position... he did not believe that Great Britain or the Dominions could face the possibility of Japan having a larger navy than their own and that if Japan forced the building contest they would have to follow suit". ¹

Yet, as Tuleja notes, "with issues precisely defined, official and unofficial spokesmen on both sides of the Pacific continued to expand and clarify the naval positions adopted by their respective countries". Truly "no single international project during the early twentieth century elicited such monumental labour for a dead cause as did naval limitations". ²

The above situation was reflected in the course of the preliminary negotiations of October-December 1934. At the first meeting the Japanese adamantly demanded parity. Equally adamant the Americans countered with their conception of the mutual advantages of the existing system. No compromise was possible without one or both powers accepting a drastic reappraisal of their established political policy in the Far East - neither was prepared to do this. The British, still struggling with their policy dilemma, attempted to steer a "middle course" between the Japanese and American positions until ultimately the obstacles to such an approach could no longer be ignored. Reluctantly, the

¹ D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.27.
² T.V. Tuleja "Statesmen and Admirals" pg 116.
British then accepted the American "empty-handed" approach, i.e. to send the Japanese home with nothing agreed upon and let them consider their situation. The failure of the October-December negotiations finally forced the British to take up a definite position and it simply remained to be seen if this isolation had induced the Japanese to alter theirs.

In adopting the uncompromising attitude he had outlined to Lothian, Roosevelt faced the possible accusation that the United States was wreacking the preliminary conversations by making a bold statement of policy rather than attempting to reach a fair settlement through an attitude of give and take. To meet such a contingency Roosevelt provided Davis with a letter which embodied Roosevelt's "philosophy of disarmament" to be used if and when Davis thought the occasion demanded. The letter, in fact, simply restated the American position adopted in July 1934. Roosevelt proposed yet again "a total tonnage reduction of twenty per cent below existing treaty tonnage" and should this prove impossible a lesser reduction - fifteen, ten, or five per cent was to be sought. Only if all else failed was Davis to "seek agreement providing for the maintenance and extension of the existing treaties". Once again Roosevelt blandly assumed that if any of the above were possible then qualitative "technicalities" could easily "be solved by friendly conference". 3

That Davis did not see fit to use the above letter until December 1935 (by which time the United States had gone much of the way towards meeting British cruiser demands) was

3 F.R.U.S. pg 282.
probably fortunate for Anglo-American relations. In a joint memorandum on the pending naval discussions the British Admiralty and the Foreign Office had assumed that there was "every reason to suppose that the new Japanese naval proposal will prove unacceptable to this country" and that it would "ultimately have to be rejected both by ourselves and the Americans". To meet this situation the British had arrived at a possible compromise solution to be put to the Japanese (after consultation with the Americans) "at the appropriate moment". This compromise would take the form of a new multilateral qualitative treaty which "would also contain an article laying down the principle of equality of national status between all the signatory powers". The treaty would contain no quantitative limits but each power was to make a voluntary declaration of its intentions re future construction, which, "while not constituting a contractual obligation, would not be departed from without previous notice to other signatories". As a first step in the conversations the British representatives were to enquire of the Japanese whether they would require strict parity with the British Empire as well as with the United States. Consequently the "crucial question" anticipated from the Americans was whether Britain would continue to dissuade Japan from her parity claim and "only continue negotiations with Japan on the basis of the preservation of the existing Japanese ratio, not only to the British Empire but also to the United States". As the British considered their cruiser demands vital it was felt that any answer must be "largely determined" by the American attitude to these demands, for "the United States can
hardly expect us to fight their battles for them so long as they maintain the same unreasonable attitude towards the British proposals as they adopted last summer.\textsuperscript{4} As Roosevelt's letter indicates, the United States had every intention of maintaining its "unreasonable attitude" and the result could have been in theory a split between the Anglo-American powers. In practice the two powers were to resolve their differences when confronted by an even more "unreasonable" Japan.

Of course the concept of a reasonable position differed with the national standpoint but like the Anglo-American powers, Japan was not prepared to compromise vital interests. The chief Japanese delegate:\textsuperscript{5} Rear-Admiral Yamamoto was instructed to propose the complete abolition of aircraft carriers, and "if the condition of the conference permits, of capital ships. If this proved impossible he was to attempt to obtain a total tonnage restriction on those two classes, 'A' and 'B' class cruisers, destroyers, and submarines. Emphasis was to be placed "on the reduction of capital ships, aircraft carriers, and heavy cruisers" and the tonnage allotted to the United States and Japan for each of these types was to be equal. Yamamoto was also to inform the other powers of Japan's decision to abrogate the existing treaties and obtain "the mutual understanding of all nations concerned". The inclusion of other powers in the abrogation process was

\textsuperscript{4} D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.28.

\textsuperscript{5} The delegations remained those of July 1934 except for the inclusion of Yamamoto and a full team of technical experts for Japan and the substitution of Admiral Standley, the new Chief of Naval Operations for Admiral Leigh.
intended to "contribute to the alleviation of public opinion" although should this prove impossible Japan would still abrogate "by the end of the year according to its independent decision". 6 Furthermore, possibly because he was considered by some to be pro Anglo-American, 7 Yamamoto was permitted little freedom of action in the interpretation of his instructions. 8 Obliged to "follow the basic policy as indicated... as well as the import of this instruction" the only latitude allowed Yamamoto was the knowledge that the Imperial government was prepared to consider an agreement in which it would gradually obtain parity "in a limited time". 9 Thus the incompatible programmes adopted by the three Pacific naval powers appeared bound to produce a result like that of the 1932 Geneva Conference - a statement of mutually irreconcilable differences rather than a comprehensive settlement.

As in the earlier conversations of June-July 1934 it was decided that the talks would be conducted on a bi-lateral basis. 10 These opened with an Anglo-Japanese meeting on October 23 followed by an American-Japanese meeting the next day. At both meetings Yamamoto read out a detailed

7 Ibid pg 33.
8 Davis later cited Yamamoto's "limited authority" as one of the problems confronting the Anglo-American powers. D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.77.
9 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 14.
10 The Americans were again concerned that this would give Britain the chance to play "honest broker" (see above pg140) and this fear persisted throughout the conversations. D. Borg "The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis 1933-1938" pg 106.
statement of the principles on which the Japanese proposals were based although for the time being specific figures were omitted. The statement is worth quoting in full as the Japanese clung to the principles it contained throughout the 1934 conversations and the 1935-6 conference.

Yamamoto declared that

"To possess the measure of armaments necessary for national safety is a right to which all nations are equally entitled. In considering the question of disarmament, therefore, due regard must be given to that right in order that the sense of national security of the various powers might not be impaired: any agreement for the limitation and reduction of armaments must be based on the fundamental principle of "nonaggression and nonmenace".

To that end we believe that the most appropriate method in the field of naval armament is for us, the leading naval powers, to fix a common upper limit which may in no case be exceeded, but within which limit each power would be left free to equip itself in the manner and to the extent which it deems necessary for its defensive needs. It is desirable that this common upper limit should be fixed in the agreement as low as possible and that offensive arms should be reduced to the minimum or abolished altogether in favour of essentially defensive arms so as to facilitate defence and render attack difficult."\(^{11}\)

Sentence by sentence this policy statement could be easily defended on grounds of precedent. That all nations were equally entitled to the armaments necessary for national defence could not be denied so this constituted the main Anglo-American argument for the continuation of the Washington and London Treaties. Similarly the principle of

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\(^{11}\) F.R.U.S. pg 254.
"non-aggression and non-menace" and the strengthening of defensive armaments through the reduction or abolition of offensive armaments had been agreed on at Geneva in 1932. Even the proposed common upper limit and the freedom to equip as each power saw fit within this limit had precedents: The British had proposed what amounted to a common upper limit for aircraft at Geneva in November 1932 through "the immediate reduction of the air forces of the leading powers to the level of those of the United Kingdom",\textsuperscript{12} the French in an attempt to break the cruiser deadlock in 1930 had tabled a proposal which allowed the contracting powers to allocate the tonnage they desired to certain categories so long as their total allocation did not exceed a "global" tonnage limit, and the Anglo-Japanese compromise presented at Geneva in 1927 had called for a global tonnage limit for light cruisers, destroyers, and submarines. Moreover the Americans, in rejecting the 1928 Anglo-French naval compromise had suggested that should any power wish to favour a particular class of vessel "this could be accomplished by permitting any of the powers to vary the percentage of tonnage in classes within the total tonnage."\textsuperscript{14} As for the contention that a common upper limit should be fixed as low as possible, Article 8 of the League Covenant recognised "that the maintainence of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety" and this point had been adopted by the General Commission in Geneva in April 1932.\textsuperscript{15} Thus the

\textsuperscript{12} I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 13(2).
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid Annex 6.
\textsuperscript{14} See above pg 35.
\textsuperscript{15} I.M.T.F.E Ex 3011 Annex 8.
Japanese possessed a post-war precedent on the part of one or both of the Anglo-American powers for every point in their policy declaration. However when taken as a whole neither the British, nor the Americans, would accept the validity of Japan's general statement.

Having made the point that defensive armament should be strengthened at the expense of offensive armament. Yamamoto went on to advocate the abolition or drastic reduction of capital ships, aircraft carriers, and heavy cruisers as "peculiarly offensive naval weapons". Light cruisers, destroyers, and submarines, were identified as defensive weapons and it was proposed that "these should be merged into a single category with complete liberty for each power to build as it chooses". 16 When the Americans made the point that from the standpoint of commerce destruction, submarines could hardly be considered defensive 17 Yamamoto added that the I.J.N. regarded submarines as useful primarily for defence owing to their short range and relative unseaworthiness. As for "the offensive character of submarines vis a vis merchant vessels", this "would be ended if the existing agreement in the London Treaty against the use of submarines" in this way "were made effective and universal". 18 The Japanese had ignored the fact that while the Geneva General Commission had agreed that reduction should be applied primarily to offensive weapons, the Naval Commission had been unable to agree on which categories were actually "offensive". The Japanese had advanced only

17 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 40.
18 F.R.U.S. pg 255.
their own definition - a definition which the Anglo-American powers had rejected two years earlier. The British delegates pointed out that the capital ship had been considered "in relation to the British strategical position, to be an essentially defensive weapon" and its abolition far from decreasing Britains vulnerability would greatly increase it. Furthermore the abolition of aircraft carriers would prove difficult as the Royal Navy required these in case of attacks in the Mediterranean or North Sea by land-based aircraft. The problem, admitted at Geneva, that the definition of an "offensive" weapon differed with the strategic viewpoint of each power, remained beyond solution.

Equally important was the Anglo-American objection that a common upper limit was incompatible with the agreed principle that "all nations are equally entitled.... to possess the measure of armaments necessary for national safety". The British contended that naval strength was relative as well as absolute and that because of differences in relative vulnerability, to fix an absolute maximum naval strength - a common upper limit - would be to deny Britain that necessary "measure of armaments".

"In other words, if the British Empire, with world-wide responsibilities, agreed to be fixed at the common upper limit while other states were free to build up their strength to that limit, the safety of the British Empire against attack will no longer exist." The Japanese recognised the arguments for Britains naval requirements but contended that Japans position must be

20 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 34.  
considered in relation to the United States and that a country's vulnerability must also be reckoned in terms of natural resources and industrial power. So while the United Kingdom was more vulnerable than Japan, Japan in her turn was far more vulnerable than the United States. Also the British had been prepared to accept parity with the United States in 1921 despite a difference in vulnerability.22

The Japanese saw no objection to the United Kingdom fixing an agreed common upper limit to a point higher than its present requirements "so as to give the British Empire some future latitude of movement". Nor would the Japanese necessarily immediately build up to a limit should one be agreed upon. What the Japanese would not do was agree in advance to limit their navy "to a percentage of the total of any other navy, nor to discuss and agree to a building programme which would be a fraction of the common upper limit, though that would not be precluded". This last gave the British hope. As Britain did not contemplate the possibility of a war with the United States the difference in vulnerability was not considered a gap in the empires defences; parity with the Japanese was quite another matter. However, as the Japanese position did "not necessarily exclude the possibility of Japan's ultimately accepting the idea of a "gentlemans agreement" or "voluntary declaration" in relation to future naval construction "once the prestige point has been disposed of to her satisfaction" the British did not abandon hope of reaching a suitable compromise.23

22 Ibid No.37, I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 34-5.
23 Ibid No.37.
The Americans argued that equality of armaments did not entail equality of security and that in fact the latter had been established under the Washington Treaty system. Davis then asked the Japanese to indicate exactly what had occurred since 1922 to alter that situation. Yamamoto stated in reply that the Five Power Treaty had established equality of defence in the waters close to Japan, but not in the mid-Pacific and since that time developments in naval technology, particularly aviation, had "overturned the equilibrium". Consequently the old ratios now cast the balance greatly in favour of an attacking fleet and "could not possibly satisfy the feeling of security of the Japanese people". The possibility of the Japanese and the Americans finding common ground thus seemed fairly remote. Davis put forward the American policy: a continued adherence to the Washington and London Treaties with a proportionate reduction of the figures agreed on in those treaties. In reply Matsudaira pointed out that "his delegation was under definite instructions to propose a new basis for continuing naval limitation and a continuance of the present system could not be accepted by them". There appeared to be no way of spanning the gap.

The Japanese also advanced the argument that national prestige necessitated the parity demand. Yamamoto explained that the inferior ratio had led China to regard Japan with "a certain amount of contempt" and this had produced "serious complications in the Orient". The British were

24 F.R.U.S. pg 255.
25 Ibid pg 255.
ready to recognise the demands of national prestige provided these could be met simply with words. But the Americans denied the theory that an increase in naval strength raised a nations prestige and relative to the China question argued that Japan could best increase her prestige through co-operation with the Anglo-American powers.

Thus at the very beginning of the October conversations the Japanese and the Americans had outlined the arguments supporting their respective viewpoints. Both sides were to repeatedly advance these same arguments during the following weeks but neither side was prepared to compromise. Nor did the Anglo-American powers yet see eye to eye. On October 25 MacDonald and Davis agreed that the idea of a common upper limit was unacceptable but apart from this the attitude of the British and the Americans differed considerably. Phillips, the Acting American Secretary of State concluded that the Japanese were preparing the ground for a probable walkout and wished to create the impression that they had been "driven to that conclusive action by indifference to Japanese necessities in the field of self-defence on the part of other countries". The British had an entirely different conception of the

26 On October 31 Davis made the point that the United States did not feel its prestige affected by the fact that it possessed a smaller army F.R.U.S. pg 260.
27 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 40.
28 Borg pg 107.
situation. On October 23 Simon expressed doubts that the Japanese "seriously intended to denounce the Washington Treaty".\textsuperscript{31} Two days later MacDonald informed Davis that it was the British hope "that when the Japanese perceived that the British and the Americans would not agree to fundamental changes", they would become more reasonable and "be content with a statement in the preamble to the treaty voicing equality of sovereign rights, the treaty itself fixing respective relative limits approximately according to the present ratios".\textsuperscript{32}

British optimism was therefore severely shaken when at the American-Japanese meeting on the morning of October 29 Matsudaira announced that his government would denounce the Washington Naval Treaty before the end of the year.\textsuperscript{33} Matsudaira also stated that the common upper limit would be applied to France and Italy. For Britain to accept parity with European powers bordered on the fantastic. At the Anglo-American meeting that afternoon technical discussions were postponed as it was felt that these would "lack reality" in view of the fundamental changes proposed by Japan. MacDonald wished to continue for the present a "patient attitude" towards Japan but stated quite clearly that Britain could not accept a common upper limit "which would apply also to France and Italy and probably to Germany and Russia as well". However "if a tripartite agreement became impossible he did not question British parity with America based on the British conception of their own risks". Davis rightly concluded that the British had "reached no solution....in their own

\textsuperscript{31} F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 237.
\textsuperscript{32} F.R.U.S. pg 258.
\textsuperscript{33} I,M.T.F.E. Ex 1250
minds" to the Japanese problem. The British simply suggested that the American delegates urge the Japanese "to contemplate the situation which would result from no treaty" while they, drawing hope from the fact that Japan had not yet ruled out the possibility of a "gentlemans agreement" and because Japans qualitative figures were reasonably close to Britains, pursued their idea of a compromise agreement which preserved the existing ratios while meeting Japans prestige demands.

The British faced the problem of rejecting the common upper limit without "wounding Japanese feelings by insisting

35 Although the Japanese informed the Americans that as "the question of qualitative limitation is inseparable from Japans fundamental policy (then).... if the fundamental policy cannot be determined, there could be no sense in discussing details" (I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 41), the British succeeded in eliciting "tentative indications" as to their attitude towards qualitative limitation. The figures given to the British were:
Capital ships: failing abolition 28-30,000 tons
displacement: 14-inch guns
Aircraft carriers: failing abolition 20,000 tons
displacement: 6.1-inch guns
8-inch cruisers: If capital ships abolished or aircraft carriers retained would wish to possess a few, otherwise prepared to let the class die out
6-inch cruisers: numerical limitation of large 6-inch cruisers. Maximum displacement of 5,000 tons all other 6-inch cruisers
destroyers: 1,850 tons displacement: 5.1-inch guns
submarines: 2,000 tons displacement: 5.1-inch guns
The only major problem which presented itself was that should capital ships be retained Japan wished her submarine allocation to be set at the "impossible figure" of 120,000 tons.
on the public expression of a fundamental and permanent ratio". By way of a solution the cabinet decided that although it would have to concentrate on reaching an agreement on building programmes, it was prepared to subscribe to a general declaration laying down the fundamental equality of national status between the parties to any future treaty. Once the Japanese government accepted this plan in principle "the next task would be to secure agreement on actual programmes". In doing this the British representatives "should endeavour to persuade Japan to accept a building programme which would in practice leave the present relative positions unaffected". Consequently on November 7 the British presented the Japanese with draft declarations: one of which "mutually and unreservedly recognised" the principle of equality of national status, the other dealing with the form advance notification of building programmes would take.36 Having done this the British could do little more than wait and see if the Japanese prestige problem was simply one of semantics.

The Foreign Office had noted that Britain could only agree "to the above measures of quantitative limitation of satisfactory provisions in regard to future qualitative limitation were to be included in a future international treaty".37 This was important - in a memorandum written by Chatfield on October 30 and submitted by Eyres-Monsell to the cabinet, the point had been made that a naval race could be of two different types: (a) a race in numbers, and (b) a race in size. Chatfield considered (b) far more serious. To him "the greatest accomplishment of the

37 Ibid No.41.
Washington Treaty was not in limiting numbers or total tonnages, but in stopping the principle of going one better". Chatfield was therefore of the opinion that should no treaty be concluded "the one thing the interests of this country require is that the competition shall not be in size of ships". A race in numbers was considered "of lesser importance both as regards security, surprise and finance". As far as qualitative limitation was concerned, although the British wished to see the limits fixed as low as possible, Chatfield concluded that "almost any limit is better than none".\(^{38}\) This line of reasoning was to lead the British to insist on attempting to gain a qualitative agreement through a "middle course" long after the Americans had abandoned hope.

At this time the debate over the form Britain's defence policy should take was coming to a head. Although the rigid and uncompromising attitude of the Japanese delegation had made the pro-Japanese position harder to hold, its adherents were not yet ready to abandon it altogether. Nor for that matter had Simons feelers for a non-aggression pact which would alleviate Japan's naval demands been definitely rebuffed. In two reports to Roosevelt on October 31,\(^ {39}\) and November 6, Davis ventured the opinion that while the British remained just as opposed as the Americans to the Japanese

\(^{38}\) Ibid No.39.

\(^{39}\) In his despatch of October 31 Davis reported that Matsudaira had cited the Immigration Act as "the real cause of the hostility in Japan to the naval ratio". The Act was considered to be "a deliberate effort to brand them as an inferior race" and this was reflected in the naval ratio. In his reply Roosevelt dismissed this issue as a "smoke screen" F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 251, 263.
demands there was a "slight possibility" that they might still agree to some increase in the Japanese ratio. Davis nonetheless believed "that the major influence in the cabinet is definitely opposed to any deal that would be misinterpreted by the United States, and that, after all, might not be lived up to by Japan". Consequently he was sure "that the small, but powerful element that favours some kind of agreement with Japan will not prevail" and that if it came to a showdown not even this group would transgress the "cardinal rule" of doing nothing which would definitely alienate the United States. Confident that the group which favoured a policy of Anglo-American co-operation would eventually see its view gain general acceptance, Davis advised a policy of "infinite patience".  

However British vacillation had created an atmosphere of suspicion in Washington and the situation only worsened when the British proposals to be put to the Japanese on November 7 were leaked to the press. Some of this suspicion spilled over in Roosevelt's reply to Davis' report of October 31. Roosevelt regarded the possibility that Britain might go along with even a slight increase in the Japanese ratio as "unthinkable" and urged Davis to impress upon "Simon and a few other Tories...the simple fact that if Great Britain is even suspected of preferring to play with Japan to playing with us", Roosevelt "in the interests of American security" would approach public sentiment in the Dominions in an effort to make these territories "understand clearly that their future security is linked with...the United States". Davis did not act upon
Roosevelt's letter as by the time it arrived he considered the situation to have "changed sufficiently not to require such drastic treatment". The pro-Japanese faction was by this time in disarray and the British dilemma near solution.

On November 9, Lindsay, the British Ambassador in Washington, reported that the American naval delegates in London were not too pessimistic about the future of Anglo-American co-operation as they felt "that Japanese Admirals might restore Anglo-American solidarity by being too insistent". This in fact turned out to be the case. On November 19 Matsudaira finally returned an answer to Simons proposals. Matsudaira stated that it had not been Hirota's intention to correct political matters with the naval problem (despite the fact, which Simon pointed out, that Hirota's original observation had been delivered to Clive in connection with the naval conversations) and suggested, instead of a special non-aggression pact, the continuance of the Four Power Treaty. As for assurances over China, Matsudaira stated that Japan did not wish to discuss this specific subject of the moment "for fear of confusion" but threw out the idea that Japan and the United Kingdom might act in concert in relation to China or "to any other question". In reply Simon noted that Hirota had originally suggested a tripartite pact but "what was now put forward was a bi-lateral arrangement" which excluded the United States. As for the proposed "gentlemans agreement"

43 Borg pg 108.
45 Signed at Washington on December 12 1921: under the terms of this treaty the British Empire, the United States, France, and Japan agreed to respect each others rights in relation to insular possessions and Dominions in the Pacific. I.M.T.F.E. Ex 24.
of November 7 Matsudaira informed Simon, i.e. that "nominal equality combined with a binding obligation to preserve existing ratios was a thing which the Japanese government could not accept". 46 At a further meeting with Matsudaira on the 21st Simon failed to elicit a more favourable response to his enquiries 47 and the Japanese government's original answer had to be accepted as final.

Britain's policy dilemma had been decided for her. The pro-Japanese faction had come to centre its arguments on the theory that some sort of diplomatic understanding could be reached with Japan and that given a new political settlement the rigid Japanese attitude vis a vis naval ratios would be relaxed. Matsudaira had completely discredited this line of reasoning. Japan would neither enter into a tripartite agreement with the Anglo-American powers or a non-aggression pact with Britain, nor would she discuss China. Furthermore the compromise solution the British had devised before the October conversations opened had been presented to, and entirely rejected by, the Japanese. Japan's position had been so uncompromising that Anglo-American discussions on the cruiser dispute had been temporarily shelved as unrealistic. Yet, with or without a cruiser settlement the only course left open to the British was that of co-operation with the United States.

Thus on November 27 Davis was able to inform Roosevelt that there had been "a distinct crystallization of opinion" within the British cabinet "in the direction in which it

47 Ibid No.76.
ought to go". 48. The small wilful group that favoured playing with Japan, and who were supported by commercial interests seeking trade advantages" had lost ground and that "the wiser and more responsible leaders" were "convinced that a trade with Japan would be too costly and uncertain of fulfilment" as the Japanese could not be relied upon while the Americans would be alienated by such a move". Chamberlain was reported as saying that he "was now convinced Japan could not be trusted, that she was perhaps bluffing, and that England and the United States must at the proper time take a common stand and call this bluff". Davis had himself spoken to MacDonald, Simon, and Baldwin, and was "satisfied that their views with regard to the Japanese proposals and intentions are substantially the same as ours, and that the only real difference is in regard to tactics". 49

48 There is some dispute over the influences of work which led to the British dropping the idea of a separate deal with Japan. D.C. Watt in "Personalities and Policies" - Longmans - 1958, suggested that pressure from the Dominions and a "conspiracy" centred on the "Round Table" group led by Lord Lothian, the "Times" and "Observer" newspapers and General Smuts exercised the "crucial influence". A. Trotter in "Britain and the Far East 1933-1937" - Cambridge - 1975, with access to documents not available to Watt argues that "there is no evidence that expected Dominion reaction was more than a secondary factor in formulating policy", that the "Round Table" and Lothian "were not taken seriously", and concludes that "the pro-Japanese movement was not "killed" as a result of the work of Smuts and others but rather died down in November 1934 because of Japan's lack of response". Trotter's conclusion is correct: with or without Watt's conspiracy the idea of an Anglo-Japanese understanding would have been dropped after November 21 1934. Apart from that the dispute is academic. Watt's "conspiracy certainly existed (see D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.65) but its exact influence can only be guessed at. The safest approach is probably that adopted by D. Borg "The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis 1933-1938" - Harvard - 1964, who admits the existence of the conspiracy without passing any judgement as to its effectiveness.

49 F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 290-3.
The difference over tactics was to be a matter of some debate. The British were aware that if qualitative restrictions were agreed on then the British Empire would, by matching future Japanese construction, "be better able to keep the status quo". But it was recognised that the Japanese were also aware of this and that "without a qualitative limitation she would undoubtedly take the line of building out-sizes of ships with the purpose of upsetting the existing plans". Instead Yamamoto had already informed Chatfield that in a non-treaty situation Japan could not accept any qualitative limitations "as she would wish to build the types of ships best suited for her own defence". The Admiralty view, therefore, was that if nothing else could be agreed on it was imperative that some qualitative limits be retained as this was "the clearest and simplest system of ensuring the maintainence of the British status quo at sea and overcoming the difficulties of quantitative agreement".  

At an Anglo-American meeting on November 14, when a Japanese answer to the November 7 compromise was still pending, Davis stated that the United States had considered only two alternatives: "either that the present treaty bases would remain, or that there would be no agreement of any sort with Japan". Simon noted in reply that should the Washington Treaty disappear there was still a "middle position". Simon felt that three points fell outside of a quantitative agreement expressed in the form of a ratio. First; it might be possible to renew the non-fortification

clause - Article XIX of the Washington Treaty,\textsuperscript{51} second; agreement on qualitative limitation, and third; agreement on future construction programmes was still possible. Therefore Simon argued, if agreement could be reached on these three points "it would certainly be better than nothing".\textsuperscript{52}

The previous day Hull had cabled Davis that in the view of the State Department there was "practically no chance... of bridging the definite disagreement" between Japan and the Anglo-American powers. Since the Japanese had been afforded "every opportunity" to explain and justify their demands, the Department concluded that "the only construction" which could be placed upon the Japanese thesis was that it represented "a desire to obtain overwhelming supremacy in the Orient". This would destroy the delicate economic and political balance "embodied in the Washington and other treaties".\textsuperscript{53} Consequently on November 14 Davis was advised to "assume a receptive attitude only in any future discussion on a non-aggression pact and give evidence of no particular interest".\textsuperscript{54} At the meeting held on that day the British had emphasised the need to obtain some qualitative agreement,\textsuperscript{55} Davis himself was of the

\textsuperscript{51} Matsudaira, in presenting the original Japanese policy declaration had stated that Japan did not envisage any change in the non-fortification agreement. \textit{F.R.U.S.} pg 256.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{D.B.F.P.} Series 2 Vol XIII No.56.: The British position as Simon presented it was that "since it had been so difficult to get the Japanese here at all... by keeping them here now we might ultimately get something of value from them". \textit{F.R.U.S.} 1934 I pg 332. cited Middlemass and Barnes pg 785.

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{F.R.U.S.} pg 259

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid pg 261.

\textsuperscript{55} The Admiralty felt that since the Japanese battlefleet was already old, should some qualitative agreement be reached, Japan could "only increase the number of her battleships by building new ones and retaining the old ones, a step which would cause us little difficulty because we could act in exactly the same manner". The same line of reasoning was applied to aircraft carriers and large cruisers. \textit{D.B.F.P.} Series 2 Vol XIII No.39.
opinion that every possibility should be explored so as "to leave finally to Japan the responsibility of turning down every proposal for a compromise that was made", 56 and even Roosevelt was in favour of reaching some type of limited understanding with Japan should the conversations break up. 57 Nevertheless Hulls instructions of November 14 had ruled out the idea of a limited understanding, and therefore the British "middle course". It was Hulls view which was to prevail.

Hull was of the opinion "that the scope of the present conversations did not include the negotiation of a new agreement based on new principles". 58 Instead he believed Japan should receive no encouragement to expect any concessions on the conclusion of a substitute treaty for the Washington Treaty, but rather should be left to denounce that treaty on her own responsibility. He, therefore, advanced what was to become known as the "empty-handed" approach in a cable to Davis on November 22. In Hulls opinion once the Japanese had announced their abrogation of the Washington Treaty;

"The end of the first phase would properly be brought about by a clean break through denunciation by the Japanese. To proceed at once with what would be in fact new conversations looking toward a new objective would mean that we have conceded the fundamental Japanese demand in the present conversations, that is, that the existing ratios be given up. Moreover, an immediate beginning of new conversations or negotiations would establish a bad precedent and have a very bad psychological effect. It would mean that the Japanese

57 F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 273.
58 F.R.U.S. pg 261.
had been granted a substantial gain and there would be no opportunity for the development which is envisaged by us as likely within a reasonably short time, that is, an approach by the Japanese on their own initiative requesting further naval limitations discussion, resulting in the creation of a setting for such discussions favourable to the viewpoint that naval limitation is desirable. Should our expectation of such a development be disappointed as times goes by, there is nevertheless, before the termination of existing treaty obligations, a period of two years during which it will be possible to revise plans and estimates".

From this viewpoint Hull saw no "practical value" in the British "middle course" except for the purpose of filling in time until Japan denounced the Washington Treaty. Even then the "middle course" was considered "hazardous" in that it might inspire the Japanese to believe the Anglo-American powers "unduly perturbed" by Japan's position and in addition would afford further opportunities for suspicion and propaganda.59

The British, concerned that it should not appear that a possible agreement had been destroyed through Anglo-American impatience rather than Japanese intransigence favoured stalling in order "to give Japan enough rope". MacDonald did not favour the "empty-handed" approach as it was suspected that the Japanese militarists wished to avoid being "bound in any respect whatever" and that continued negotiations "would be helpful to the moderate element".60

However the chances of the "moderate" element in Japanese

59 Ibid pg 262-3.
60 Ibid pg 264.
politics regaining control of Japan's policy, if they had ever existed after September 1931, were remote indeed by November 1934. The Japanese were soon to reject the earlier British compromise proposal and on December 1 Davis reported Simon as being "less hopeful" of reaching agreement with the Japanese. Despite Simon's pessimism when Davis explained the now official American "empty-handed" approach at length on December 4 MacDonald expressed his belief that neither of the Anglo-American powers "had yet got all that was possible from Admiral Yamamoto", and his fear that the "empty-handed" approach might "shut the door for ever on any hope of agreement". Nevertheless for the sake of Anglo-American unity it was accepted that Japanese denunciation of the Washington Treaty would be taken as "tantamount to termination of the conversations by Japan" although MacDonald, clinging to his faith in a "strong civil element" in Japan made it clear that Britain had not cut herself completely away from contact with Japan and that some attempt should be made to persuade Japan to postpone denunciation. With this qualification Britain and the United States had reached agreement over tactics, i.e. the adoption of the "empty-handed" approach.

On December 14 Davis reported to Roosevelt that the British had come to realise "that if they are to induce Japan to "play ball" they must make her understand that she will have to play on the same team with both of us or play alone". By this time, however, further investigation

61 Ibid pg 268.
63 F.D.R.(F.A.)II pg 316-317.
of the Japanese position by the British had already revealed that the "middle course" would have failed anyway. The Japanese remained determined to abrogate before December 31 and had not retreated from their "no qualitative limitation without quantitative agreement" stand. The British were committed to the "empty-handed" approach but still retained their fears of having shut the door on Japan. They were therefore of the opinion that "from a political standpoint" should any adjournment of the talks take place it was preferable that this occur "before rather than after denunciation". In accordance with this the Americans agreed that the conversations would be ended through a tripartite meeting on December 19 or 20, that time being considered by Hull as "close enough to the Japanese denunciation to render the connection between the two events clear in the mind of the public". Paradoxically the Japanese probably found the date acceptable for exactly this reason and on December 19 at a meeting of the three Pacific powers a joint communique was issued in which all three powers agreed the conversations had "reached a stage when it is felt that there should be an adjournment in order that the delegates may

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64 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.94.
65 F.R.U.S. pg 272.
resume personal contact with their governments". 66

Thus the conversations of October-December 1934 closed with none of the outstanding questions resolved although the December 19 communique claimed it had never been their purpose "to reach any hard and fast conclusions". 67 The Japanese had never wavered from the initial arguments they had put forward at the beginning of the talks and this had naturally affected the course of the negotiations. The Americans had repeatedly stated that they stood for a 20% proportionate reduction on the basis of the existing ratios but as the Japanese had refused to budge from their parity demand, the Americans had never presented a concrete plan to this effect. 68 The British had continued to push for

66 Ibid pg 273. D. Borg in "The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis 1933-1938" - Harvard - 1964 pg 111 claims that "at Hulls insistence, the British and the Americans dragged out the London talks until December 19" and cites P.R.U.S. 1934 I pg 402 and F.R.U.S. pg 272, as proof. The present writer lacks access to the expanded "Foreign Relations of the United States" but the two volume 1943 edition Borg also cites fails to provide any proof of "insistence" on Hulls part. The same holds true for the other sources available. In view of the fact that in November 1934 the British were expressing the view that the conversations should not be broken off, (F.R.U.S. pg 266) and as late as December 13 were "anxious" that informal talks should "if necessary" continue until the end of the month, (D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.94) a word as strong as "insistence" must be regarded as suspect, especially as by "dragging out" the talks Hull would expose himself to that additional suspicion and propaganda which he had earlier feared. (F.R.U.S. pg 263).

67 Ibid pg 273.

68 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 44.
qualitative reduction and some discussion had taken place with the Japanese on this matter. However the British had stated early in the conversations that the parity demand was unacceptable. Therefore, in view of the Japanese "no qualitative without quantitative limitation" stand, the qualitative discussions had lacked any meaning. Furthermore even if the Japanese had been prepared to accept qualitative limits it is improbable that the Americans would have accepted any beyond those already in existence.

The October conversations deadlocked with the Japanese demanding equality of armaments and the Anglo-American nations insisting that this denied the principle of equality of security.

The Japanese demands had however strengthened Anglo-American co-operation in two ways. First; the British policy dilemma had finally been resolved and the pro-Japanese faction disabused of the notion that Britain could come to some arrangement in the Far East independently of the United States. Second; the Anglo-American cruiser dispute which had wrecked the June-July conversations and threatened to wreck the October conversations had been eclipsed by the Japanese demands. The need for a precise definition of parity between Britain and the United States seemed considerably diminished in the face of Japan's own demand for parity. No talks of any consequence took place on this subject for as Davis said: while "the Japanese proved completely uncompromising on quantitative questions, public opinion in the United States would find it difficult to
understand the continuance of talks on qualitative questions". The Americans had not abandoned their earlier position but some relaxation was evident. Standley admitted to Chatfield that the big 6-inch gun cruiser had been a mistake. More important Davis referred to the British cruiser memorandum of the previous July and stated that the United States was now "disposed to try and meet that claim, provided no increase in the total tonnage (allotted to Britain under the terms of the existing naval treaties) was involved". This assumed that the Washington Treaty would remain - should it be denounced then the question of Anglo-American parity became "entirely academic". Thus, although the chances of a comprehensive naval settlement seemed more remote by the end of the 1934 conversations, by shelving their cruiser dispute Britain and the United States had managed, in principle, to agree on policy. The only difference was that the British had qualified the "empty-handed" approach with their intention to continue informal negotiations with the Japanese.

70 Ibid No.75.  
71 See above pg 142.  
72 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.56.
(B) JAPAN CROSSES HER RUBICON

As the conversations progressed the Japanese government was making the necessary preparations for abrogation and the Japanese delegation in London sounding out the other Washington powers with a view to delivering a joint denunciation of the Five Power Treaty. None of the powers would assist the Japanese in this despite the fact that the French were also determined to abrogate. Consequently on December 29 1934 Japan delivered her abrogation notice alone. Anglo-American reaction was surprisingly mild but their subsequent courses of action differed greatly: the Americans adopted a "firm stand" and continued their drive for a "Treaty Navy", the British, with mounting problems of global defence, continued to explore the possibility of a limited naval agreement. Neither power gained any definite concessions from the Japanese but pushed by reports that if the naval conference provided for under Article XXIII of the 1922 Treaty was to be held, then it must be convened in 1935, the British government issued invitations for a new naval conference. If the Anglo-American powers had effected no change in the Japanese stand, the lack of response from the Japanese had scaled down their own naval ambitions. This was particularly true of the United States. When the second London Naval Conference opened on December 9 1935 both Britain and the United States were resigned to a quantitative naval race and sought only to wage this on favourable terms.
During the conversations the Japanese government pressed ahead with the constitutional formalities necessary for abrogation. "Many elements" in the Navy pressed for an immediate abrogation but Hirota insisted that such a move be delayed until the conversations had officially closed so as to "avoid the charge that they were disrupted by Japan's action". In this Hirota had his way but the victory should not be overrated. The I.J.N.'s main demand; abrogation, was not disputed - all that was at issue was a matter of timing.

On December 3 the cabinet authorised Hirota to submit proposals to this effect to the Privy Council which unanimously approved abrogation on December 19 thereby fulfilling the last formality required by Japanese procedure. Yet, during the course of the conversations, despite their oft expressed intention to denounce the Washington Treaty before December 31, the Japanese had proved somewhat reluctant to accept sole responsibility for that action. In accordance with their instructions the Japanese delegates attempted to gain the support of some or all of the Washington naval powers in denouncing the treaties. The Americans had cited the Washington and London Treaties as the basis of their naval position early in the conversations but the Japanese saw fit to approach the British, probably because of their apparent willingness

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73 F.R.U.S. pg 253-4,274. A similar clash between the Foreign Office and the I.J.N. was to occur in December 1936 concerning the merits of an immediate walkout from the Second London Naval Conference. See below pg 206n.


75 See above pg 159-160.
to compromise, on November 15 with a proposal that Britain associate itself with the Japanese denunciation. This the British soon rejected. The Japanese still had hopes of France and Italy and approached both during the course of the conversations, yet neither showed any inclination to help Japan out of her predicament. This left the Japanese government no choice but to act "according to its independent decision.

Consequently Japan crossed her Rubicon alone. On December 29 Ambassador Saito presented Hull with an official notification of Japan's decision to abrogate the Washington Treaty which would "accordingly cease to be in force after the 31st December 1936". Nevertheless Japan had "no intention whatever to proceed to naval aggrandisement or disturb international peace" and would "strive for the conclusion . . . of a new agreement, just, fair, and adequate in conception and consonant with the spirit of disarmament to replace the Washington Treaty". Tokyo also issued a public statement which claimed that "the existing naval treaties which recognise inequality of armaments among the Powers can no longer afford security of national defence to Japan" and also reiterated Japan's adherence to the principles of "non-aggression and non-menace", the abolition or drastic reduction of offensive armaments, and a common upper limit. Therefore to the Japanese government

77 Ibid No.83.
78 This in spite of the fact that on Jan 15 1935 the French government informed the Americans that France "would not in any case have been able to agree to its (the Five Power Treaty) continuation" D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.108, F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 343-4.
79 F.R.U.S. pg 274.
80 Ibid pg 275.
81 Q.I.A. 1934 pg 501-3.
abrogation was "only a logical outcome" of its "fundamental policy".

The Anglo-American reaction was surprisingly mild. Hull acknowledged "that any nation has the right not to renew a treaty", but expressed "genuine regret" at the Japanese action.\(^8^2\) The American government remained "ready to enter upon negotiations whenever it appears that there is prospect of arriving at a mutually satisfactory conclusion" although it was pointed out that the objectives envisaged at Washington in 1922 were still considered "fundamental among the objectives of the foreign policy of the United States".\(^8^3\) This conciliatory attitude was echoed in the American press.\(^8^4\) The British reaction was much the same. The Foreign Office toyed with the idea of sending a note to Matsudaira similar to Hull's statement but eventually decided against it as to do so would be for Britain "to assume a role which should be properly played by the United States".\(^8^5\) The official British reaction came with a speech by MacDonald in the Commons on January 28 1935 in which he stated that the Japanese decision had been received by Britain "with sincere regret" but expressed "great satisfaction" at Saito's assurances.\(^8^6\)

If their immediate reactions to Japanese abrogation were similar the subsequent courses of action adopted by

\(^{8^2}\) F.R.U.S. pg 275.
\(^{8^3}\) Ibid pg 275-6
\(^{8^4}\) Borg pg 112.
\(^{8^5}\) D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII Nos.103,104n4.
\(^{8^6}\) H.C.D. Vol 297 pg 24-5.
Britain and the United States differed greatly. The British continued to explore the possibility of a limited naval agreement with Japan and to explain fully the difficulties of the British position. The Americans adopted a somewhat stronger stance. For Hull the abrogation left the United States "at the Oriental crossroads of decision". One course was gradual withdrawal from the Far East: "potent appeasement in its worst sense", the other was a continued insistence on the maintainence of law, legitimate American rights and interests in the Far East, and observance of the existing treaties. In choosing the second course the Americans committed themselves to a "firm though not aggressive policy towards Japan".87

Certainly the Americans made it clear that they had not deviated from the policy initiated by Roosevelt in 1933. On June 25 1935 the Naval Supply Bill providing $460,000,000 for the construction of 24 new vessels88 received Roosevelt's signature. This new construction, under the terms of the Vinson-Trammel Bill, was simply the next instalment in Roosevelt's drive for a treaty navy.

The "firm stand" being taken by the United States was obvious in more than just the translation into reality of the Vinson-Trammel Bill. In March 1935 the government granted Pan-American Airways the right to construct landing fields and seaplane ramps at Wake, Guam, and Midway. Such developments could be easily defended on commercial grounds.

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87 C. Hull "Memoirs" Vol I pg 280-1.
88 1 aircraft carrier, 2 light cruisers, 6 submarines, and 15 destroyers. Provision was also made for 500 aircraft for service with the fleet. Tuleja pg 140.
but the American government did admit that such facilities could have a military application in wartime.\(^89\) This provoked allegations in Japan that the United States had violated both letter and spirit of Article XIX. Moreover on December 29, the same day as Saito's denunciation, the United States Navy Department had announced that the annual naval manoeuvres scheduled for May 1935; Fleet Problem XVI, would be held in the "Pacific Triangle" between the Aleutians, Hawaii, and the continental United States. Roosevelt was at pains to stress the coincidental nature of the manoeuvres, and to arrange goodwill visits of American warships to Japanese ports during the manoeuvres. Furthermore the image created by the State and Navy Departments must be measured against the publicity surrounding the Nye Committees investigation into the armaments industry and the passage of the first Neutrality Act in August 1935.\(^90\) Despite this the "unprecedented scale" of the manoeuvres: 160 ships and 450 aircraft, could only be regarded as a show of strength on the part of the Americans.\(^91\) As such it reinforced the "firm stand" taken by Hull and embodied in the "empty-handed" approach, but it failed to sway the Japanese.

There was some hope that the Japanese would still back down. In May 1935 United States Naval Intelligence assumed that the I.J.N. would accept the 5:5:3 ratio if the

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89 See above pg11
90 For a good summary of the arms embargo issue, neutrality, and American isolationism during the thirties see R.A. Divine "The Illusion of Neutrality" - Chicago - 1962.
91 Survey 1936 pg 79-80.
Americans would abandon all their bases in the Far East. Grew had supplied a more convincing argument to the State Department on December 27 1934: i.e. the Japanese government had allocated 47% of the total national budget for 1935-6 to the armed services. Since the national debt for 1936 would be equal to the national income of 1930, and in view of Japan's "vast outlay in Manchuria, her already heavily taxed population, and the crying need of large sections of her people for relief funds", Grew found it difficult to see how Japan could hope to achieve naval parity with Britain and the United States. However, having given formal notice of their intention to gain complete freedom from all quantitative and qualitative restrictions on future naval construction, and being in full control of the government, the armed services were capable of mobilising all the states resources for the establishment of a "national defence state". Therefore, far from being cowered by the magnitude of Fleet Problem XVI the Okada cabinet announced that Japan's own naval manoeuvres would be held from July to October in the area between Kamchatka and the Kuriles and the Marshall Islands, just west of the international date line. Despite the fact that half the major ships in the I.J.N. were undergoing repairs or still under construction the Japanese managed to muster 180 warships for the culminating stages of the manoeuvres in September 1935. With this riposte to the

92 F.D.R. (F.A.) II pg 505.
94 J.B. Crowley "Japan's Quest for Autonomy" pg 215.
95 Survey 1936 pg 80.
American challenge "all but the most disciplined pacifists could see that the point of no return had been reached".\textsuperscript{96} Any attempt on the part of Japan to attain parity by building on a ship to ship basis would, under the conditions described by Grew have threatened a complete economic collapse. But as the armed services already controlled the nation's economy and as the I.J.N. already possessed plans for a revolutionary departure for the existing qualitative limits, Japan could afford, or at least the Navy reasoned Japan could afford, to play at naval competition with the Anglo-American powers and possibly win by changing the rules. This was what doomed British attempts to reach a settlement.

On December 8 1934 Hirota had informed Clive that the I.J.N. would prove more reasonable once the Washington Treaty had been denounced and the ratios eliminated. Although, as Vansittart noted, this read like "jam tomorrow",\textsuperscript{97} at the beginning of 1935 it gave the British some cause to hope that the Japanese could yet be brought to see their point of view. Events were soon to demonstrate the futility of this hope. On December 28 Yamamoto presented the British with specific figures for the proposed drastic reduction of "offensive" arms: something noticeably absent from the original Japanese policy declaration. Yamamoto proposed that, should the abolition of capital ships and aircraft carriers prove impossible, each power should agree to limit the number of its capital ships to six or eight, its aircraft carriers to three, and its 8-inch cruisers to

\textsuperscript{96} Tuleja pg 136.
\textsuperscript{97} D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.89n2.
eight. For 6-inch cruisers, destroyers, and submarines, Japan still favoured a global tonnage limit, to be set at 350,000 tons with maximum limits for each category set within this figure. The Japanese had thus indeed proposed a "striking reduction" but they based this on the principle of a common upper limit which had already been rejected as being unacceptable by the Anglo-American powers.

Yamamoto did not however leave the British entirely without hope. Speaking for himself, Yamamoto stated that in his opinion his present instructions need not be regarded as final, that "the proposal for "programmes of construction" over a term of years might still form a basis for agreement", and that it "would be best if he returned to Japan to explain this proposal to his government".

To assist Yamamoto in his task the British Foreign Office prepared a "Note on the Minimum British Naval Strength necessary for Security", reasoning that this might have much the same sort of effect as the cruiser memorandum presented to the United States in July. The Foreign Office stated that Britain must have at least fifteen capital ships as, given less than this figure, "it would not be possible to provide reasonable security both in European waters and elsewhere". Britain would also require at least five aircraft

98 Ibid. No.98: 6-inch cruisers were to have a maximum limit of 200,000 tons, destroyers 150,000 tons and submarines 100,000 tons.
99 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 37.
100 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.98.
101 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 14(2)
carriers and fifteen heavy cruisers. Furthermore even on the basis of fifty cruisers Britain would need to raise the 1930 figure of 339,000 tons to 410,000 tons. As it was, Britain required seventy cruisers and proposed to make up the additional tonnage through the retention of average vessels. Average destroyers would also be retained unless submarines were abolished, but should the other powers wish to increase their submarine allocation Britain would be prepared to devote her extra submarine tonnage to destroyers. The note avoided any mention of a ratio but argued that Britains "unique situation" implied "the possession of a fleet of sufficient strength to be able to dispose simultaneously in more than one area forces adequate to meet all reasonable defensive needs". This ruled out parity and that in turn made the notes qualitative proposals: a limit of 25,000 tons and 12-inch guns on capital ships, unacceptable to the Japanese.

The British could in fact gain nothing from this approach, it was recognised that Britain could not "hope to change the American attitude, and that the Japanese were very reluctant to alter theirs. British hopes rested with Yamamoto "who quite recognises our special position and requirements" and who might, on his return to Japan, "succeed in persuading the Ministry of Marine to adopt a compromise of the kind we have suggested" i.e.: advance notification of construction programmes. However Clive had already informed the Foreign Office that Yamamoto had presented his report but felt there were too many "diehards" to make it acceptable.

103 Ibid No.111.
104 Trotter pg 114.
Under these circumstances the British chances of success were only reduced further when the Americans again leaked the compromise proposal to the press and thereby caused the Japanese government to stiffen its public posture. Yet the deadlock on the ratio question left the British no choice but to continue to push for advance notification as the only course of action left open to them, or to abandon all hope of incorporating Japan into some system of qualitative limitation. Eyres-Monsell admitted as much to the Commons on July 22 1935 when he stated that if Britain was to continue to enjoy the benefits of a greatly reduced navy it would have to be done "by some other system than the Treaty of Washington". Consequently the ratio system had been "abandoned" and Britain had "gone in for a system of programmes because some countries think it against their national dignity to accept permanently a ratio much below that of any other country".

Britain also continued to pursue the idea of qualitative limitation. However the United States still supported the big ship and gave "no definite indication" of any willingness to reduce below the existing limits. Moreover the Japanese still insisted on a quantitative settlement as a precondition for qualitative limitation, for as Yamamoto pointed out in his report on the 1934 conversations, a purely qualitative settlement would affect Japan "very unfavourably" in view of the I.J.N.'s plan to equip itself

"with such an armament as to give . . . . a guarantee of national security at a smallest possible armament expenditure". There was little hope of Japan accepting either qualitative limitation or the British building programme compromise. Even if the British could obtain some agreement on the latter this was unlikely to do more than what Roosevelt expected of it, i.e.: to "make unnecessary the expenditure of large sums for naval intelligence purposes". Furthermore, in the unlikely event of Japan eventually accepting qualitative limits it was improbable that the United States would allow these to be set much below the existing levels. The British could protest in vain that their proposals, if accepted in their entirety would produce a substantial reduction. Caught between the conflicting demands of Japan and the United States and facing new strategic problems in Europe, Britain's disarmament ambitions had shrunk to a point where she wished only to ensure that the arms race, which now seemed almost inevitable, was waged on her own terms.

The position of the British Empire in 1935 was not one to be envied. In advocating declared building programmes the British were assuming that naval strength was absolute rather than relative. Thus the naval ambition of His

110 Nor for that matter would it have been safe for the British to allow this to happen. In 1934 the Italians laid down two new 35,000 ton 15-inch battleships. By the spring of 1935 construction of these had reached a stage where significant modification was no longer possible and the French had decided that they had no choice but to follow the Italian example: Survey 1936 pg 77.
Majesty's Government was that outlined in the White Paper on Defence published in March 1935, i.e.:

"to secure an arrangement that will avoid competition in naval armaments while leaving us free to maintain a fleet of the level necessary for our absolute requirements".

By 1935 Britain's absolute requirements had increased to a point well in excess of the 5:5:3 ratio. When the reconstituted D.R.C. finally reported in July 1935 it recommended, among other things, the completion of the Singapore base, and the resumption of a two power standard, so that Britain could maintain a fleet in the Far East capable of deterring Japan, and a fleet in home waters capable of opposing Germany. In theory Britain moved closer to this ideal situation in June 1935 through the Anglo-German naval agreement. This restricted the German Navy to 35% of the total tonnage of the British Navy, although the Germans were to be allowed, within their total tonnage allocation to build up to 45% of British submarine tonnage and ultimately to attain parity in this category. The Admiralty, placing an unjustified faith in adsic did not object to this concession. More shortsighted was the fact that Britain remained qualitatively unbound, though some hopes of ultimately bringing Germany into a qualitative agreement were entertained. But the argument that the ensured "a superiority over the German fleet twice as great as we (Britain) possessed in 1914, and avoided a race that would beggar the British Treasury" seemed "unanswerable".

111 G.B.P.P. Cmd 4827.
112 See above pg 138.
113 B.B. Schofield "British Sea Power" pg 125.
114 Templewood "Nine Troubled Years" pg 140.
This echoed the view expounded in the White Paper on Defence which stated: "the main fleet is the basis upon which our strategy depends". Germany, however, was building not for another Jutland but with a view to commence destruction, and, to meet a course de guerre, the White Paper noted, Britain would require considerable numbers of cruisers ... over and above those forming part of the main fleet". Therefore even if Britain could secure Japanese acceptance of a continued 5:5:3 this would need to be based only on vessels serving with the fleet if Britain was to secure her two power standard vis-à-vis Japan and Germany while guarding against the possibility of a course de guerre. This argument - that ratios should only be applied to the main fleet - was the issue which had so embittered Anglo-American relations in 1927-8.

Britains position deteriorated still further during the course of 1935. Hitherto Britain had considered only Germany and Japan as potential enemies and even this strained her resources. However in October 1935 the African ambitions of Mussolini culminated in the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. In November the League imposed ineffective economic sanctions which revealed its own impotence but failed to halt Mussolinis conquest.115 During the Abyssinian crisis the Admiralty rejected the idea of military sanctions since a war with Italy would inevitably leave the fleet weakened through losses or damage. This was considered "too high a price to pay even in a victorious war, given the possibility of trouble with Japan or

115 A. Eden "Facing the Dictators" pg 318.
Germany". Nonetheless Britain did participate in the economic sanctions and by doing so earned herself a third potential enemy; in this case a Mediterranean sea power and a military threat to Egypt and Suez. Thus in view of her increased strategic liabilities Britains absolute naval requirements involved, if the Empire was to be assured of naval security, an upward revision of her naval strength vis a vis Japan and the United States, for by the end of 1935 the 5:5:3 ratio would not, if strictly applied, allow Britain to meet unaided the European naval threat, if she was to maintain a naval presence in the Pacific.

In spite of this the British pressed ahead with plans for a new naval conference under the terms of Article XXIII of the Washington Treaty which stated that this should meet before the end of 1935. There were some fears that if the conference was not held in 1935 it would not be held at all for on August 18 a Japanese Navy spokesman informed the press that

"after December 31st there can no longer be any question of the convocation of the conference provided for by the Washington Treaty but only of an entirely new conference which we will only accept if our principles of naval disarmament are previously admitted: otherwise we prefer to remain without a treaty".  

116 A.J. Marder "The Royal Navy and the Ethiopian Crisis of 1935-6". American Historical Review Vol 75 June 1970, pg 1343. The Admiralty had no doubt it could soon win command of the Mediterranean. But if it sustained heavy losses this might fatally compromise the empires security in view of the fact it took four years to build aircraft carriers and capital ships.


Consequently on October 21 Britain issued invitations to all the Washington powers to attend a new conference in London beginning on December 2 1935. By November 21 the last of these powers; Italy, had accepted. Due to French objections Germany was not invited. Germany remained bound quantitatively as German strength had been fixed relative to that of Britain although the application of qualitative limits to Germany and the Soviet Union remained an open question. Yet although all five Washington powers had agreed to attend a formal conference there seemed little hope that any settlement could be reached in view of the policy statements of the Pacific Powers.

On August 26 the Japanese government had informed the British Foreign Office that it was definitely "unable to accept any agreement on naval limitation except on a basis of qualitative and quantitative limits" and that it could not agree to "a system of unilateral declaration of building programmes" as this conflicted with the Japanese claim to a common upper limit. Yet on October 2 Hull informed Saito that the United States "had no change from the attitude (it) had taken generally in the bilateral conversations in London" and on October 21 Hoare, when approached by the Japanese embassy, stated that "there was no possibility of any change of opinion on the part of His Majesty's Government". Thus the results of any naval conference promised to be nothing more than a mutual restatement of differences.

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119 Ibid No.533.
120 Survey 1936 pg 84-5.
122 F.R.U.S. pg 278.
However, the gap between the Anglo-American nations was closing. Both agreed to reject Japan's demand for parity and that neither side would, as in 1934, depart from its opposition to an increased Japanese ratio without first informing the other.\(^{124}\) Also, possibly because Roosevelt wished to make "manifest" the American desire to negotiate a new naval treaty,\(^{125}\) the Americans declared themselves prepared to accept a 14-inch gun for capital ships, instead of the 16-inch guns permitted at Washington.\(^{126}\) Furthermore although they continued to insist on a limit of 35,000 tons displacement the Americans held out "the possibility that, with the experience gained in the construction of the first two new capital ships, the United States government might be prepared to agree to a reduction of from 1,000 to 2,000 tons in the displacement of future ships".\(^{127}\)

The American position had shifted from the proposed 30% all-round cut on the basis of the existing ratios to a point where they wished only "to salvage everything possible from the Washington Treaty",\(^{128}\) believing it to be "the part of wisdom to seek agreements on those elements of the naval question for which a solution can now be found for the purpose of avoiding an unrestricted naval race".\(^{129}\) By October 1935 the United States was prepared to settle for a general qualitative agreement even without Japan" on the understanding that the Japanese would undertake, in the

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\(^{124}\) Ibid No.547,551,551n4.  
\(^{125}\) F.D.R.(F.A.)III pg 46.  
\(^{126}\) The only post-Washington exceptions to the 14-inch limit were to be the two Italian battleships building or at most two each for France, Italy, and Germany. D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.527 Annex I.  
\(^{128}\) Ibid No.507.  
\(^{129}\) F.R.U.S. pg 277.
form of a "gentlemans agreement" not to construct vessels of a type likely to upset the general agreement. By November 26 Hull was even willing to accept a Three Power Treaty if this possessed "escalator" clauses. In short, the Americans had adopted the logic behind the British "middle course"; that a naval race with rules was better than nothing at all. And if this was all that could be achieved then at least the Anglo-American powers had the consolation of knowing that the question of numbers of ships, ie. the cruiser dispute, need never arise.

Thus throughout 1935 the Americans had resolutely continued their "empty-handed" approach while the British had had to sound out possible areas of compromise through informal negotiations with Japan. Neither approach had elicited a single definite concession from the Japanese. On the other hand American resistance to Japanese demands had not been relaxed in any way and the British compromise proposals had consisted of a semantic change in the ratio system or ignoring the Japanese quantitative demands altogether. However during the course of the year the Americans had gradually shifted more and more towards the British point of view until like the British they sought only to fight a quantitative naval race on favourable qualitative terms although they "made it plain that they did this without enthusiasm". The British, despite the

130 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.520.
131 Hull pg 447.
132 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.507. The idea of a separate Anglo-American agreement was ruled out as unnecessary because of the similarity of the British and American positions. Hull pg 447.
fact that they postponed battleship construction pending the results of the conference,\textsuperscript{133} and clung ostensibly to the ideal of quantitative and qualitative limitation probably could not, considering the European naval threat they forced in December 1935, have put forward any quantitative proposals compatible with even the American concept of parity, let alone the Japanese demand. Nevertheless both Anglo-American powers entered the second London Naval Conference with some hope of securing at least an interim agreement and determined not to appear to be treating what was in fact already a dead cause, too casually.

Some slight hopes were still being entertained that Japan might yet come to accept the Anglo-American viewpoint. When in mid-October the spokesman for the Japanese Foreign Office stated that the government would be prepared to participate in a formal naval conference without insisting on preconditions to be met in return for participation some foreign observers thought they detected a "shift in emphasis" which might include a relaxed naval policy.\textsuperscript{134} Furthermore Hoare noted "with interest" the comment of the Japanese Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs that once Admiral Kato, the Chief of Naval Staff in 1930 and one of the foremost advocates of Japan's parity demand, retired in November 1935, "a more accommodating view" might ensue.\textsuperscript{135} This was however the same "don't antagonise the militants and the moderates might prevail" straw which the west had been clutching at since September 1931. By 1935 only the most determined

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{133} G.B.P.P. Cmd 4827. L.S. Amery "My Political Life" Vol III pg 158.
\item \textsuperscript{134} F.R.U.S. pg 281.
\item \textsuperscript{135} D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.443,452.
\end{itemize}
optimists continued to take it seriously. The American Embassy in Tokyo was of the opinion that "no appreciable alteration" in the Japanese stand or any "substantial concessions" would be forthcoming in an effort to prevent the entrance of Japan into a non-treaty status in January 1937. When the second London Naval Conference, postponed for a week at Davis' request, finally opened on December 9, this evaluation was to be proved correct almost immediately.

CHAPTER IV

(A) THE SECOND LONDON NAVAL CONFERENCE

The failure of the "empty-handed" approach became obvious on the first day of the 1935-6 London Naval Conference. The Japanese presented, unaltered, their 1934 demand for a "common upper limit" and stuck to this "purely wrecking proposal" throughout the conference. The Americans still claimed to favour an all-round reduction of 20% on the existing ratios but as there was no chance of this gaining general acceptance the only proposals to receive any attention apart from the Japanese demand were the European proposals for the declaration of building programmes and qualitative limitation. However the Japanese persisted with their demand, refused to entertain the idea of qualitative without quantitative limitation and eventually, as the Americans had at Geneva in 1927, refused to discuss any other proposal until their basic premise: in this case the common upper limit, had been recognised. This finally forced the issue, and on January 15 1936 the other delegations definitely rejected the common upper limit as a basis of discussion. The Japanese announced their withdrawal on the same day. From that point on events moved fairly rapidly to produce on March 25 1936 the second London Naval Treaty. This, although it embodied definite

1 R. Craigie "Behind the Japanese Mask" pg 17.
2 See above pg 31.
qualitative limits and advance notification of building programmes, was due to the non-participation of Japan, so riddled with "escalator" clauses as to be little more than a face-saving device soon to prove totally ineffective in checking a new naval race.

Unlike the 1934 conversations the second London Naval Conference was attended by all five Washington powers and by representatives of India, the British Dominions, and the Irish Free State. The chief American delegates were once again Davis and Standley, accompanied for a time by Under-Secretary of State Phillips. The British delegation was nominally headed by Hoare, until his resignation as Foreign Secretary, and then by Eden, but neither took an active part in the conference and it was in fact Eyres-Monsell, now Lord Monsell, who, assisted by Chatfield and Craigie, led the British delegation. The Japanese considered reappointing Yamamoto, but because of the high rank of the western delegates the Japanese delegation was headed by Admiral Nagano, War Councillor to the Okada cabinet and an ardent supporter of the parity demand, and by Nagai, the Ambassador to France. Also unlike the 1934 conversations, talks were not conducted

3 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 57. Nagano, one of the delegates to the 1932 Geneva Conference, was to become Navy Minister in the Hirota cabinet in March 1936.

4. According to Kase, a minor member of the Japanese delegation, there was a split between Nagano and Nagai, the former reflecting the Navy view and insisting on an immediate walkout, the latter the view of the Foreign Office and insisting on reaching a compromise so as to avoid a direct break. However the chauvinism of the Japanese public made Nagai's position "impossible" and it was Nagano who eventually prevailed. See T. Kase "Journey to the Missouri" pg 32.
on a bi-lateral basis but, as at the 1930 conference, by a first committee, chaired by Monsell, and assisted by technical sub-committees.

The first plenary session of the conference was opened on December 9 by Baldwin, now Prime Minister, who stated that the British proposals remained those put forward in Geneva in July 1932 and that the government "attached the greatest importance to a continuation of limitation in both the quantitative and qualitative field". However since quantitative limitation based on anything resembling a ratio system would be "difficult of attainment" Britain remained in favour of the "middle way" i.e. "that the quantitative side of the treaty should consist of unilateral and voluntary declarations by each of the signatory Powers limiting its construction over a period of, say, six years". As for qualitative reduction Britain proposed yet again those restrictions rejected by the United States in 1932.5

Davis in his opening speech read out the letter Roosevelt had intended for the October 1934 conversations,6 despite earlier fears that this might be regarded as antagonistic in view of the British stand on cruisers.7 In October 1934 Roosevelt had called for a twenty, fifteen, ten, or even five per cent all round proportionate reduction, or "if all else fails", Davis was "to secure agreement providing for the maintainence and extension of existing treaties over as long a period as possible". In December

5 G.B.P.P. Cmd 5137.
6 See above pg 157.
7 F.D.R. (F.A.) III pg 92.
1935 Davis insisted that the disarmament ambitions of the United States remained the same. It was however recognised that since October 1934 the situation had "undergone considerable modification" and therefore Davis suggested that the objective of the naval powers must simply be to ensure "that the essential balance between our fleets, should be maintained by means of mutual agreement rather than by expensive and dangerous competition" – a veiled reminder that the United States could probably maintain a 5:3 ratio vis à vis Japan even under conditions of unrestricted building. The positions taken up by the Anglo-American powers: American proportionate reduction versus British qualitative limitation suggests that the cruiser dispute was still very much alive. In fact this was no longer an issue. Before the Conference opened Standley made a courtesy call on Chatfield and "at once said: "Admiral, I want you to know straight away that I haven't come over here to tell you how many cruisers you are to have". In reiterating the plans rejected at Geneva in 1932 the Anglo-American powers were simply ensuring that the onus of failure did not fall upon them. The problem was not the cruiser dispute, nor even the doubts expressed by the French and Italian delegates over quantitative limitation, but the uncompromising stand taken by the Japanese.

From an informal meeting with the Japanese on December 7 the British were aware that the Japanese intended to demand a common upper limit for the Pacific naval powers although

9 A.E.M. Chatfield "It Might Happen Again" pg 71.
10 Survey 1936 pg 89.
some variation might be made to meet differences in vulnerability. "This, in the Japanese view, would result in equality between Japan and the U.S.A. but not necessarily equality between Japan and the British Empire". Should the Anglo-American powers accept the common upper limit Japan would discuss qualitative limitation "but unless satisfied quantitively" reserved her position.\[11\] At the December 9 meeting Nagano stated the Japanese position with greater clarity. Nagaro's government believed that a new treaty "should be based upon the fundamental idea of setting up, among the great naval powers of the world, a common limit of naval armaments to be fixed as low as possible, which they shall not be allowed to exceed; simultaneously offensive forces must be drastically reduced and ample defensive forces provided so as to bring about a substantial measure of disarmament, thus securing a state of nonmenace and nonaggression among the powers".\[12\]

In other words the slender hopes the British had pinned on Kato's retirement had come to nothing and the "shift in emphasis" some had detected, when the Japanese had agreed to attend the conference, had no significance. Japan's position was precisely what it had been in October 1934 and was therefore unacceptable to the Anglo-American powers. Unless the Japanese could be induced to accept some compromise such as declared building programmes or a separate qualitative agreement, the second London Naval Conference was doomed to failure.

Just how rigid the Japanese position was became obvious the following day at the first meeting of the First

\[11\] D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No 570.
\[12\] F.R.U.S. pg 284.
Committee. Nagano put forward Japan's fundamental thesis which repeated almost word for word the policy statement Yamamoto had presented on the first day of the October 1934 conversations. On this basis Nagano proposed yet again the abolition of aircraft carriers and, if possible, capital ships, as offensive weapons. Davis explained that the Americans were "demanding absolutely nothing" being "satisfied with the existing treaties" but pointed out that the United States continued to adhere to the principle of proportionate reduction. The issue was in fact that which had faced the first London Naval Conference and it was Monsell who put his finger on it. Monsell considered it "imperative to find some way of perpetuating the underlying principles of the Treaty of Washington". The problem of defining those principles remained. As the changes in the existing system of naval limitation which the Japanese thesis involved were so important and far-reaching, Monsell sensibly proposed that the conference take this as its first business and examine it on its merits.\footnote{13 D.L.N.C. pg 275.}

During the next six days three more meetings of the First Committee and two informal Anglo-Japanese meetings were held. At these the Japanese proposals and the Anglo-American objections to them were discussed. On the 11th Monsell argued that equality in naval armaments upset equality of security,\footnote{14 Ibid pg 312.} a point supported two days later by Davis, who maintained that with the Nine Power Treaty as a firm political basis, and with the inclusion of
Article XIX, the Five Power Treaty had established "as near as was humanly possible a state of non-menace, non-aggression, and equal defence". Nagano, however, found himself unable to "feel that the Washington Treaty affords equal security to all" and instead claimed that the 5:5:3 ratio had been established "amid the very abnormal conditions prevailing immediately after the world war . . . without great effort being made to study the question of vulnerability". 15

This involved the knotty question of differences in vulnerability. The Japanese had proposed that the common upper limit should be fixed as low as possible and that the leading naval powers would therefore have to make the greatest sacrifices. In other words the Anglo-American powers would grant Japan parity by scrapping down to her level so that instead of the Japanese having to accept the economic burden of matching the naval strength of the U.S.N., the Americans would be expected to throw away anything achieved through Roosevelt's building programme. Yet Nagano could cite a precedent for his proposal. The Hoover Plan of June 1932 had in fact involved such one-sided sacrifices but Nagano found his "state of mind similar" to that of Simon in November 1932 when he (Simon) had proposed a common upper limit in air armaments to be achieved through rival nations scrapping down to Britain's level. Both Hoover and Simon had been prepared to propose further reductions for all powers once their rivals had made the initial sacrifices, but so for that matter was Nagano. The problem was that the British had "absolute needs of naval security . . . quite apart from any relative ones" and would therefore have to propose a high

15 Ibid pg 365.
common upper limit. Furthermore, they argued that as both a Pacific and a European power, Britain possessed a higher degree of vulnerability and that, therefore, "the responsibility of scattering its forces will make it necessary for it to possess two parity strengths".

Naturally the Japanese persisted in the belief "that comparisons between navies must be made on the basis of the total strength of each". Nevertheless they did recognise "that there may be different degrees of vulnerability between countries" and at the Anglo-Japanese meeting on December 13 proposed "adjustments" in the common upper limit so that Britain, Japan, and the United States would all possess naval forces over and above the limit, the "adjustment" of Britain being larger than that of the other two. This compromise resulted only in semantic quibbling. Mansell suggested that the "adjustments" were only another ratio while Nagano denied this, claiming that vulnerability adjustments would only give some powers "parity plus alpha". The question was, in any case, academic. France and Italy would not consent to a common upper limit, especially if they were to remain bound by it while the Pacific Powers built above it. Yet the British would not accept parity with any European powers, particularly as both they and the Americans argued that any common upper limit would have to apply to all powers, including Germany.

16 Ibid pg 312.
17 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 70.
18 D.L.N.C. pg 364.
19 Ibid pg 307.
21 D.L.N.C. pg 396.
and the Soviet Union, and the end result would be a great increase in naval armaments.\(^{22}\) For their part the Japanese were "perplexed" by the demand of the Irish Free State to be allowed to build up to any common upper limit which was agreed upon, and "astounded" by the British suggestion that this right should also be extended to each of the British Dominions.\(^{23}\) Consequently the only result of examining the Japanese proposal on its merits was a mutual restatement of differences. Japan persisted with her proposed common upper limit, the other four Washington powers pronounced it unacceptable.

Talks on the Japanese proposals had obviously, at least for the time being, deadlocked. Therefore at a meeting of the delegation heads on December 18 Monsell suggested that the common upper limit should be shelved for a while and that the conference should proceed first with the British proposal for the limitation of programmes and then with the Franco-Italian proposal of "preavis" (system of advance notification). Nagano agreed to go on to the discussion of these proposals although he expressed the hope that the conference would be able to return to the Japanese proposal "at the earliest possible moment".\(^ {24}\) This development gave the Anglo-American powers some grounds to entertain the hope that

"a solution might be found along the lines of limitation of programmes which without specific ratios would enable the Japanese voluntarily to declare a building programme in harmony with the relative strengths formulated".\(^ {25}\)

\(^{22}\) Ibid pg 312.
\(^{23}\) I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 68.
\(^{24}\) D.L.N.C. pg 400.
\(^{25}\) F.R.U.S. pg 290.
In separate American-Japanese and Anglo-Japanese meetings, after the December 16 Delegation Heads meeting, Nagai "expressed interest in the suggestion" and gave no indication "that Japan would have to adopt a passive role when (the conference) came to consider qualitative limitation.  

At this point Hirota, faced with the uncompromising attitude of the Navy raised the same ballon d'essai he had sent up eighteen months before. On December 17 Hirota expressed the belief to Clive that "if no general naval agreement" resulted from the Conference then some form of political understanding between Britain, the United States, and Japan, was "essential". On December 29 he again put the idea to Clive "not in the nature of an offer but more of a pious hope" in order to avoid loss of face if the British failed to react. A rebuff was not long in coming. In marked contrast to the British policy dispute of 1934 Davis was able to report that the pro-Japanese elements in Britain "had been unable to mobilise their forces" and that he could detect "no tendency in that direction". Nonetheless the British did sound the Americans out on Hirota's suggestion. Phillips ruled out the idea of a non-aggression pact on January 8 and Davis envisaged obstacles in the way of even a consultative pact. Consequently on January 11 Clive informed Hirota that

26 Ibid pg 289.  
28 Ibid No.598.  
29 Ibid No.598.  
30 Ibid No.584.  
31 F.D.R. (F.A.)III pg 131.  
33 Ibid No.609.
neither the British nor the American governments "could seriously consider political agreement as a substitute for a naval treaty" and if the Japanese attitude on naval matters "remained completely uncompromising the difficulties in the way of any possible political understanding would be almost insuperable". Eden was prepared to consider a political agreement "only if the United States would come in and as the price of a naval agreement". The idea of a political understanding with Japan had again been rejected, only to be revived by the Japanese Foreign Office with a similar look of success later in the year.

On December 17 the Final Committee resumed its meetings, this time to discuss the British proposals for unilateral declarations and advance notification of building programmes. To Monsell, the essential thing was "to cover the difficult period" in which the Washington powers found themselves, "and create a position of stability from which we should be able to make a fresh start". Therefore the British suggested that each government make a voluntary declaration of that construction considered necessary to meet the needs of national security for a set number of years, and agree not to offer those figures by construction or acquisition without giving at least one years notice to the other parties. Quantitative figures would be excluded from the treaty and a formula inserted to the effect that "The voluntary agreement by a particular contracting party to limit its own naval construction over a period of years is to be regarded simply as the

34 Ibid No. 612.
35 Minute by Eden January 13 1936: cited A. Trotter "Britain and East Asia.
expression of that country's carefully considered naval needs at the moment and not as any derogation from the national status of the party concerned". As Monsell pointed out, the British compromise left each power free to determine the construction it would begin with, and free to alter this later on. The naval powers could not be freer if they were to have any quantitative agreement at all.\(^\text{37}\)

Hoare considered the reception accorded the British proposal to be "in general favourable". The British Empire delegates expressed their approval and the Americans agreed to accept it as a basis of discussion. Both the French and the Italians wished to cut back the duration of the declaration from the six years the British had suggested, and the Italians "were not inclined to accept the view that building plans could be concerted in advance consistently with declarations being really unilateral".\(^\text{38}\)
Neither of these objections was particularly serious - the real opposition came from the Japanese.

During the discussion of the British compromise proposal the Japanese had raised various objections. On December 19, the two powers clashed yet again on the problem of relative vulnerability\(^\text{39}\) and the following day Nagano put forth his objections in a five point programme. Nagano insisted that (1) as the British proposal sought to preserve the existing naval ratios it was incompatible with the fundamental Japanese thesis and (2) failed to solve the problem of prestige. Furthermore it (3) was

\(^\text{37}\) D.L.N.C. pg 421.
\(^\text{39}\) D.L.N.C. pg 450-4.
concerned only with future construction and thus failed to accomplish any reduction in armaments, (4) would precipitate a naval race in the event of one power submitting an excessive programme as it set no upper limit, and (5) gave no "concrete substance" to the Japanese thesis regarding the right to equality in armaments. Therefore, Nagano concluded, the Japanese proposal of a common upper limit recommended itself as a basic necessity for agreement. At that point the conference adjourned for the christmas period until January 6 1936. No agreement had been reached on either the common upper limit or the British proposals. However, three days earlier the Anglo-American powers had settled on a plan of action. It was intended that discussion of the proposals put forward by the European powers would be continued in the new year until "at an appropriate time in January" Mansell would suggest that "inasmuch as the discussion of quantitative proposals appeared to have been exhausted for the time being" the conference should go on to "consider other matters such as qualitative limitation without implying that the quantitative question had been disposed of by the conference".

In conversation with Craigie on January 5, Davis expressed the opinion that Japan should be disabused of the notion that her withdrawal would bring the conference to a close, and that "even should Japan leave the conference, the discussions would continue with a view to concluding a qualitative treaty between them and probably also with all

40 Ibid pg 476-7.
the other naval powers". Craigie himself thought such a course might "tend to confirm Japan's isolationist tendencies", but Eden, who minuted Craigie's report, found "force in Mr Davis' argument". 42 Nevertheless nothing further had been done along this line with the First Committee reconvened the next day. At this meeting, the eighth, discussion simply took up where it had left off, with Monsell refuting, from the British standpoint, the criticisms Nagano had advanced on December 20, and accepting in principle the French counter-proposal that building programmes should be declared annually. The crunch was to come two days later at the ninth meeting.

This meeting was called to continue discussion of the British proposal and alternative French and Italian proposals, for the annual advance notification of building programmes and the voluntary exchange of information. In substance the three plans were very similar: the only significant difference being in the French plan which provided for a period of six months between notification and commencement of new construction. But the Japanese considered themselves placed in "a situation where the shipbuilding programme announcement changed to a shipbuilding notification problem which seemed to be irrelevant with the problem of limitation in numerical strength" and "realized the necessity of stopping such a move at an early stage". 43 Therefore Nagano ventured the opinion that the discussion of the European plans should be "reserved until a decision

42 D.B.F.P. Series 2 Vol XIII No.600,600n1.
43 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 Annex 24.
has been reached on quantitative limitation". The other powers wished to continue but Nagano persisted, stating that the Japanese delegation was

"most firmly of the belief that quantitative limitation is the most important question with which this conference will have to deal and hence this decision should take precedence over all other matters. .... We recognise that the French and Italian plans do in part refer to matters regarding the strength of naval forces. On those points I could make observations but as regards the parts of those two plans which are concerned with the exchange of information, I can make none".

Nagano had thus refused to discuss the exchange of information. He then went on to reject the advance notification of building programmes as unsuitable for the readjustment of the existing relations between navies, ineffective as a check on naval competition, and because insufficient consideration had been given to the need to secure real reductions in naval armaments. Nagano had ruled out the possibility of quietly shelving the quantitative question without reaching a decision and at the same time precluded the possibility of further progress on the European proposals. In effect the Japanese were forcing a decision on their own parity demand.

The following day, January 9, another Anglo-Japanese meeting was held in which Nagano defined the position now held by his delegation. If no further quantitative proposals were forthcoming the Japanese desired the resumption of discussion on the common upper limit and a

44 D.L.N.C. pg 541-3.
decision "for or against" this proposal as soon as was convenient. In the event of an adverse reaction the Japanese delegation would, on the basis of its existing instructions, have to withdraw from the conference. Eden and Monsell then brought up the point which Davis had made on January 5: i.e. that the conference could possibly continue without the Japanese and asked whether in that situation Japan would be prepared to leave observers. Nagano replied non-committally that "the matter was beyond the scope of his instructions". It was finally decided that the next meeting of the conference would be postponed until December 13 "in order to give time for further consultations between delegations and for the receipt of further instructions from Tokyo" and that the agenda for the meeting would be the Japanese proposal for a common upper limit.

The Japanese accordingly sent an urgent message to Hirota, outlining the Anglo-Japanese meeting and requesting further instructions. Hirota's answer arrived on January 12 and sealed the fate of naval limitation in the Far East. Nagano was instructed to "explain exhaustively" Japan's previous assertions and endeavour to persuade the other delegations to reconsider the Japanese proposal. But if its basic principles were not recognized the Imperial Government had no intention "of remaining in the conference to discuss a shipbuilding notification plan or the plan on restricting quality. Consequently cession from the conference would be inevitable". Hirota saw no

46 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 3011 pg 82.
objection to concluding an agreement restricting the use of submarines or to leaving observers at a Four Power Conference, but with regard to quantitative limitations the Japanese had moved close to presenting what was, in effect, an ultimatum. Meanwhile the western powers were preparing to call Japan's bluff. The British, having decided that the whole conference, and not just the United Kingdom delegation should pronounce itself opposed to the Japanese thesis, were sounding out the other delegates on this point and stressing the fact that any agreement reached without Japan should be left open for Japan's later adherence. The Anglo-American nations were now resigned to Japan's quitting the conference. Monsell and Eden informed Davis that "the jig was up" and Davis cabled the same to Hull. All that remained to be done was to arrange Japan's departure, with Japan's collusion, in a form which did not involve an explicit statement of rejection "since such a course might make difficulties for the future".

The tenth meeting of the First Committee, intended to settle finally the common upper limit issue was convened on January 15 having been postponed two days at the request of the Japanese. Opening the discussion, Monsell expressed the hope that should the Japanese proposal prove unacceptable the Japanese delegation would "agree to

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50 Ibid No.618.
51 F.R.U.S. pg 292.
53 The previous day the British had rejected a Japanese request for an immediate adjournment until later in the year. F.R.U.S. pg 291-2.
continue the discussion of the various other important questions before the conference". The floor then passed to Nagano to set forth the Japanese position for the last time. Nagano contended that if two powers were to achieve equal standing and mutual security "the most rational principle to be applied is that of equality of armaments".

The framework of the Japanese proposals was therefore a maximum global tonnage to be fixed as low as possible and which none of the powers could exceed. Offensive vessels: i.e. capital ships, aircraft carriers (if these two categories were not abolished) and A cruisers would be limited by categories, both in total tonnage and in number of units. Thus "naval forces would be largely deprived of their capacity for menacing other powers". Defensive vessels: i.e. B cruisers, destroyers, and submarines would be restricted only by a common maximum global tonnage limit and each power would be free to transfer tonnage allotted to them for A cruisers to the defensive categories. Nagano pointed out that the Japanese proposal was "characterized by a high degree of elasticity" for if it were adopted "the way could be found for incorporating therein the important features of the other proposals with such modifications as may be deemed suitable" and a common upper limit would still allow each individual power to "restrict its navy to the smallest size with which its defensive needs can be adequately met". Nevertheless, Nagano argued, naval disarmament must be considered on a "one power versus one power basis" for Japan, being overpopulated and poor in natural resources was "wholly dependent on the sea" and therefore could not "be expected
to feel secure with a naval force inferior to that of another whose circumstances are far more favourable". Furthermore the Japanese found it "difficult to see the reasonableness of a claim for superior forces for the defence of ... outlying possessions, if as a consequence, the very heart of another Power will be menaced".

"Therefore Nagano considered the proposed common upper limit to be "at once fair, just, and practical" and as such constituted an acceptable base for a new naval treaty and ongoing naval disarmament. 54

It now fell to the other powers to make their replies. Davis described the common upper limit as "a continuance of the ratio system on the basis of parity without taking into account the varying needs of the countries concerned" and repeated that equality of armaments did not necessarily give equality of security. Chatfield argued that "naval strength in the area of contact cannot be measured safely in terms of numbers of fighting ships" and that a common upper limit "might well furnish an incentive for a general increase in building among the powers at present possessing smaller navies". Both felt it impossible to distinguish between offensive and defensive warships. As a result Davis stated that the common upper limit "would not serve as a basis for negotiation and agreement" and Chatfield objected that it not only failed "to provide a fair and practical basis for a general agreement but would create a position of special disadvantage" for the British Empire. 55

54 D.L.N.C. pg 571-6.
55 Ibid pg 577-84.
The reaction of the French and Italians was somewhat more restrained but the important point was present. When the tenth meeting closed Nagano had explained "exhaustively" the basic propositions underlying the Japanese proposals and the other four Washington powers had definitely rejected these as a basis for any future disagreement.

If the western powers had entertained any last minute hopes that Japan would now execute a volte face and remain in the conference these were dashed the same afternoon when the Japanese delegation, in accordance with the method already agreed on, announced their withdrawal from the conference. Monsell, as chairman, received a letter in which Nagano stated that the Japanese remained convinced that their proposal was the best calculated to attain an effective disarmament. However "as it has become sufficiently clear at today's session of the First Committee that the basic principles embodied in our proposal .... cannot secure general support, our Delegation have now come to the conclusion that we can no longer usefully continue our participation in the deliberations of the present Conference". 56

The meeting convened the next day was spent primarily in formulating a reply for Nagano. This, sent by Monsell that afternoon, expressed the "real regret" felt by all other delegations of the Japanese decision, but announced their intention to continue as a Four Power Conference and inquired as to whether the Japanese would be prepared to leave observers. 57 The invitation was accepted and two

57 Ibid No.623.
Japanese observers remained to report on the work of the conference. Nevertheless after January 15 the Japanese no longer played any active part in the conference and this had its effect on the subsequent negotiations. On January 1 1937 Japan would become completely free to build as she chose: qualitatively and quantitatively. Neither Britain nor the United States would irrevocably bind itself so long as Japan remained outside any naval agreement. But "no new ratio was to be set for the Japanese until American bombs and shells fixed it at zero". 58

With the departure of Japan the second London Naval Conference began to make progress towards a settlement. Having dealt with Japan the First Committee closed the eleventh meeting with the unanimous adoption of Monsells proposition: "that the exchange of information was an essential feature of any agreement for the limitation of naval armaments and that advance notification of naval programmes was most desirable". 59 On January 17 this proposition was given over to a technical sub-committee which would work out the details. This presented its report to the First Committee on January 31. The report recommended that within the first four months of the year, each signatory power should communicate confidentially to the other signatories full details of all warships to be built by, or for, that power. This notice would be given at least four months before the projected ships were laid down. Signatory states would be prohibited from laying down or acquiring any vessel not indicated in their declared

58 C. Hull "Memoirs" pg 290.
59 D.L.N.C. pg 628.
building programme and if subsequent design modifications were considered necessary, then the other powers were to be notified and four months allowed to elapse before the changes were effected. The report was adopted unanimously by the First Committee,⁶⁰ - the question of qualitative limitation proved a thornier problem.

The United States, despite its desire for "small numbers of large ships "had shown some inclination during the earlier part of the conference to accept slight qualitative reductions. But with the departure of the Japanese the American attitude hardened, for with its most probable enemy unbound by qualitative restrictions the General Board of the U.S.N. had to consider the danger of being outclassed on a "one ship versus one ship" basis when operating in the West Pacific: in short, to guard against the emergence of a type such as the Yamoto class. Nevertheless some qualitative agreement was possible. The Americans were prepared to accept a temporary building holiday in "A" cruisers. Standley had already confessed that this class might have been a mistake and as the United States already possessed twenty-seven "A" cruisers, eighteen with 8-inch guns and nine with 6-inch guns, a temporary suspension would leave American superiority in the class unimpaired.⁶¹ Furthermore all the Washington Powers were agreed that the aircraft carrier limit of 27,000 tons was excessive and the United States was quite prepared to accept a limit of 22,000 tons for this type. As for submarines, with Japan out of the conference, and the French

⁶⁰ Ibid pg 703-716.
and Italians strongly opposed to any reduction in submarine size, anything beyond continuance of the existing limits seemed hopeless. Such limits were not spectacular, but they were all that could be agreed upon. On January 29 Monsell therefore listed those qualitative limits on which there appeared to be some possibility of agreement and these were accordingly referred to a technical sub-committee by the First Committee.

The problem was however the application of qualitative reductions to capital ships. Once the Japanese had withdrawn the importance of having ships capable of operating effectively across the Pacific increased to a point where the U.S.N. was unwilling to accept any reduction from the 35,000 ton displacement limit. The General Board had made this quite clear in October 1935 when it declared that

"any reduction of capital ship tonnage or of capital ship characteristics, made without reference to all other aspects of naval power or the relative strength of other categories without the completion of a treaty which fully maintains the balance of strength established by the Washington and London Treaties would be an irrevocable step backward in national security".

The United States would, tentatively, accept a maximum gun calibre of 14-inches. The importance of this should not be overrated: as the tonnage maximum remained unchanged the reduction from 16-inches to 14-inches would simply "enable the heavy battery of future ships to be increased by three

62 Survey 1936 pg 96.
63 D.L.N.C. pg 678-684.
65 General Board 438-1 Serial No. 1696, 4 October 1935. cited T.V. Tuleja "Statesmen and Admirals" pg 139.
or more guns, or alternatively, the armour protection to be improved". Moreover, the United States would only continue to restrict herself to a 14-inch capital ship if the adherence of the Japanese to this figure could be obtained. Opposition to the American stand came from France and Italy, both of whom had 35,000 ton, 15-inch battleships under construction. These nations, for reasons of economy, now proposed that each nation be permitted to build two vessels of this size, and the maximum limit for all subsequent capital ships be 27,000 tons with 12-inch guns, arguing that since the Japanese had always advocated the drastic reduction of large ships such a limit might encourage the later adherence of the Japanese to a new naval treaty.

The German "pocket battleships" created a new qualitative problem, for these proved that if there was to be any effective limitation on the size of cruisers, the naval powers had not only to fix maximum limits for this type but also minimum limits for battleships, and to establish a "zone of non-construction" between those two limits. The British, concerned by the possibility of yet another cruiser race, in yet another guise, and the Americans, anxious to avoid having their lead in "A" cruisers damaged by the emergence of a heavier cruiser type, even if such a vessel was to be described as a battleship, advocated setting such a lower limit for battleships. But the French and Italians, as smaller naval

66 Round Table Vol 26 No.103 June 1936 "The New Naval Treaty" pg 522.
68 D.L.N.C. pg 646-653.
powers with more to gain strategically and economically from qualitative "surprises" opposed the creation of such a gap between battleships and cruisers.

The Americans were not disposed to compromise on the retention of the 35,000 ton capital ship limit and for a time it appeared the conference might deadlock on this issue. On February 15, Corbin: the French Ambassador, and Admiral Raineri-Biscia of the Italian Delegation returned to their respective capitals to consult as to where the upper and lower tonnage limits for capital ships might be fixed. The French did not yet abandon their plea for a smaller capital ship but returned ready to resume negotiations and anxious not to push the Americans to a point where they might reconsider the concessions already made; i.e. the 14-inch gun and the "A" cruiser holiday. At this point the European political situation intervened.

The first European problem had been solved fairly easily. The European naval powers left outside the Washington and London Treaties, i.e. Germany and the U.S.S.R. could upset any qualitative agreement by initiating a race in new types - the German pocket battleships had proved that. It was therefore very desirable that those two powers be included in any agreement reached at London. However the French objected to any proposed inclusion of Germany, and even if an invitation had been extended to the Germans it was by no means certain that they would agree to attend, should the Soviet Union be invited as well. The solution was found in bi-lateral agreements between Britain and Germany and possibly between Britain and the Soviet Union, which would place those powers under the same
qualitative restrictions as the London powers. This solution proved acceptable to both Germany and France and by the end of February 1936 Anglo-German negotiations were underway.69

The second political problem proved a little more difficult. Just as the 1932 Geneva Conference had opened under the shadow of the Shanghai crisis so did the second London Naval Conference open during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. This had no apparent effect on the Italian position at first but by mid-February 1936 it became known that Mussolini might prove reluctant to conclude a new naval treaty with powers imposing sanctions upon Italy. Thus whereas Corbin had returned from Paris prepared, if necessary, to accept the American viewpoint, Raineri-Biscia "returned from Rome with instructions to pick as many holes as possible in the technical agreement" being prepared by the technical sub-committee on qualitative limitation.70 Consequently when that sub-committee did report on March 11, its plan was adopted "under the reservation of the Italian delegation on capital ships and the non-construction zone, and subject to the preparation of satisfactory safeguarding clauses".71 The same Italian reservations were put forward when a draft treaty was finally tabled on March 21.72 The reasons given were technical objections on the part of the Italian Ministry of Marine73 but on March 25 the Italians abandoned any pretence that it was in fact anything but the sanctions arising from the Abyssinian crisis which prevented them from signing

70 Ibid No.676.
71 D.L.N.C. pg 746.
72 Ibid pg 766.
a new naval treaty. In this case there seemed no reason to assume that Italy would provoke a European naval race and the three remaining Washington powers agreed to press ahead with a Three Power Treaty to be left "open for signature by Italy and Japan as soon as those powers felt disposed to come in". This was finally signed on March 25, 1936.

The second London Naval Treaty was originally signed by the United States, Great Britain, France, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and India. In addition to Japan and Italy, both South Africa and the Irish Free State, neither of which possessed a navy, refrained, for this reason, from signing. The Treaty was divided into five parts. Part I covered definitions and age limits - the only significant change here being that the life of capital ships was extended from twenty to twenty-six years. Part II contained the qualitative limits to be imposed on the various categories. Capital ships were to displace at least 17,500 tons but not more than 35,000 tons and their main armament was to consist of guns of at least 10-inch calibre, but not more than 16-inches. The maximum gun calibre for aircraft carriers remained fixed at 6.1-inches, the maximum displacement reduced to 23,000 tons. Cruisers, destroyers, and submarines were limited to 8,000, 3,000, and 2,000 tons displacement respectively; the maximum gun calibre of cruisers to be 6.1-inches and of destroyers and submarines to be 5.1-inches. Under the terms of Article 6 the construction of cruisers in excess of 8,000 tons, i.e.

74 D.I.A. 1936 pg 615-616.
76 G.B.P.P. Cmd 5561.
"A" cruisers, was prohibited until January 1 1943. This meant that the "zone of non-construction" established between 10,000 and 17,500 tons was in fact extended downwards to 8,000 tons.\(^{77}\) Part III dealt with advance notification and the exchange of information. This section simply embodied, with no significant alteration, the main points of the report submitted by the technical sub-committee on January 31.\(^{78}\) Part IV contained the safeguarding clauses considered necessary in view of the non-adherence of Japan and Italy, and Part V stated that the treaty would come into force on January 1 1937, (if it had been ratified by that date - if it had not been ratified then it would not come into force until all the signatories had done so) and expire on December 31 1942. Provision was also made in Part V for a new conference to be held in 1941 and Article 31 left the treaty open for Japanese and, or, Italian accession.

Théré could of course be no guarantee that those powers would acede to the second London Naval Treaty or consider it in their interest to observe its provisions. Consequently the treaty was riddled with safeguards to prevent its becoming a millstone tied around the necks of the contracting parties for six years should the naval activities of a non-treaty power present a security threat.

\(^{77}\) Article 1: "Definitions" defined a capital ship as a vessel bearing a gun of more than 8-inch calibre and displacing (a) more than 10,000 tons or (b) less than 8,000 tons. A combination of Article 6 and the lower limits set on battleships (Article 4) established a zone of non-construction between 8,000 and 17,5000 tons from which only aircraft carriers were exempt.

\(^{78}\) See above pg 225.
The 14-inch limit on capital ship guns was thus dependent on all the Washington powers entering "into an agreement to confirm this provision .... not later than April 1 1937". Failing this the limit would remain fixed at 16-inches. Similarly Article 6 which embodied the "A" cruiser holiday, also stated that should any signatory power consider "the requirements of .... national security .... materially affected by the actual or authorised amount of construction by any power of light surface vessels" then that power had the right, after notifying the other signatories "to lay down or acquire light surface vessels of any standard displacement up to 10,000 tons". More important Article 25 in Part V: "General and Safeguarding Clauses" stated that:

"in the event of any vessel not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions as to standard displacement and armament prescribed by .... the present treaty being authorised, constructed, or acquired by a power not a party to the present treaty, each High Contracting Parity reserves the right to depart, and to the extent to which, he considers such departures necessary in order to meet the requirements of his national security".

Article 26 added that should a "change of circumstances" affect the security of any contracting power then it possessed the right to depart from its declared building programme for that year. Only notification and a three month lapse was required to implement either of these articles. Thus although the second London Naval Treaty was only a Three Power Treaty its survival was dependent upon the adherence of all the naval powers to the substance of the qualitative limits it prescribed. Should any non-treaty power deviate
from these to a point where Britain, France, or the United States felt its naval security threatened, any one of those powers could wind up the treaty with only three months notice.

In the absence of any quantitative restrictions the Anglo-American powers also informally agreed that the parity dispute was effectively over. Schofield is of the opinion that the 1935-6 Conference was not so much a disarmament as a rearmament conference in that it "enabled Britain to make open preparations for the replacement of her capital ships without being accused of stealing a march".79 On March 3 1936 the British government had issued another White Paper on Defence80 which gave notice of the governments intention to lay down two new capital ships in 1937 and to continue modernising the existing battlefleet.81 The White Paper also provided for a new aircraft carrier, a "considerable expansion" of the Fleet Air Arm, "a steady replacement programme for destroyers and submarines", and raised yet again the cruiser bogey. It was stated unequivocally that "in cruisers the aim is to increase the total number to seventy, of which sixty will be underage" and that "five cruisers will be included in the 1936 programme". This naturally raised questions in the United States about Anglo-American parity and Davis suggested that both Britain and the United States declare their intention not to engage in competitive building

79 B.B. Schofield "British Sea Power" pg 139.
80 G.B.P.P. Cmd 5107.
81 Four battleships: "Queen Elizabeth", "Warspite", "Valiant", and "Renown" were completely modernised. Old boilers and turbines were replaced and the space and thousands of tons thus saved devoted to deck armour, anti-aircraft guns, underwater protection, and the carrying of three or four aircraft. Chatfield pg 123.
and that the principle of parity was still the basis of their naval policy. Thus on March 24 Davis wrote to Eden that it was the American understanding "that we are in agreement that there shall be no competitive naval building as between ourselves and that the principle of parity as between the fleets of the members of the British Commonwealth and of the United States of America shall continue unchanged". Eden in reply confirmed this and added "that neither country should question the right of the other to maintain parity in any category of ship". Anglo-American rivalry had not entirely disappeared. Standley made it clear that the American consent to a holiday in "A" cruisers was dependent on the figure of seventy British cruisers and "should the British Government find it necessary to increase its cruiser building beyond this total, this would constitute a change of circumstances entitling the American Government to terminate the cruiser holiday". Nevertheless it was Davis' hope that "the assurance that there shall be no naval race as between the two leading naval powers should have a stabilizing effect in these uncertain days".

As the "Round Table" noted the second London Naval Treaty was "so hedged about with reservations that its efficacy" was "likely to depend more on the spirit in which it is observed than on the literal interpretation of the text". This applied not only to the contracting powers but also to those outside the treaty. Thus, whether

83 Ibid No.716.
84 Ibid No.714.
85 Ibid No.698 Annex I.
86 N.H. Davis "The New Naval Agreement" Foreign Affairs Vol 14 No.4 July 1936 pg 583.
or not the treaty was to be anything more than a face-saving formula depended "largely on the extent to which the Powers not yet associated with the treaty decide to conform to its decisions".\textsuperscript{87} The gap between the Japanese demand for equality of armaments and the Anglo-American conception of equality of security had, on January 15 1936, finally proved unbridgeable. Rearmament could no longer be avoided; indeed before the treaty was even signed the British had taken steps to renovate and strengthen their battlefleet. The second London Naval Conference saw the end of quantitative naval limitation in the Far East and produced only a "totally innocuous"\textsuperscript{88} qualitative treaty dependent on the observance of its provisions by all the naval powers although two of the Washington powers remained outside of the agreement. Italy had refused to sign for political reasons and it seemed unlikely that she would raise any technical problems. But the Japanese had clearly stated that if their quantitative demands were not met, and the Anglo-American powers had rejected them, then they would reserve their right to qualitative freedom in order to meet the requirements of national security. If the second London Naval Treaty proved incompatible with Japan's conception of her naval requirements then qualitative limitation in the Far East would end on December 31 1936.

\textsuperscript{87} Round Table Vol 26 No.103 June 1936 "The New Naval Treaty" pg 518-519.

\textsuperscript{88} D. Borg "The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis 1933-1938" pg 114.
During the course of 1936 the British and Americans laid the foundation for the expansion of their battlefleets and their navies in general once the 1922 and 1930 Treaties expired. The British, prodded into action by European developments, pressed ahead with 14-inch capital ships but as the Japanese refused to enter into any agreement limiting gun calibres when work began on the new American battleships these bore 16-inch guns. Meanwhile the Japanese naval authorities were asserting themselves at home: a new national policy consensus in August 1936 freed the I.J.N. from its position of watchdog at the back door while the Army pursued its continental ambitions, and made it a full partner in Japanese expansion. The I.J.N.'s new role made an increase in its relative strength vis a vis the Anglo-American navies more important than ever and the government began to implement the navy's plan to meet the non-treaty situation Japan would find herself in on January 1 1937. Towards the end of 1936 the Anglo-American nations began to receive hints as to the nature of Japan's proposed construction and came to the painful realization that not only had quantitative naval limitation disappeared but that in the face of Japan's construction plans, qualitative limitation in the Far East was also in danger of collapse.

The British construction programme actually authorised for 1936-7 involved even more than the White Paper of January 3 had envisaged. In addition to the two battleships,
the number of aircraft carriers was increased to two and
the number of cruisers to seven. Also as part of the
"steady replacement programme" eighteen new destroyers and
nine new submarines were ordered whereas the corresponding
annual construction figures for these types during the
period 1930-1935 had been nine and three respectively.89
Spurred on by the appearance of a new naval menace in the
Mediterranean, the "defection" of Japan from the recent
naval conference, and the warnings of the second D.R.C. report,
the British government, soon to be free of quantitative
limits, prepared itself for a massive programme of naval
rearmament.90 However pushed by events, and hobbled by
circumstances arising out of the Washington Treaty, Britain
produced, as part of this programme, a class of battleships
outgunned by those being constructed by her rivals.

On June 29 1936 the British government was notified
that the Japanese cabinet had formally decided it could
not adhere to the second London Naval Treaty under the
existing circumstances.91 Nonetheless this positive
rejection did not yet rule out the possibility of Japanese
adherence to a separate agreement limiting the gun calibre
of capital ships to 14-inches. In view of Japan's
qualitative stand such an event was unlikely but the
British Admiralty decided it could not afford to wait for
a definite refusal and pushed ahead with plans for the
"King George V" class battleships: displacing 35,000 tons
and mounting 14-inch guns as their main armament. However

89 S.W. Roskill "Naval Policy between the Wars"
Appendix C pg 583-584.
90 Chatfield pg 114.
91 J.C. Grew "Turbulent Era" pg 1017.
the situation was affected by the fact that France, Italy, and Germany each had two 35,000 ton, 15-inch battleships building,\textsuperscript{92} quite apart from the fact Japan had yet to declare her intentions; there was every chance that she would not accept the 14-inch limit and therefore the United States would build 16-inch capital ships. Thus there was a possibility that before they were even complete the King George V class battleships would be outgunned in both range and firepower by the new capital ships of Britain's rivals. Churchill, "deeply impressed by the superior weight of the 16-inch broadside"\textsuperscript{93} wrote to Hoare, now First Lord of the Admiralty, insisting that "the British Navy always travels first class" and that if he (Churchill) were First Lord "nothing would induce me to succumb to 14-inch".\textsuperscript{94}

Paradoxically, in direct contrast to their earlier qualitative fears, the problem facing the Admiralty was as much quantitative as qualitative. In comparison to six European battleships building and four new battlecruisers built or building,\textsuperscript{95} the only post-war capital ships Britain possessed were "Nelson" and "Rodney"; both laid down in 1922.\textsuperscript{96} Britain now had to pay the price for fifteen years of naval limitation. Not only was her existing battlefleet in urgent need of modernisation, but

\textsuperscript{92} G.B.P.P. Cmd 5371.
\textsuperscript{93} W.S. Churchill "The Gathering Storm" pg 125-6.
\textsuperscript{94} Two French battlecruisers displacing 26,500 tons and mounting 13-inch guns and two German battlecruisers displacing 26,000 tons and mounting 11-inch guns. G.B.P.P. Cmd 5371.
\textsuperscript{96} Churchill pg 124.
"during the long period of enforced abstinence, the channels of supply, the teeth and digestive powers of the Navy, had been partly destroyed: great supply firms were bankrupt, the dockyards reduced, the armour and gun-mounting plant cut in half, the skilled leaders of industry, the draughtsmen, the workers had become disheartened, and many indeed had vanished". 97

The Admiralty in accepting the ten year battleship holiday at Washington in 1922 had insisted that the capacity to produce the armour, shells, and guns for two capital ships per annum in 1931 and the years following should be maintained. 98 This much had been done, but the design of the King George V class had begun before it had been known whether the other powers would accept the 35,000 ton, 14-inch limits. The gun turrets were actually ordered in May 1936 before the Japanese had definitely refused to adhere to the 1936 Treaty. 98 Thus Britain was committed to the 14-inch gun. The Admiralty could not afford to change over to 16-inch guns as, due to the shortage of draughtsmen, this might have involved a years delay 100 and in any case under Article 2 of the 1936 Treaty, Britain was obliged to wait until April 1 1937 before beginning work on 16-inch battleships. This would have allowed Britain only two new ships by 1941 instead of five, 101 and as the reconstruction of old battleships was already to reduce to twelve the number of capital ships available to Britain, 102 the Admiralty considered the risk

97 Chatfield pg 113.
98 Roskill pg 411.
99 Churchill pg 126.
100 Chatfield pg 122.
101 Churchill pg 126.
102 Chatfield pg 123.
involved in waiting a year too great to be borne. Caught up in events in 1936 Britain was committed to the 14-inch capital ship.

With the advantage of hindsight it can be argued that the money spent on the King George V class would have been better spent on the development of naval air power: on new aircraft carriers and the strike aircraft to operate from them. But it was not until the Pacific War that the aircraft carrier was to emerge as the new capital ship (even then its status in European waters remained debatable) and then at first only by default as the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbour disabled the American battleline. In 1936 "the Board of Admiralty acted as responsible Boards always had: they built gunned ships against the threat of enemy gunned ships".

"Gunned ships" however did not simply mean battleships and battlecruisers, but also conventional cruisers and destroyers. In these categories the problem facing Britain was not retaliatory building but keeping what had already been built. Article 16 of the first London Naval Treaty had set precise figures for the total completed cruiser, destroyer, and submarine tonnage that the United States, Britain, and Japan might each possess and stated clearly that "vessels which cause the total tonnage in any category to exceed" the maximum tonnage limit, "shall be disposed of gradually during the period ending on December 31 1936". In 1936 Britain possessed 40,000 tons of overage destroyers and four overage "A" cruisers due to be scrapped under Article 16 but which, in view of the breakdown of collective

103 E.B. Potter "Sea Power" pg 639.
104 P. Padfield "The Battleship Era" pg 266.
105 G.B.P.P. Cmd 3578.
security and the new naval race which threatened in both Europe and the Pacific, the British government wished to retain. In Hoare's words:

"not only did we need every ship we could put or keep on the sea, but .... the political effect of scrapping servicable ships at a time when our policy was based on the urgent need for more ships would be very damaging". 106

The British felt they had reached the point where Article 21, the "escalator" clause, of the 1930 Treaty should be invoked. This gave any signatory power the right, in the interests of its national security - should this be threatened by the construction of a non-signatory power, to increase its tonnage in one or more of the restricted categories after giving notice to the other signatories who would then "be entitled to make a proportionate increase in the category or categories specified".

The British originally proposed in February 1936 that they should be allowed to retain their four Hawkins class cruisers (9,800 tons; 7.5-inch guns) but to avoid offending the United States over the subject of "A" cruisers these would be rearmed with 6-inch guns and reclassified as "B" cruisers. To avoid exceeding their cruiser tonnage quota the Admiralty planned to retain one of those cruisers, H.M.S. "Hawkins", as a deactivated training vessel and to scrap five small cruisers: three of the "Ceres" type (4,290 tons; 6-inch guns) and two of the "Caledon" type (4,180 tons; 6-inch guns). As for destroyers it was proposed that the tonnage allotted to Britain be raised from 150,000 to 180,000

106 Templewood "Nine Troubled Years" pg 207-8.
tons. It was hoped that Japan and the United States would allow "this tonnage to be retained without invoking the Escalator "clause", and if these powers insisted then at least "the quid pro quo" would be "limited to destroyers .... the least objectionable form of increase". But "in the last resort" the Admiralty would "agree to the retention of some Japanese submarine tonnage instead". 107

Both Japan and the United States answered that if Britain wished to alter Article 16 then she would have to invoke Article 21. In July 1936 the British formally did this, and in August the Americans announced that they too would retain 40,000 tons of overage destroyers. Japan was therefore entitled to retain another 28,000 tons of destroyers but as she did not possess sufficient average tonnage in this category to do so announced that she would instead keep 11,000 tons of destroyers and 15,600 tons of submarines, due to be scrapped by 1937. Later in 1936 "a strong movement" against the proposed scrapping of the five Ceres and Caledon cruisers emerged and Britain in December of that year resorted yet again to the escalator clause. This time neither the United States nor Japan possessed the necessary overage cruiser tonnage and so the Americans announced that they would again make up their tonnage in overage destroyers and the Japanese theirs in submarines. 108 The whole incident involved no significant change in the world balance of naval power, nor did it belittle the very real benefits conferred by the first London Naval Treaty. Nevertheless the readiness of the British

government to invoke the escalator clause is an indication of the extent to which rearmament had supplanted disarmament as the main issue in world politics by 1936.

During 1936 American rearmament also began to gather speed. By 1935 Hull was convinced that the United States should hasten construction of a larger navy, particularly because of the situation in the Far East" and "seldom lost an opportunity to urge substantial rearmament upon the President and appropriate members of the Cabinet". Each statement Hull made to this effect "brought forth the never-failing opposition of the isolationists who had powerful segments of public opinion behind them". Roosevelt was sensitive to this and continued to call for a return to effective naval limitation. Nevertheless he also supported a construction programme which, even if it did not go as far as Hull wished, still entailed the largest peacetime appropriation in American history.

The Navy Bill for 1936-7 as presented to Congress on April 30 provided for a total expenditure of $531,069,000. The House of Representatives and the Senate between them made only token reductions and the Navy Appropriation when finally approved by Roosevelt on July 3 was fixed at $526,546,532. The proposed programme of new construction for 1936 was modest enough: twelve destroyers and six submarines, plus provision for the acquisition of 333 aircraft for service with the fleet. However money was also allocated for "two new capital ships, as replacement.

109 Hull pg 456-458.
110 W.L. Neumann "America Encounters Japan" pg 231-2.
111 Survey 1936 pg 139-140. Naval Expenditure for 1936 was actually to be $529,031,665 of which $186,895,831 was spent on new construction: T.A. Bisson "American Policy in the Far East" 1931-1940" pg 41.
of overage capital ships, to be undertaken only in event that the President determines as a fact that capital ship replacement" had been commenced by the other signatories to the first London Naval Treaty. Like Britain, the United States was bound by that treaty to postpone capital ship construction until January 1, 1937, unlike Britain she was not committed to the 14-inch gun. On January 8, 1937, citing the King George V class and the French "Jean Bart" as fulfilment of the conditions of the Appropriation Act of June 1936, Roosevelt was to direct the Navy Department to proceed with the construction of two new 35,000 ton 16-inch "North Carolina" class battleships. The United States could still remain within the terms of the second London Naval Treaty for in the unlikely event of Japan accepting the 14-inch limit before April 1, 1937, work would not have progressed too far for alteration, and by the time the North Carolina class battleships were completed three of the existing American battleships would be beyond the twenty-six year age limit. The policy of naval expansion which Roosevelt had initiated in 1933 had thus gained considerable momentum by 1936. At the end of that year, when the battleships were still only a threat, Swanson was able to speak of "an unparalleled renaissance" in American naval construction with three carriers, eleven cruisers, sixty-three destroyers, and eighteen submarines under construction.

112 F.D.R. Public Papers and Addresses Vol V pg 659.
113 Neumann. pg 232. All of the aircraft carriers and cruisers were appropriated for prior to the 1936 Act. Two of the carriers "Enterprise" and "Yorktown" were laid down in 1934, the third: "Wasp" in 1936. G.B.P.P. Cmd 5936.
was also gaining momentum.

Following the Japanese withdrawal from the second London Naval Conference "Nagano and others in the Navy immediately started drafting plans for the creation of a Japanese force strong enough to take command of the Western Pacific". Events were soon to play into their hands. On February 26 1936 some 1,500 troops led by their junior officers launched a series of assassination attempts against the leading liberal political figures in the hope of overthrowing the Okada government and replacing it with a military cabinet. This rebellion was to prove the final showdown between the two main factions in the Japanese army: the Koda-ha or "Imperial Way" faction, to which the rebels belonged, and the Tosei-ha or "Control" faction. The coup was technically a failure. The rebels surrendered to "loyal" forces and in marked contrast to the leniency accorded the leaders of earlier outbursts of Koda-ha terrorism, thirteen officers and four civilians were executed. Furthermore a number of high-ranking officers were placed on the retired list, including the leading lights of the Koda-ha movement. However this was not a victory for civilian government - complete control now passed to the Tosei-ha faction and Okada, who the rebels had sought to remove was not retained in office, but replaced on March 9 by Hirota with Nagano as his Navy

114 R.J.C. Butow "Tojo and the Coming of the War" pg 78.
115 The former Prime Minister: Admiral Saito, Finance Minister Takahashi, Inspector-General of Military Education: General Watanabe, and Colonel Matsuo were slain, the last being mistaken for his brother-in-law; Okada. The Grand Chamberlain: Admiral Suzuki was severely wounded, Prince Saionji, and the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal; Count Makino, although marked for death, escaped.

116 For a breakdown of the factions within the Japanese military see J.B. Crowley "Japanese Army Factionalism": Journal of Asian Studies.
Minister. 117

"By 1936 the nature of the Japanese political process was such that the very ability of a man to form a cabinet was a gauge of his willingness to compromise with the situation which had caused the fall of the preceding cabinet". 118 The Hirota cabinet conformed to the Tosei-ha pattern of military control behind a facade of civilian government and on May 18 revived the old ordinance that the Navy and War Ministers must be officers on the active list bearing the rank of at least Vice-Admiral and Lieutenant-General respectively. "This placed in the hands of the military authorities a weapon which could make or break governments without recourse to the methods of intimidation which had led Okada to resign". 119 The Foreign Ministry could now pursue no line of policy without the approval of the service ministries 120 and during the next few months these last were to thrash out a new "Basis of National Policy" between them.

During the latter part of 1935 the Japanese military authorities formulated a new "national defence policy" for Japan in which they argued that in order to equip Japan with an "autonomous national defence" which would leave her strategically secure against both the Soviet Union and the Anglo-American sea-powers, Japan's free economy should be abandoned in favour of two government directed five-year plans: the first to be devoted to the development of Manchukuo and that rationalization of the Army, the second

118 Butow pg 80.
119 I.M.T.F.E. Judgement Ch IV pg 118-119, Ch V pg 667.
120 J. Huizenga "Yosuke Matsuoka and the Japanese-German Alliance" pg 616.
to naval construction. Meanwhile the Army advocated a cautious China policy, so as to prevent the creation of a hostile coalition against Japan, and the negotiation of a new naval treaty for a further five years so as to prevent the naval powers stealing a march while Japan built up her Army. This proposal naturally drew criticism from the Navy which, although it agreed with the need for a cautious China policy, argued that the Anglo-American powers had already been alienated and therefore substituted for the Army's concentration on North-East Asia, its own strategic doctrine: hokushu nanshin "Defend in the North, Advance to the South". Since Manchukuo had failed to live up to the Army's economic expectations the Navy proposed that Japan should use Manchukuo only as a buffer and not as a stepping stone. Instead the Navy advocated enlargement of the fleet and a peaceful expansion into the South Seas which could provide, as Manchukuo could not, the strategic resources Japan required. In January 1936 the Foreign, War and Navy Ministries managed to agree on a moderate China policy (which relied on economic subversion in North China and limited Sino-Japanese track and commercial agreements) but the fundamental differences over strategy remained. This led the Navy in mid-April to present another proposed guide for national policy. 121

The "National Policy" presented by Nagano embodied the arguments advanced against the Army in the previous year. It eschewed overt military aggression in North

121 J.B. Crowley "Japans Quest for Autonomy" pg 283-289.
China as this would only provide "an excuse for a tripartite intervention" and limited military involvement on the continent to the development of Manchukuo's internal defences. Japan's economic problems and strategic deficiencies were to be solved by peaceful expansion into the South Seas and the fleet strengthened to protect this expansion. This plan was based on the strategic axiom that Japan in 1936 was capable of defeating one western power, or of reaching a stalemate in a war with two major powers, but should the Soviet Union and the western sea-powers combine then the result would be disaster. The Navy reasoned that, if strengthened, the I.J.N. could hold the Western Pacific against the U.S.N., that Manchukuo, if properly developed, could neutralise Russia, and that Britain, faced with her European problems would reach a modus vivendi with Japan once reassured by Japan's new moderate China policy and a courteous acknowledgement of British rights and privileges on the mainland. However the role the Army had envisaged for itself was not so limited as that which the Navy plan accorded it, nor had the Army yet accepted the hokushu nanshin doctrine. Therefore on April 17 Hirota requested the War Minister: Terauchi, and Nagano to draft a single strategic policy guide for consideration by the Inner Cabinet. 122

In the aftermath of the February 26 Incident the Navy seized the initiative and the discussions held between the War and Navy Ministries which Hirota's request brought about were conducted in terms of the Navy's recommendations. 123

122 Ibid pg 287-289.
123 Ibid pg 290.
This did not mean the subordination of the Army to the Navy's plans but it did mean a policy compromise and a new role for the I.J.N. On June 26 Nagano presented the Inner Cabinet with a "Basis of National Policy" which stated that Japan's "fundamental policies must consist in advancing and developing the Southern Seas as well as obtaining a firm position on the Oriental continent for the stabilization of... national defence". To do this Japan would have "to get rid of the menace of the U.S.S.R. while preparing against Britain and the U.S.". Ultimately Japan's army must be strong enough to "smash" Russia's Far Eastern forces "at one blow" and her navy able "to maintain the command of the Western Pacific against the U.S. Navy", but for the moment Japan would attempt to extend its strength by "moderate and peaceful means" so as to avoid "arousing other powers to action". The "Basis of National Policy" had thus become an expression of the ambitions of both the Army and the Navy and "national defence" possession of the striking power necessary to achieve those ambitions. In the discussion that followed Hirota, the Finance Minister: Baba, and the Foreign Minister: Arita, all agreed in principle to the policy outline, (although it was necessary to assure Arita that "to provide against Britain and America" was only "a provision for military preparedness in case of emergency") and the Conference adjourned with Nagano's declaration that "a more concrete plan" would be drafted on that basis.

This "more concrete plan" when submitted by Nagano on

124 I.M.T.F.E. Ex 977.
125 Ibid Ex 978.
August 7 under the title "Foreign Policy of the Empire" was even more cryptic than that of June 30 - the result of incorporating the competing ambitions of the two services in one policy statement. Nonetheless the main points of the earlier plan were there. "The chief object of foreign policy" was the "frustrating of Russia's aggressive plan into the East" and the South Seas area was identified as "the sphere necessary and indispensable in the industries and national defence of our empire as well as the natural sphere of development of our people" in which "we must secure our footsteps for further advance". However Japan would endeavour to make her progress "gradually and peacefully". The plan was duly accepted after which Nagano, at Arita's request, made various "clarifying" remarks. These were then incorporated into a new draft: the "Fundamental Principles of National Policy" presented to, and sanctioned by, the Inner Cabinet four days later (August 11) as Japan's new national policy.

The "Fundamental Principles of National Policy" stated clearly that Japan "should aim to counteract all the military forces that Russia can furnish to employ in the Far East", and strengthen the Army so that in the event of hostilities with the Soviet Union it could "strike a hit at the very outset of war". With regard to the Navy the government "should attempt to fulfil its strength to such an extent as to be sufficient for securing the command of the sea on the Western Pacific counter to the American Navy". Unable to compromise, the two general staffs had simply inserted their respective ambitions without giving either priority over the other. Thus, with the decision of

126 Ibid Ex 704.
127 Ibid Ex 979.
August 11, Japan committed herself to a race in military armaments with the Soviet Union and a race in naval armaments with the United States. The new national policy "concensus" still stated that Japan's advance to the South Seas should be "gradual and peaceful" and that Japan "should always be careful to hold most amicable relations with the powers". But Japan was committed to acquiring a national defence armament which if necessary gave her the offensive power to fulfil her ambitions. There could, moreover, be no going back. With the revival of the ordinance which required service ministers to be on the active list, control of the government had passed to the services. The government's new national policy had been formulated "behind the curtain" in the War and Navy Ministries and it was there that the real power lay. Restricted only by the Army's ambitions, the I.J.N. pushed ahead with its plans for naval equality.

In May 1936 the Hirota government secured the adoption of a budget of which 47% constituted the Army and Navy appropriations: 508,000,000 yen and 550,000,000 yen respectively. Part of the naval appropriation was devoted to battleship reconstruction and to the completion of the 1934 Second Replenishment Programme, the only important vessel being bid down under this in 1936 being the 17,300 ton aircraft carrier "Hiryu". These developments lay within the 1922 and 1930 Treaties which Japan remained bound

128 Ibid. Judgement Ch IV pg 124.
129 "Mutsu", "Krishima", and "Kongo" were all in the process of being converted and "Hiei", ostensibly a training vessel, was due to begin conversion that year. A.J. Watts and B.G. Gordon "The Imperial Japanese Navy" pg 47,61.
by until December 31. But both Britain and the United States were making preparations for naval expansion, including new battleship construction, once those treaties expired. After Congress passed the 1936 United States naval appropriation bill on May 1 Nagano warned the Diet that unless Japan embarked upon its own programme of naval expansion Japan's fighting strength, estimated to be approximately 80% of that of the United States would shrink below 60% by 1941. To combat this Nagano proposed an annual addition of 50,000 tons new construction as protection against the 70,000 tons the United States would build annually.\textsuperscript{130}

The upshot of this was the passage, late in 1936, of the Third Replenishment Law which "made the increase in Japanese naval tonnage in 1937 the greatest on record for the critical period 1931-1945".\textsuperscript{131} This authorised the construction of sixty-seven new vessels including two battleships, two aircraft carriers, one seaplane carrier, fifteen destroyers, and fourteen submarines\textsuperscript{132} which would provide the I.J.N. with the increased strength necessary for the new role assigned it on August 11. The "Shokaku" class aircraft carriers" probably the two most successful vessels in the Imperial Navy" each displaced 25,675 tons and were therefore outside the provisions of the second London Naval Treaty,\textsuperscript{133} but this discrepancy was not serious in itself. The most radical departure from the limits the west sought to impose upon Japan was the authorisation of the two Yamato class battleships: "Yamato" and "Musashi".

\textsuperscript{130} Neumann pg 233.
\textsuperscript{131} Butow pg 85.
\textsuperscript{132} Watts and Gordon Appendix I pg 523.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid pg 182-183.
The British had received the first hints that Japan "might require to build a capital ship of more than 35,000 tons" in November 1935 from the Japanese naval attache in London but had "found it difficult to know how much importance to attach to his observations". Following the Japanese refusal, in June 1936, to adhere to the second London Naval Treaty, the possibility of Japan exceeding the limits that treaty imposed on battleships could not be dismissed in such an offhand manner. Towards the end of August Clive and Grew discussed the merits of an approach to the Japanese government to ascertain the intentions of the I.J.N. with regard to the 14-inch limit on capital ships guns. The two ambassadors decided that "an indirect approach would be futile" and "that the only practical method .... would be a point-blank inquiry", but as there "seemed no reason for haste" Grew suggested that such an inquiry be postponed until he returned from leave of absence in November. The British government, however, considered the matter to be somewhat more urgent by this stage and Clive then suggested that the matter be taken up with Yoshida, the new Japanese ambassador in London. Cräigie began dealing directly with Yoshida, "on the basis of a semi-official assurance by the Japanese that they had no plans for the building of ships carrying guns larger than fourteen inches and that they would inform the British government before altering such plans". Because of this the British requested a tolerant attitude on the part of the United States at least until the end of 1936.

135 F.R.U.S. pg 298-299, Grew pg 1017-1019.
Grew returned to Japan on November 27 and within a week was discussing with the State Department when, and if, the Japanese government should be approached on the subject of capital ship guns as there were indications that the I.J.N. was testing 16-inch and 18-inch guns. Meanwhile the I.J.N. pressed ahead and in January 1937 the keel of the "Yamato", intended as the first of four, "was laid in the utmost secrecy behind great fences and sisal curtains". At the end of March 1937, with its first superbattleship underway, the Japanese government formally replied to Britain's queries with a definite refusal to accept the 14-inch gun limit as this would entail "qualitative without quantitative limitation". One June 4 the United States, pushed by the progress of its construction to make a decision on the size of the guns to be fitted to the North Carolina class also made a direct approach to the Japanese government to determine whether "this one aspect of naval limitation" could be preserved. In reply two weeks later, the Japanese government restated its adherence to the principle of non-aggression and non-menace, denied any intention of building up "a naval force which could be a meance to other countries", and expressed its "belief that a mere limitation in quality alone will only induce a tendency to make up for the deficiency caused through such limitations by resorting to quantitative augmentation, thus ultimately leading to a competition in naval armament in quantity". The government was therefore

136 Grew pg 1019.
137 Padfield pg 262.
138 F.R.U.S. pg 300-301.
139 Ibid pg 300-301.
not "in a position to adopt .... a mere limitation of the
gun calibre for capital ships".\textsuperscript{140} As a result on July 10
the State Department announced to the press that, under
the terms of Article II of the 1936 London Naval Treaty,
the new American capital ships would be filled with 16-inch
guns.

During the course of 1936 the Anglo-American powers,
having failed to impose quantitative restrictions upon the
worlds navies, prepared to embark upon massive programmes
of naval expansion. This involved the possibility of a
new naval race and the Anglo-American powers attempted to
ensure that this would be conducted according to their
rules. Any hopes that these powers may have briefly
entertained that Japan would adhere to the second London
Naval Treaty, were shattered on June 29, but they continued
to hope, particularly the British who were committed to the
14-inch gun, that at least as far as battleships, the most
expensive category, were concerned, a race in types might
yet be avoided. This was not to be. The Japanese Diet had
authorised its own mammoth naval expansion programme which,
unbeknown to the Anglo-American powers, or for that matter
to the Diet,\textsuperscript{141} included two superbattleships. Consequently
the Japanese government refused to commit itself to the
14-inch gun and when more direct approaches resulted from
the rumours reaching the British and American governments,
definitely rejected any qualitative restrictions. Britain
and the United States could remain within the terms of a
treaty which, as early as August 1936, Roosevelt had admitted
"already shows signs of ineffectiveness",\textsuperscript{142} but the hard
\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid pg 301-302.
\textsuperscript{141} I.M.T.F.E. Ex 914.
\textsuperscript{142} F.D.R. (F.A.)III pg 380.
\end{flushleft}
fact remained that the attitude of the Japanese government, rendered inflexible by the policy consensus of August 11, meant that naval limitation in the Far East, both qualitative and quantitative had collapsed. The press release issued by the State Department on July 10 was the first step the Americans were to take towards admitting that, without the participation of Japan, naval limitation in the Far East was a dead cause.
EPILOGUE: THE END OF NAVAL LIMITATION

In the years immediately preceding the war in Europe, naval rearmament, particularly battleship construction, snowballed. Having failed to fix the calibre of capital ship guns at 14-inches, Britain, France, and the United States continued to press the Japanese for a commitment to the 35,000 ton, 16-inch, capital ship limit. The Japanese naturally refused to comply. This led to agitation on the part of the Americans to raise the limits on capital ships and the addition of a protocol to the second London Naval Treaty in June 1938 which set a new displacement limit of 45,000 tons. Meanwhile the British, confronted by problems of global strategy even more serious than those Chamberlain had envisaged in 1934, pursued the concept of naval limitation in Europe and actually managed to gain the adherence of Germany and the Soviet Union to the provisions of the 1936 Treaty, while Italy finally saw fit to adhere to the now-revised treaty in December 1938. But these successes did little to disguise the fact that more than thirty capital ships were under construction in the arsenals of the world. All but two of these remained technically bound by qualitative restrictions but the limits were, by this stage, quite farcical. With the outbreak of war in Europe on September 3 1939 the British gave up the struggle and formally announced their suspension of all their obligations under the terms of the 1936 Treaty. One month later the Americans followed suit and set about

1 P. Padfield "The Battleship Era" pg 265.
planning their own superbattleships. Thus during the period 1936-1941, the world witnessed not only a quantitative race in all categories but also what was in effect a race in dreadnoughts and superdreadnoughts similar to that which had preceded the 1914-1918 war. Quantitative limitation had ended on December 31 1936, qualitative limitation was to continue, by virtue of an upward revision, until September 1939. But to all intents and purposes the naval race in the Pacific after 1936 was unrestricted in either size or numbers.

In January 1937 all three Pacific naval powers launched those naval expansion programmes they had planned the previous year. As the sheer size of the Third Replenishment Programme left Japan's hands full for 1938 as well, and since the Yamoto class had been planned so as to avoid building against the Anglo-American sea powers battleship for battleship, the supplementary Japanese programme for 1938 authorised only three auxiliary vessels, although in terms of warships actually laid down Japanese naval construction for 1938 actually exceeded that of 1937. One battleship, one aircraft carrier, one seaplane carrier, five destroyers, and two submarines, were laid down both in 1937 and 1938, but in addition the keels of two light cruisers were laid in 1938. The British construction programme for that year provided for three new battleships, two aircraft carriers, seven cruisers, sixteen destroyers, and seven submarines. The Americans authorised two more

3 Ibid pg 68-336.
4 G.B.P.P. Cmd 5385.
battleships for 1938 but these were not in fact laid down until 1939 and the second battleship of the 1937 programme not until October 1938. Fourteen destroyers and four submarines were laid down in 1938 as opposed to twelve and six respectively for the previous year, but as yet no cruisers, and despite Hulls lobbying, no aircraft carriers. The British battleships were of the King George V class and the American of the "Indiana" class (improved North Carolina class). These vessels were still within the 35,000 ton limit, but continued Japanese secrecy over the Yamato class was soon to lead to an upward revision of the 1936 battleship limits.

Reports that the projected Japanese battleships exceeded the limits of Article 4 of the second London Naval Treaty persisted until early in 1938 the western powers felt constrained to act upon them. On February 5 1938 the British, French, and American ambassadors in Tokyo presented Hirota (once again Minister of Foreign Affairs) with identical notes from their respective governments requesting the Japanese to furnish assurances that their planned battleships were within the limits of the 1936 Treaty, or at least to agree to the reciprocal exchange of construction information. Hirota's reply, received on February 12, again set forth the case Nagano had presented in London in 1936, and drew the conclusion

5 Hull had been urging Roosevelt to authorise three battleships and two aircraft carriers for 1938. C. Hull "Memoirs" pg 458-459.
7 F.R.U.S. pg 303-304.
"that the mere communication of information concerning the construction of vessels, will in the absence of quantitative limitation, not contribute to any fair and equitable measure of disarmament".  

The Japanese government therefore refused to release any information regarding its naval construction, but when pressed by the British, replied truthfully, if somewhat tongue-in-cheek, that Japan was not building ships of "such extravagant size" as 40,000 tons.  

The western powers remained unconvinced and on March 31 1938, the Americans, citing the reports on Japanese construction and the Japanese refusal to provide any clarification of the situation as reasons, invoked Article XXV, the escalator clause, of the 1936 Treaty with regard to the size and gun calibre of capital ships.  

This caused a diplomatic struggle between the signatories to that treaty. On one hand the French, for economic reasons, and the British, who wished to avoid downgrading the King George V class both maintained that a new limit should be fixed at 40,000 tons. On the other hand the "Americans simply wished to see all size restrictions lifted. A compromise limit was finally set at 45,000 tons and on June 30 1938 a protocol to this effect added to the second London Naval Treaty. The British were no longer restricted by equipment deficiencies to the 14-inch

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8 Ibid pg 305.  
9 Padfield pg 264.  
11 Padfield pg 264-265.  
12 G.B.P.P. Cmd 5781.
gun\textsuperscript{13} but to construct battleships over 43,000 tons would mean enlarging the docks and would thereby increase the cost. Furthermore the problems of outclassing the King George V class remained. Consequently the British while mounting 16-inch guns on their new "Lion" class battleships limited their size to 40,000 tons. The first two vessels of this class were laid down in 1939, but owing to the outbreak of war in Europe, were never completed.\textsuperscript{14} The Americans faced none of the British equipment problems and, aided by the second Vinson-Trammel Bill of May 1938, which provided for a 20\% overall increase in the strength of the U.S.N.\textsuperscript{15} authorised two 45,000, 16-inch "Iowa" class battleships which were duly laid down in 1940.\textsuperscript{16} Thus after June 30 1938 quantitative and qualitative naval competition had reappeared in the Pacific. Technically the Anglo-American powers remained within the second London Naval Treaty, but as to whether a treaty, twice revised to meet the new limits arising out of a qualitative naval race can still be termed naval limitation is a moot point.

Meanwhile Britain had been advancing the cause of naval limitation in Europe. The limits fixed by the second London Naval Treaty were extended, through bi-lateral treaties, to Germany and the Soviet Union on July 17 1937,\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{13} Hoare had set aside £4,000,000 from the 1937 naval estimates for grants to armour and gun factories for plant and equipment. Templewood "Nine Troubled Years" pg 207.

\textsuperscript{14} Padfield pg 265.

\textsuperscript{15} E.B. Potter and C.W. Nimitz "Sea Power" pg 484.

\textsuperscript{16} Janes Fighting Ships 1943-4 pg 441.

\textsuperscript{17} G.B.P.P. Cmd 5637 Cmd 5679.
and to Poland, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden in 1938. Naval limitation thus appeared to be working in Europe and Hoare attributes Raeder's admission that, at the outbreak of war "the U-boat arm was much to weak to have any decisive effect on the war, and the surface forces could do no more than show that they knew how to die gallantly", to the effect of the naval treaties Hitler adhered to until 1939. Nevertheless the realities of the situation were less comforting. In November 1936 the combination Chamberlain had feared so much in 1934, materialized in the form of the Anti-Comintern Pact which although "ostensibly directed at the communist international . . . . nevertheless served notice upon the world of a community of interests between the German and Japanese governments". A year later this became the Tripartite Pact with the accession of Italy - a power which had not even been considered among Britain's potential enemies in 1934. Furthermore no matter what the position was in Europe, Britain was also a Pacific power, and there qualitative limitation had definitely come to an end. With the outbreak of war in Europe on September 3 1939 the British announced their suspension of the terms of the second London Naval Treaty, to be followed by the United States on October 3, and by Italy on October 13. Naval limitation, already a farce, formally ceased to exist.

19 Admiral Erich Raeder: Commander in Chief of the German Navy 1928-1943.
20 Templewood pg 147.
22 H.L. Trefousse "Germany and Pearl Harbour" For Eastern Quarterly Vol 11 No.1 November 1951 pg 35.
It was however to be more than two years before Japan and the United States entered the war and during this period the naval race between these two powers intensified. A Fourth Replenishment Programme was authorised by the Japanese government in 1939 which, together with the supplementary estimates approved later in the year, provided for a total of eighty-nine vessels, including two more Yamato class battleships, five cruisers, one aircraft carrier, one seaplane carrier, twenty-two destroyers, and twenty-five submarines. Most of these vessels were laid down during the next two years: the aircraft carrier "Taiho" and the battleships being laid down in 1941. Of equal significance was the Japanese decision to begin the conversion of three liners and one submarine tender to aircraft carriers in 1940, to be followed by the conversion of three more vessels in 1941. By this time however the United States had taken up the naval challenge in earnest: both in numbers and types of warship.

In addition to the two "Iowas" laid down in 1940, the United States also laid down the last two "Indianas", four "Cleveland" class cruisers (10,000 tons 6-inch guns), four "Atlanta" class cruisers (6,000 tons 5-inch guns), ten destroyers, and ten submarines. In the same year Congress passed the "Two Ocean Navy" Bill which authorised a 70% increase in the overall strength of the U.S.N.

25 Watts and Gordon Appendix I pg 515-516.
26 One of the battleships: "Shinano" was converted to an aircraft carrier after Midway, the other: Hull 111 was scrapped in December 1941 while only 30% complete.
27 Watts and Gordon pg 184-191.
28 T.V. Tuleja "Statesmen and Admirals".
Armed with this the U.S.N. set about attaining its ambition of the First World War: a navy second to none.

In 1940 five "Montana" class superbattleships (58,000 tons, 16-inch guns), four more "Iowas", six "Alaska" class battlecruisers (27,000 tons 12-inch guns) ten "Baltimore" class cruisers (13,000 8-inch guns), thirty-two "Cleveland" class cruisers, and, perhaps realising that with only one aircraft carrier on the stocks, the United States had been building for the last war rather than the next, eleven 27,500 ton "Essex" class aircraft carriers, were ordered. Events in fact overtook the proposed American battlefleet. The Montanas and three of the Alaskas were never laid down and work on the last two Iowas suspended after Pearl Harbour. Nevertheless the Americans had picked up the naval gauntlet Japan had thrown down. With the "Alaskas", the "Baltimore" class cruisers, and the "Essex" class carriers, which were capable of thirty-five knots, the Americans, consciously or unconsciously, had constructed those non-treaty types Roosevelt had recommended in December 1934. In 1941 the next four Iowas, the first

29 "Hornet", laid down in 1939.

30 The "Alaska" class, officially described as large cruisers rather than battlecruisers, (see E.J. King "U.S. Navy at War" pg 252) illustrates both the effect of the suspicion produced by secrecy and the tendency to go one better which resulted from a non-treaty situation. The Alaskas were laid down as an answer to the four Japanese "Tibutu" class pocket battleships described by Jones Fighting Ships 1943-4 as displacing between 12,000 and 15,000 tons and mounting six 12-inch guns. The Tibutu class never existed but the proposed Alaska class led the Japanese to design their own 31,495 ton 12.2-inch battlecruisers. (Watts and Gordon pg 73-74).

31 See above pg 124.
Alaska, sixteen cruisers, eighty-eight destroyers, thirty-one submarines, and the first six "Essex" class aircraft carriers were laid down. The naval race, averted in 1922, was on again with a vengeance. The United States also possessed the wealth and industrial capacity to realise her goal of a two-ocean navy. Should the Americans be allowed to achieve this then to many Japanese, Japan would have failed to establish that autonomous national defence for which it had scrapped naval limitation. The logic of the situation was to lead to Pearl Harbour. 32

32 Figures from Jones Fighting Ships: 1940; pg 471-480, 1941; pg 480-483, 1942; pg 451-474, 547, 1943-4; pg 441-451, 1944-5; pg 459.
CONCLUSION

The system of naval limitation established between 1922 and 1930 contained within itself the seeds of its own decay. Two major issues emerged during this period: one the Anglo-American cruiser dispute, the other the question of fundamental principles: i.e. immutable ratio's or Japanese security in her home waters? Despite appearances at the time, neither of these was satisfactorily resolved at the first London Naval Conference. Under the terms of the 1930 treaty Japan had little choice but to demand the revision of the naval ratio's in 1936; the alternative was a position of permanent naval vulnerability. Similarly Britain, able to accept considerably reduced demands in 1930, could not hope to maintain these concessions indefinitely as her defence problems mounted during the 'thirties. During the period 1932-36, these issues were to rise up yet again, this time, in the case of Japanese security requirements, to destroy naval limitation in the Far East. The Anglo-American dispute was eventually shelved as being "relatively academic" under the circumstances prevailing in 1936, but the Japanese, in searching for a solution to their defence dilemma, eventually concluded that full naval security could best be attained in a non-treaty situation.

The 1922 Washington Conference successfully removed the threat of a dreadnought race which confronted the Pacific naval powers at the close of the 1914-18 war. At this conference the Anglo-Saxon powers managed to agree on a policy of naval parity re battleships and aircraft carriers
while fixing Japan's strength in these categories at a level which, in conjunction with the non-fortification clause of the Five Power Treaty, assured the Japanese of a position of naval hegemony in the Western Pacific. However, by imposing firm limits on battleships and aircraft carriers the Washington powers did not bring naval competition to an end but simply ensured that future competition would be confined to the still unrestricted categories; i.e. cruisers, destroyers, and submarines. The Americans assumed that the 5:5:3 ratio was a fixed principle which would ultimately be extended to all categories of warship. In this they clashed with the British view that parity applied only to warships serving with the battlefleet and that the large number of extra cruisers Britain required for commerce protection were exempt. The cruiser issue was to bedevil Anglo-American relations until settled temporarily at the Rapidian meetings of 1929. However the American view also conflicted with that of the I.J.N. which considered itself free to build over the 5:5:3 ratio in auxiliary vessels, and indeed argued that should the ratio be rigidly applied to all categories then Japan would no longer be secure even in her home waters.

Thus the 1930 London Naval Conference was faced with the problem of deciding which principle had been established in 1922: the 5:5:3 ratio, or Japanese security in home waters? Stimscn, arguing in favour of the former was able, with the acquiescence of the British, Anglo-American differences having been thrashed out the previous year, to pressure Hamaguchi's government into accepting a settlement which although more favourable than the 5:5:3 ratio, only
fulfilled one of the Three Great Principles the I.J.N. adjudged vital for Japan's continuing naval security. By the terms of the Reed-Matsudaira compromise the Japanese secured the fact of naval hegemony in their own waters until 1936, but conceded the principle. This meant that at the next naval conference the Japanese would have to secure an upward revision of their naval ratio, or accept a position of permanent vulnerability should the U.S.N. be built up to full treaty limits.

It was this same issue which confronted Japan in January 1932 but in the intervening period the political position had altered radically. The first London Naval Treaty had been the last triumph for civilian government in Japan. In September 1931 the Kwantung Army set Japan on the road to full military control and the Anglo-American powers were forced to the painful realization that their ability to defend their Far Eastern interests was dependent not upon theoretical ratio's but upon the realities of fleets-in-being, a lesson which the I.J.N. was to push home at Shanghai in January 1932. The British, although confident of American goodwill, felt they could expect nothing more concrete than this and confined themselves to vague resolutions within the anonymity of the League. On the other hand Stimson, though openly disavowed by Hoover, through his policy of "international nagging", the Borah Letter, and his positioning of the United States fleet, created an illusory American naval threat in the Pacific - an illusion which fooled no-one in authority but which provided the Japanese naval authorities with ample material for domestic propaganda and stiffened the public posture of
the Japanese government. Nonetheless, Stimson's policy of bluff forced the hand of the succeeding administration. It was to be left to Roosevelt to flesh out the spectre which Stimson had raised and thereby confirm the worst fears of the I.J.N.

The 1930 London Naval Treaty did leave the Japanese Naval High Command with a legitimate grievance. Bound by the terms of the treaty until 1936, the High Command attempted to minimise the damage firstly by ensuring that the I.J.N. built up to full treaty strength, and secondly by initiating an intensive internal propaganda campaign aimed at the mobilisation of public opinion. The campaign witnessed the end of party government in Japan and built up a vociferous public demand for the revision of the 1930 ratio. It was with this demand in mind that Japan attended the 1932 Geneva General Disarmament Conference. The disarmament plans submitted by the American and British delegates signaled the re-emergence of the "large numbers of small ships versus small numbers of large ships" controversy which had been the basis of the Anglo-American cruiser dispute during the 1920s, but the outbreak of the Shanghai Incident four days before the conference opened meant that these two powers were at least united in their determination to resist any change in Japan's ratio. In this situation it is not surprising that the Pacific naval powers could agree only to disagree. All three acknowledged the validity of the proposition that defensive armaments should be strengthened through the reduction of offensive armaments - however no agreement as to which categories of warship were actually offensive
proved possible. With the acceptance of the MacDonald Plan the naval powers admitted that further naval disarmament would have to wait until the conference provided for in the 1930 treaty was convened, yet with their proposals of December 1932 the Japanese had served notice upon the world that Japan would not accept the existing ratios after 1936.

Stimson's frequent pronouncements on Japan's foreign policy meant that Roosevelt, upon taking office in March 1933, was already committed to the course Stimson had charted, but like Stimson, he lacked the naval power to enforce his Far Eastern policy. As a remedy, Roosevelt initiated the largest naval construction programme since the 1914-18 war with the ultimate aim of providing the United States with a treaty navy, while sidestepping isolationist opposition by incorporating naval expansion into the new deal. The inclusion of four 10,000 ton, 6-inch cruisers in the American programme further complicated the already involved cruiser question, but of even greater significance was the fact that the Japanese government retaliated with a Supplementary Naval Budget designed to use up the last of Japan's treaty allocation. Further expansion of the I.J.N. would require revision of the Washington and London Treaties and in the closing months of 1933 the Japanese government formally adopted abrogation of those treaties as a fixed axiom of national policy. Then in March 1934 the whole situation changed again with the passage of the Vinson-Trammel Bill which provided for the construction of 102 new American warships by the end of 1942. Construction of 68 of these would commence during
the next three years, in addition to the 37 vessels already building under the original Roosevelt programme. Despite their abrogation decision the Japanese remained bound by the existing treaties until 1936 while facing a new naval threat in the Vinson-Trammel Bill.

Roosevelt's construction programme destroyed the basis of Japanese naval ambitions yet the I.J.N. could no longer accept a continuation of the Washington and London ratios in the face of a public demand it had itself created. Japan's naval leaders therefore attempted to secure the voluntary return of the United States to the pre-Roosevelt position, through a diplomatic settlement which would recognise Japan as the protector of continental East Asia, while demanding full naval parity to meet this responsibility. Hull naturally refused to recognise the Western Pacific as a Japanese sphere of influence or to accept the parity demand - however the I.J.N. had no intention of backing down, or of risking economic ruin through a naval race with its wealthier rivals especially as the effects of Russian military expansion began to make themselves felt on the Japanese economy. Faced with the problem of augmenting her relative naval strength cheaply, Japan changed the rules of naval competition. The I.J.N. did increase its strength quantitatively by developing the merchant marine as a strategic industry but rather than compete on a "ship for ship" basis with the Anglo-American powers, it attempted to improve its position through qualitative superiority. Japan's mid-Pacific defences were reinforced through developments in submarine technology - while remaining within the 1930 tonnage limit, her battleships
extensively modernised, and in some cases practically rebuilt from the keel up, and finally; existing naval tactics revolutionised by initiating development of the Yamato class superbattleship. But the Japanese solution to their defence dilemma involved raising existing qualitative limits and a demand for full naval parity; conditions they knew would be unacceptable to the Anglo-American powers. The death knell of naval limitation in the Far East had in fact sounded, although the world was to watch the patient's progress for several more years.

At this time the British government also found itself on the horns of a defence dilemma similar in many respects to that faced by the Japanese. By 1934 it was obvious that the British government, in spite of public opinion, could ill afford to postpone rearmament much longer - however it remained split as to the form rearmament should take. One group argued that Britain should attempt to equip itself with the forces necessary for an effective defence of the empire's interests in both hemispheres, primarily through naval expansion. The other group, led by Chamberlain, pointed out economic obstacles such as those which confronted Japan, and argued that Britain should instead strengthen her air defences against her ultimate potential enemy - Germany, while negotiating a diplomatic agreement with Japan to protect her Far Eastern interests. These programmes could not be combined. Effective global defence involved a policy of Anglo-American co-operation. Such a policy was incompatible with any Anglo-Japanese understanding. The D.R.C. report, which could have provided a framework for
British rearmament, instead provided support for both points of view, while the preliminary naval conversations of June-July 1934, which failed to resolve the revived Anglo-American cruiser dispute, did serve to highlight the differences in the British and American approaches to disarmament, thereby furthering Chamberlain's case. However by October 1934 the pro-Japanese case had come to centre on the idea of an Anglo-Japanese non-aggression pact which could then be used to modify Japan's naval demands. The Japanese policy consensus of November 1934 doomed such a plan to certain failure. Although the British dilemma remained unresolved, Britain could in fact proceed only along the path of Anglo-American co-operation.

Thus when the naval conversations of October-December 1934 opened the fate of naval limitation in the Far East had already been decided. At the first meeting the Japanese advanced their demand for parity and the Americans their conception of the advantages of continuing and extending the existing system. Any compromise involved drastic modification of established policy on the part of one or both of these powers, neither was prepared to do this. Only the British attempted to steer a "middle course". Ultimately, however, the failure once again of the Pacific naval powers to agree on what constituted an "offensive" weapon, and the inability of the British to reconcile their relative naval demands with Japan's "common upper limit", forced the British to accept the American "empty-handed" approach and the policy of Anglo-American co-operation this entailed, thereby providing a solution to the British policy dilemma. It
must be emphasised that Anglo-American naval differences had not been resolved but simply shelved in the face of an even greater naval threat. Yet, despite the emergence of this common front, and the determination of the French to also abrogate, the Japanese already committed, delivered their abrogation notice on December 29 1934 and through this action set in motion the formal winding up of the Washington and London Naval Treaties.

Throughout 1935 the British explored, unsuccessfully, the possibility of a limited naval agreement, involving only qualitative limitation, or the advance declaration of building programmes. In the face of steadily mounting problems of Imperial Defence a simple continuation of the existing treaties would have been no more satisfactory to the British government than it was to the I.J.N. Resigned to a new round of naval competition the British sought only assurances that this would be waged on their terms so as to avoid the qualitative surprises which had characterised the dreadnought race prior to the Washington Conference. Meanwhile the naval ambitions of the Americans, who had stuck resolutely to their "empty-handed" approach while pursuing their drive for a "Treaty Navy", had in view of the lack of Japanese response to British overtures, been gradually scaled down until they became roughly those of the British; i.e. to ensure that in any future naval race, national wealth and industrial power would be the deciding factors, and to avoid the possibility of warships being outclassed even as they were built.

In this situation the London Naval Conference of
December 1935 - March 1936, was a rearmament rather than a disarmament conference; the issue at stake being the rules under which a new naval race would be run. Once again at the first meeting the Japanese advanced their demand for a common upper limit while the Anglo-American powers argued that equality of armament did not guarantee equality of security. Nevertheless talks with the Japanese continued until their withdrawal on Jan 15 1936 although they could not be induced to depart from their original position. Even then the Anglo-American powers did not give up hope. On March 25 1936 Britain, France, and the United States produced the second London Naval Treaty. A largely face-saving document, the treaty abandoned quantitative limitation entirely, and was so riddled with escalator clauses as to be virtually meaningless. The treaty did provide for some minor qualitative reduction but the lowering of battleship gun calibres to 14-inches was made dependent on the accession of all the Washington powers to this provision not later than April 1 1937. Yet the I.J.N. had come to depend on the concept of qualitative superiority to offset quantitative inferiority. On January 1 1937 Japan would be free of all naval restrictions and naval limitation in the Far East, as far as the Japanese were concerned, would formally come to an end.

During 1936, the Anglo-American powers prepared for a new round of quantitative naval expansion upon the expiration of the 1922 and 1930 treaties. The British, caught up in events, planned a new class of 14-inch battleships, while the Americans, having no immediate
threat to contend with, made provision for the mounting of 16-inch guns on their new battleships should the Japanese fail to adhere to the 14-inch limit. But, parallel to these developments, the I.J.N. was preparing to abandon all forms of naval limitation. On June 29 1936, the Japanese cabinet formally announced that it could not adhere to the 1936 treaty, although the Anglo-American powers, particularly the British, continued to hope that a race in types could at least be avoided in capital ships. However following the Japanese Foreign Policy consensus of August 11, 1936 the I.J.N.'s ambitions became restricted only by the conflicting ambitions of the army, while the designation of South-east Asia as a vital strategic area meant that the ability of the I.J.N. to hold the Western Pacific in the face of a hostile U.S.N. became more important than ever. Unable to compete on a ship for ship basis, the only way in which Japan could do this was through qualitative superiority. Consequently the Third Replenishment Law of late 1936 involved, inter alia, the laying down of two Yamato class superbattleships. The Anglo-American powers could continue to observe the terms of the 1936 treaty, but the fact remained that with the actions of the Japanese government, naval limitation in the Far East, both quantitative and qualitative had collapsed.

The post-war "propaganda of the victors" has thus obscured two important aspects of naval limitation during the period 1932-36. Firstly, although it cannot be denied that the actions of the Japanese government led to the collapse of naval disarmament in the Far East, it is
difficult to see how any workable Anglo-American agreement on quantitative limitation could have been produced in 1936. The British contended that not only was the 1930 figure of fifty cruisers no longer adequate for imperial defence but even on the basis of fifty cruisers, Britain would still require an increase in her total tonnage allocation to compensate for qualitative improvements. The only solution which the British could envisage, and which therefore formed the basis of their naval proposals, was further qualitative limitation. The Americans, concerned that further qualitative limitation would reduce the effective range of their warships, and therefore the feasibility of trans-Pacific operations, would only contemplate further quantitative limitation, or a continuation of the status quo - both of which were unacceptable to the British. The "large numbers of small ships versus small numbers of large ships" controversy was still the naval bone of contention between the Anglo-American powers in 1936, and no solution was found to it. Anglo-American naval differences were not resolved but instead were ignored. Although able to agree that parity was an established principle between the two nations, no definition was attempted; indeed no definition would have been possible.

Secondly Britain, the United States, and Japan, all expected to gain one thing from any system of naval limitation, i.e. an effective naval defence. It was this which caused the British to call for further qualitative limitation, or an increase in their total tonnage allocation, and which caused the Americans to be "demanding absolutely
nothing", as the existing ratio's enabled the U.S.N., in theory, to conduct operations in Japanese home waters. But the first London Naval Treaty had denied Japan the right to an effective naval defence after 1936. As Japan embarked upon her period of territorial expansion her naval ambitions and her desire for full naval security increased just as Roosevelt's drive for a treaty navy threatened to translate the I.J.N.'s worst fears into reality. The I.J.N. therefore had to seek an alternative solution, and found it in a doctrine of qualitative superiority. Unable to reconcile the ideal of naval limitation with the realities of national defence as the I.J.N. saw it, the Japanese government abandoned naval limitation for the same reason as the Anglo-American powers supported it - in order to guarantee naval security.
A NOTE ON SOURCES

The limitations imposed upon the available sources by the "propaganda of the victors" and the resultant Anglo-American bias have already been described in the opening pages of this thesis. It, however, still remains to attempt some evaluation of these sources with regard to the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East 1932-1936.

By far the most important Japanese sources available were the exhibits and judgement of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East although, as has been mentioned, the very nature of the Tribunal must have affected the selection of documents. Moreover, the death of Nagano in prison while awaiting trial, has very probably resulted in the exclusion of documents relevant to naval limitation which would otherwise have been included. Lastly, the usefulness of the Tribunals work is somewhat impaired by the absence of any adequate indexing system. Exhibits are catalogued only by their, often misleading, titles, and the absence of any guide to content made many useful documents very hard to trace.

Anglo-American primary resources proved both more accessible and comprehensive. Series Two of "Documents on British Foreign Policy" provided considerable insight into the formulation of British policy vis a vis naval limitation, particularly Vol.XIII: "Naval Policy and Defence Requirements". The 1943 edition of "Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States" did not yield the same coverage for American policy, but this deficiency was compensated for by the existence of the three volume work: "Franklin D. Roosevelt
and Foreign Affairs". The British parliamentary debates and the "Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt" give some indication of the public stance of the Anglo-American nations - for Japan's public position one is obliged to rely more heavily upon the reports included in D.B.F.P., F.R.U.S., and the extracts included in the Royal Academy's "Documents on International Affairs".

The "Documents on International Affairs", accompanied by Toynbees: "Survey of International Affairs" also proved an invaluable source of reference for a wide range of topics within the bounds of the thesis, as did the British parliamentary sessional papers. Finally some League of Nations publications and New Zealand government papers provided specific references, particularly for the 1932 Geneva General Disarmament Conference.

The memoirs available for this period proved somewhat varied in their usefulness. Some such as Hoover's: "Memoirs", Zhukov's: "Memoirs" and that section of the Saionji-Harada Memoirs translated by Mayer-Oakes were of use only for the introductory chapter (although the information which the latter imparted about the first London Naval Conference made the absence of a complete translation even more regrettable), while others such as Amery's: "My Political Life", Craigies: "Behind the Japanese Mask", and Eden's: "Facing the Dictators" yielded only one or two specific references. Still others, though, proved to be of far greater value. Stimson's: "Far Eastern Crisis", despite the obvious element of after-the-event justification of the authors political decisions, did reveal much of Stimson's reasoning while in office, and the first volume of Hull's: "Memoirs" completes the period from the American side.
Between them Chatfield in his "It Might Happen Again" and Hoare in "Nine Troubled Years" provide an equally comprehensive view of the factors shaping British policy. But once again the Japanese sources failed to measure up. Both Kase's "Journey to the Missouri" and Fuchida and Okumiya's "Midway" are devoted in the main to the events of the early 1940's and in fact Grew's "Ten Years in Japan" and "Turbulent Era" provided more information about Japan during the thirties than the two Japanese authors.

Secondary sources dealing with naval limitation in the Far East are both numerous and surprisingly weak in detail. As the introduction to this thesis points out, the general area of great power foreign and defence policies during the thirties has been extensively covered by many authors from a variety of viewpoints. Few of these authors ignore the question of naval limitation entirely but at the same time few accord the topic more than vague generalisations (with the exception now of S.E. Pelz: "Race to Pearl Harbour"). The position is further confused by the number of articles contained in "Foreign Affairs", "The Round Table", and "Pacific Affairs" - goldmines in terms of the number of articles expressing contemporary opinions. Although confronted with a wealth of secondary sources it is difficult, and in the case of contemporary articles, almost impossible, to isolate any one work as being of exceptional value in relation to the others.

For technical sources dealing simply with the warships in service or projected during the thirties "Janes Fighting Ships", published annually, is certainly the most comprehensive. But where possible I have used the British
sessional papers which give details of the forces of the worlds leading naval powers. Unfortunately with the expiration of the 1922 and 1930 naval treaties this source ceases to be of real value after 1936. The best technical source available to me on the I.J.N., chiefly because it has been written with the advantage of hindsight, is A.J. Watts and B.G. Gordon's: "The Imperial Japanese Navy". Other valuable sources in this area are P. Padfield: "The Battleship Era" and A. Hezlet's two books: "The Submarine and Sea Power" and "Aircraft and Sea Power" - these three, although weaker in technical details of individual warships, do offer some interpretation of developments in warship design and as such complement the purely technical sources.

To introduce the topic of naval limitation in the Far East 1932-1936 by briefly examining the balance of power in 1932 and the course of naval limitation 1919-1932 there are a number of excellent books available. For a succinct account of the overall strategic position C.Thorne: "The Limits of Foreign Policy" would be difficult to surpass, while naval limitation 1919-1932 is more than adequately covered by W.R. Braisted: "The United States Navy in the Pacific 1909-1921", S.W. Roskill: "Naval Policy between the Wars", and the opening chapters of J.B. Crowley: "Japans Quest for Autonomy".

"Japans Quest for Autonomy" was also undoubtedly the best secondary source available to me on Japans foreign policy dilemma and its military repercussions during the thirties. As a general text on Japans political development during this period I could find no equal for it. This was complemented by D.M. Brown: "Nationalism in Japan" which although of little direct value to the thesis topic gives
an excellent account of the ideological basis for Japan's naval ambitions. More specific works which also proved useful were R.J.C. Bütow: "Tojo and the Coming of the War" which, although most of the book is outside the period, gives details of the new national policy consensus of 1936, and M.D. Kennedy: "The Estrangement of Great Britain and Japan" which despite its deceptive title is devoted entirely to Japan and provided an excellent coverage of Japanese objections to the American and British plans forwarded at the 1932 Geneva Conference.

On the British side for a general account of foreign and defence policies in the Far East I referred mainly to Wm.R. Louis: "British Strategy in the Far East 1919-1939" and to the introduction to B.A. Lee: "Britain and the Sino-Japanese War 1937-1939". However other books covered sections of the British case in far greater detail. Sir John Pratt: "War and Politics in China" gives the other side to Stimsons charges in "The Far Eastern Crisis", a useful, if somewhat sketchy, account of Chamberlains role in the formulation of policy can be found in K. Feiling's biography: "Life of Neville Chamberlain", and a clear brief explanation of the British defence dilemma can be found in A. Marder's article: "The Royal Navy and the Ethiopian Crisis of 1935-36". Finally the cabinet split in 1934 over the possibility of an Anglo-Japanese rapprochement and the form which British rearmament should take receives excellent coverage in three different books: K. Middlemass and J. Barnes: "Baldwin", A. Trotter: "Britain and East Asia 1933-1937", and D.C. Watt: "Personalities and Policies".

As general texts for the American case I referred
principally to W.L. Neumann: "America encounters Japan", and T.V. Tuleja: "Statesmen and Admirals". Although the latter seemed to contain a strong pro-American bias at the expense of objective argument, factually it proved again and again a useful source of reference. For Stimson's term in office I found R.N. Current's article: "The Stimson Doctrine and the Hoover Doctrine" to be the most useful secondary source available, although A. Rappaport: "Henry L. Stimson and Japan 1931-33", also deserves mention. For the state of American public opinion during the thirties I consulted R.A. Divine: "The Illusion of Neutrality" and another of Rappaport's books: "The Navy League of the United States". However the most useful reference for American policy was D. Borg "The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-38". This seems to have become a standard text and gives an excellent account of the 1934 conversations, although only from the American viewpoint.

Thus the breakdown of naval limitation in the Far East 1932-36 is well covered in terms of primary resources from the Anglo-American side although the Japanese case is considerably more limited and somewhat twisted as a result of the Pacific War. As for secondary sources the Far Eastern crisis in general is extensively covered yet naval limitation remains a curiously neglected area. The exception of S.E. Pelz must once again be mentioned but having read "Race to Pearl Harbour" I saw no reason to alter any of the conclusions reached in my own work.
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