Counter-Terrorism: An International History, 1919-1937

Mary Samantha Barton
Roanoke, Virginia

MA in History, University of Virginia, 2013
BA in History, Bryn Mawr College, 2009

A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Corcoran Department of History

University of Virginia
December, 2016

Acknowledgements

This dissertation is the culmination of five years of graduate study at the University of Virginia. I would like to thank my advisors and professors for their time, support, and service as educators: William Hitchcock, Melvyn Leffler, Jeffrey Rossman, Stephen Schuker, Philip Zelikow, Erik Linstrum, Mark Thomas, Alon Confino, Robert Geraci, Elizabeth Thompson, and Brian Balogh. My thanks go especially to Mr. Hitchcock and Mr. Leffler for their careful reading of my work, made better by their suggestions and comments, and for always inspiring me to be a better scholar and writer.

I am also indebted to the following organizations for financially supporting this project and allowing me to undertake archival research in the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Switzerland: The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, University of Virginia; Society of Fellows, University of Virginia; Institute of the Humanities and Global Cultures, University of Virginia; Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, University of Virginia; Robert J. Huskey Travel Fellowship, University of Virginia; Robert A. and Barbara Divine Graduate Student Travel Grant, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations; Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation; Hayek Fund, Institute for Humane Studies, George Mason University; Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; Clements Center for History, Strategy, and Statecraft, University of Texas at Austin; Carnegie International Policy Scholars Consortium and Network, Carnegie Corporation and Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University; and the John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding, Dartmouth College. I would like to extend my gratitude to the archivists and staff at the following repositories: The National Archives of the United Kingdom; the British Library; Special Collections, University of Birmingham; U.S. National Archives and Records Administration; the Library of Congress; Georgetown University Special Collections Research Center; Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia; Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University; The Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France; and the League of Nations and United Nations Office at Geneva Archives, Switzerland. I would also like to thank the library staff at the University of Virginia and Dartmouth College.

In addition to my scholarly and intellectual community at the University of Virginia, I benefited enormously from my outstanding undergraduate education at Bryn Mawr College, Haverford College, and the University of Oxford. My classes and teachers at these institutions instilled a deep love of history and dedication to the discipline that continues to influence my scholarship. I would like to thank my colleagues at UVA and in the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations for reading my work and becoming friends and mentors along the way. This dissertation improved immensely from the opportunities I had to present sections of it in research seminars and at conferences hosted by the Kennan Institute; Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations; Council for European Studies; European History Section of the Southern Historical Association; the International and Global History Group, University of Virginia; and the Dickey Center International Relations Faculty Working Group, Dartmouth College.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to my dear friends, little brother, and parents. I am grateful for your belief in me and your love and encouragement. I dedicate this dissertation to my mom and dad, Valerie Brooke Stephens and Jonathan Barton. You are my role models, pillars of strength, and reason I completed my doctorate in history. Thank you.

Table of Contents

Introduction: The Anarchist Precedent, 1898-1914

Western governments first responded to international terrorism in the 1890s when anarchists assassinated a record number of heads of states, politicians, and diplomats. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Gavrilo Princip, a member of the Young Bosnians, in June 1914 symbolized both the "old" anarchist terrorism of "propaganda by deed" and the "new" terrorism of state sponsorship because of the shadowy involvement of Serbian intelligence. After the First World War, surplus stockpiles of arms and ammunition posed a new threat, as government officials worried that the munitions needed to win the war would now be employed against them by religious extremists, revolutionary nationalists, and Soviet Bolsheviks.

The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 marked a turning point in international counter-terrorism doctrine, as the Allied and Associated powers took steps to disarm the defeated nations and to stop the sale of arms and weapons in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East in an effort to defeat colonial insurgencies. Terrorist activity continued to escalate, however, as governments failed to adhere to the disarmament and arms trafficking treaties. In 1937, the League of Nations produced the last comprehensive anti-terrorism strategy of the interwar years in the form of an international Convention for the Punishment and Prevention of Terrorism. The simultaneous increase in state-sponsored terrorism, however, nullified the legal successes of the League in defining and criminalizing international terrorism in a multilateral treaty.

The argument of this dissertation is that a lack of consensus over arms controls and the emergence of state-sponsored terrorism hindered an effective Western counter-terrorism strategy after the First World War. Why did interwar counter-terrorism fail and why has it not been

studied before? The answer to these two principal questions requires first understanding how the First World War changed terrorism, the modern state, and counter-terrorism doctrine.

Terrorism is the planned and systematic use of violence, or its threat, to achieve a political aim. It serves as a spectacular form of communication, conveying messages to audiences well beyond the intended target. The word "terrorism" was first popularized during the French Revolution and the *régime de la terreur* (reign of terror) of 1792-4. The revolutionary state under Maximilien Robespierre and the Jacobin government justified the use of terror as virtuous and necessary for eliminating counter-revolutionaries, subversives, and other dissidents regarded as "enemies of the people." By the middle of the nineteenth century, associations between the state and terror had largely faded, and especially any positive interpretations of state terror. By the start of twentieth century, Western governments viewed terrorism as a form of violence used by protest movements in "their struggle against established political orders."[1]

Among national liberation movements seeking to gain political autonomy or expand their territory, terrorism was a component of irregular warfare consisting of low level attacks and covert operations. It was a weapon of the weak against a more powerful adversary, the modern state, which possessed a "monopoly on violence" through its military, civilian, and legal apparatuses.[2] This was true of ethnic separatist groups in the Balkans or anticolonial organizations in British India. Leftwing and rightwing groups also engaged in terrorist tactics, including robberies, the destruction of government property and infrastructure, and assassinations, as part of their larger strategy to topple regimes and assume power. Disagreements about the definition of terrorism derived from differences in opinion about the

[1] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Klaus Weinhauer, "Terrorism and the State," in *Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe*, eds. David Bloxham and Robert Gerwarth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 180-81; Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press 1998), 15; Beverly Gage, "Terrorism and the American Experience: A State of the Field," *The Journal of American History* 98 (2011): 74.
[2] Lauren Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes in World History, 1400-1900* (New York, 2002), 130.

use of revolutionary violence for regime change, and if it was justified against a despotic government. In addition, some policymakers expressed political and moral concerns about labeling certain groups as terrorists, if doing so empowered a government to repress political dissent or national self-determination. As a result, liberal states hesitated to codify a definition of terrorism in international law that served authoritarian regimes and delegitimized all forms of violence against the state. The counter-terrorism methods employed by interwar governments reflected their political and legal cultures, often leading to disagreement and disunity. This dissertation fills a crucial void by showing counter-terrorism's evolution in the early twentieth century, a legacy that continues to influence modern day practices. In this study, I examine government responses to violence perpetrated by non-state actors and their state-sponsors. I exclude state terror, although I argue that by the 1930s governments used anti-terrorism laws and international treaties against domestic critics at home and abroad.

Modern terrorism erupted in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth-century. It was strongly associated with left-wing radicals because the writings of anarchist theorists provided an intellectual justification for political violence against the state, or "propaganda by deed," along with technical manuals for homemade explosives.[3] Young militants proclaiming allegiance to anarchism assassinated seven heads of state in Russia, Europe, and the United States and attacked bourgeois symbols of government. In November 1893, anarchists bombed the Barcelona Liceu Opera House and the French Chamber of Deputies the next month. The unprecedented geographic scope and scale of attacks attributed to anarchists prompted European governments to overlook national differences and rally behind collective action in the fight

[3] Major theorists include the Russians Sergei Nechaev, Nicholas Mozorov, Peter Kropotkin, and Serge Stepniak, the Italians Carlo Pisacane and Errico Malatesta, and the Germans Karl Heinzen and Johann Most. See Barbara Tuchman, *The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the World Before the War 1890-1914* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1962); Richard Bach Jensen, *The Battle against Anarchist Terrorism: An International History, 1878-1934* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

against international terrorism. European governments viewed anarchist terrorism as a transnational movement that necessitated a "practical scheme of common defense against this common danger."[4]

Continental European governments organized the first multilateral counter-terrorism initiatives. They convened two international anti-anarchist conferences: the International Conference of Rome for the Social Defense Against Anarchists in 1898 and the St. Petersburg Conference of 1904. The two anti-anarchist conferences held in 1898 and 1904 attempted to combat political violence through the international coordination of law and policy.[5] The United Kingdom and United States, however, shied away from the continental model of anti-terrorism based on international cooperation, shared information and surveillance, and uniform laws regarding extradition and punishment. Instead, the United Kingdom relied on its anti-terrorism police force, the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, to monitor subversive individuals and groups, while the United States turned to exclusionary immigration legislation to deport anarchists and detain the revolutionary ideology at the border. Western governments acquired a formidable bank of experience combatting anarchist terrorism, but national and regional differences impeded the creation of an international security system.

After World War I, terrorism was ideologically fractured, widespread, and often state-sponsored. The First World War and Bolshevik revolution in Russia unleashed three ideologies that profoundly influenced world politics and terrorism for the rest of the century: Soviet

[4] Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne, 13 December 1901, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereinafter TNA), London, England, FO 881/7711; Richard Bach Jensen, "The Evolution of Anarchist Terrorism in Europe and the United States from the Nineteenth Century to World War I," in *Terror: From Tyrannicide to Terrorism*, eds. Brett Bowden and Michael T. Davis (Queensland, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2008), 134-60; David C. Rapoport, "Reflections on 'Terrorism and the American Experience,'" *Journal of American History* 98 (2011): 116.

[5] Peter Romaniuk, *Multilateral Counter-Terrorism: The Global Politics of Cooperation and Contestation* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 20; Mathieu Deflem, *Policing World Society: Historical Foundations of International Police Cooperation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 66-68; Hsi-Huey Liang, *The Rise of Modern Police and the European State System from Metternich to the Second World War* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 163.

communism, fascism, and ultra-nationalism based on exclusive categories of ethnicity and race. These ideologies inspired terrorist groups to carry out attacks, while the political politicization and ideological extremism of the era motivated governments to provide weapons, money, and safe haven for militant groups. The years after World War I ended terrorism's exclusive association with anarchist violence and left-wing revolutionaries, as right-wing and nationalist-separatist groups primarily sponsored terrorist operations.[6]

Unlike their anarchist antecedents, interwar terrorist groups received state support. The massive systematic involvement of governments in terrorist movements in foreign countries developed in the 1920s. The often clandestine support, encouragement, and assistance provided to terrorist groups by foreign governments rendered them more effective and lethal. In the age of mass political parties, both communists and fascists subscribed to collective violence and supported political murder for regime change.[7] In the 1920s, the Soviet Union maintained a dual foreign policy. The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (Narkomindel or NKID) pursued "peaceful coexistence" with foreign governments and engaged in normal diplomatic and commercial relations, while Moscow's transnational network, the Communist International, sponsored revolution abroad in Europe and Asia, even during the Stalinist era of "socialism in one country." The Communist International provided logical and military assistance for communists and revolutionary nationalists engaged in the global anti-imperialist struggle.[8]

[6] Walter Laqueur, *Terrorism* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977), 17, 74. Right-wing terrorism grew in ascendancy in Europe, but also in Japan and Egypt. Japanese terrorists in the 1920s were manipulated by military leader who desired the government to implement a more aggressive policy of expansion abroad. In the 1930s and especially in the 1940s, the Muslim Brotherhood and other extreme right-wing groups such as Young Egypt employed systematic terrorism and killed two prime ministers and a few other leading officials.

[7] Laqueur, *Terrorism*, 114; Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 23; Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 21-22.

[8] Jon Jacobson, *When the Soviet Union Entered World Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 7, 16-19, 28-31, 44-45, 51, 120.

In Europe, state-sponsored terrorism emerged as a direct response to the postwar peace treaties and the creation of new European states at the Paris Peace Conference. Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary, the defeated nations of the war, and Italy, a former wartime ally, opposed the territorial settlements of 1919-20. They carried out a "revisionist" campaign against the Versailles system, while also clandestinely supporting foreign terrorist groups in proxy wars against their neighbors.[9]

The First World War also created the modern interventionist state with a vast bureaucracy, expanded police and intelligence services, and wartime legislation that could be used during peacetime emergencies.[10] After the war, governments suppressed militant groups through censorship, police surveillance, biased courts, and military action. In east-central Europe, extra-judicial paramilitaries, frequently connected to the military and police, and often comprised of hardened and armed war veterans, attacked political opponents and protected their own factions.[11]

Governments also addressed terrorism in active and creative ways in the 1920s. The peacemakers at Paris established an arms policy designed to destroy surplus stocks of munitions left over from the Great War and to keep small arms and explosives from reaching European and anticolonial terrorist groups. Western governments first created the Inter-Allied Commissions of Control, and then empowered the new intergovernmental peacekeeping body, the League of Nations, with demilitarizing and disarming the defeated nations and regulating arms trafficking. As a result, the League of Nations arbitrated terrorism cases having to do with minority

[9] Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 23, 27.
[10] Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst: The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3-11; Norman Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 9; Eric Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 52; Martin Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 14.
[11] Mark Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice: The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 125-26.

protections, the administration of mandates, weapons violations of the peace treaties, and state support and asylum given to armed groups.

Government officials and law enforcement officers also utilized global police systems and surveillance networks to monitor criminal and terrorist activity. Two international police organizations promoted the exchange of information regarding criminal enterprises. In 1922, Richard Enright, the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department, established the annual International Police Conference in New York. The next year, the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC), Interpol's predecessor, was founded in Vienna. By 1934, ICPC's membership included police officers from almost all European countries, Egypt, China, and Japan, and in 1938, the United States officially joined.[12] The emergence of the Bolshevik threat encouraged the Americans and British to continue their wartime information-sharing practices. In the 1920s, British intelligence continued to supply the U.S. State Department with intelligence regarding their common enemy, the Communist International, and the movements and actions of American communists. Through their security services and intelligence networks, Western governments received information on militant groups in all parts of the world.

Despite these innovations, terrorist campaigns escalated in the colonial world and Europe. As my dissertation argues, international cooperation on terrorism matters disintegrated along national security lines, allowing small arms to continue reaching terrorist organizations through gun-running operations and state-sponsorship. This argument engages with four broad historical fields and compels us to rethink our understanding of international relations in the 1920s and 1930s, the history of the League of Nations, British decolonization in India, and the history of global political violence and state responses.

[12] Deflem, *Policing World Society*, 124, 128-29, 132-33.

Since the end of the Paris Peace Conference, the study of interwar diplomacy has revolved around the question of responsibility, first for World War I, and then for the Second World War. Scholars blamed the Versailles Treaty and postwar order for sowing the seeds of another conflict until the fifty-year rule for opening diplomatic records in the main belligerent countries expired. The opening of the archives led to an outpouring of scholarship that reconsidered interwar diplomacy, and in particular, the decade of the 1920s. Since the 1970s, historians have argued that the 1920s were distinct from the 1930s and the rise of Nazi Germany.[13] Contemporary studies, including Zara Steiner's definitive two volume examination of interwar international relations, now point to the London reparations conference of 1924 and the Locarno treaties of 1925 as major turning points that settled many of the grievances of the Treaty of Versailles.[14]

My dissertation draws from two pivotal points emphasized in the extensive secondary scholarship on interwar diplomacy. First, I stress the influential role of ideology on internal and international politics as noted by Arno Mayer and Charles Maier; and second, I agree with Sally Marks that the diplomatic overtures of the 1920s were an illusion of peace, as statesmen

[13] Jon Jacobson, "Is There a New International History of the 1920s?" *American Historical Review* 88, no. 3 (1983): 619-623, 645.

[14] Jon Jacobson, *Locarno Diplomacy: Germany and the West, 1925-1929* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972); Stephen Schuker, *The End of French Predominance in Europe: The Financial Crisis of 1924 and the Adoption of the Dawes Plan* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976), Walter McDougall, *France's Rhineland Diplomacy, 1914-1924: The Last Bid for a Balance of Power in Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978); Melvyn Leffler, *The Elusive Quest: America's Pursuit of European Stability and French Security, 1919-1933* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Manfred F. Boemeke, Gerlad D. Feldman, and Elizabeth Glaser, eds., *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment After 75 Years* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919-1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) and *The Triumph of the Dark: European International History 1933-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). As Steiner argues, the 1920s represented a time of experimentation, while the "triumph of the dark" derived from the political and economic strains of the Great Depression. In the 1930s, the forces of nationalism coupled with economic instability rendered the League of Nations helpless in the face of aggression and exacerbated tensions between the French, still seeking security guarantees against a rearming Germany, and the British and Americans.

supported international cooperation only when it suited their national interests.[15] My dissertation supports Marks's claim by examining the growth of state-sponsored terrorism in Europe. The stabilization of western Europe in the mid-1920s through the Dawes plan and Locarno treaties did not remove the casual factors inciting political violence in east-central Europe.[16] These factors included resentment against the peace treaties, expansionist foreign policies, Comintern intervention, paramilitary and state violence against ethnic and political minorities, and the harboring of foreign terrorist groups. My work helps to reshape the international history of the interwar years by demonstrating that terrorism and state-sponsored terrorism were directly tied to the postwar peace treaties, and that this form of political violence deeply destabilized Europe despite the economic and security arrangements of 1924-26.

The continuation of terrorism in Europe is evidenced by League of Nations cases on the subject and American and British intelligence reports that revealed mass violations of the peace treaties' disarmament clauses. A recent renaissance in League scholarship has led to more studies on the mandates system, minority rights treaties, and the covenant's technical articles which promoted intergovernmental collaboration and international cooperation.[17] The League was also

[15] Arno Mayer, *Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917-1918* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959); *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918-1919* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967); Charles Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilization in France, Germany, and Italy in the Decade after World War I* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Sally Marks, *The Illusion of Peace: International Relations in Europe, 1918-1933* (London: MacMillan, 1976).

[16] European scholarship now stresses that the First World War and its legacies differed in the east for both civilians and combatants. See Donald Bloxham and Robert Gerwarth, eds., *Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, eds., *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012); Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela, eds., *Empires at War, 1911-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Jochen Böhler, Wlodzimierz Borodziej and Joachim von Puttkamer, eds., *Legacies of Violence: Eastern Europe's First World War* (Munich, Germany: Oldenbourg Verlag München, 2014); Robert Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917-1923* (London: Macmillan, 2016).

[17] Most of this work celebrates the achievements of the League, and moves away from post – World War II "realist" interpretations that condemned the League for failing to safeguard collective security. See Susan Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations," *American Historical Review* 112 (2007): 1108-09, 1110, 1116, 1093. The technical articles dealt with regulating transnational traffics, such as opium, refugees, prostitutes, as well as health care, the drug trade, intellectual property rights and labor policy. Many nonmembers of the League, the United States, the Soviet Union, Germany, and Japan were involved in the League's technical areas.

tasked with overseeing international regimes that prohibited arms trafficking and state involvement in terrorism.[18] League officials attempted to codify these regimes in law, and thereby influence states' behavior, by holding an arms trafficking conference in 1925 and an anti-terrorism conference in 1937, both of which produced international treaties. However, as noted by political scientists, states have routinely violated international norms connected to arms control and security.[19]

The historical record highlights the difficulty League officials faced in enforcing the arms and anti-terrorism treaties. Both the Hungarian and Yugoslavian governments brought terrorism cases to the League in the late 1920s and early 1930s, while the governments of the Little Entente protested against Italian arms transfers to well-known Balkan terrorist organizations. In these instances, France and Britain tried to keep the cases out of the League and no parties were ever penalized. Beliefs about the sanctity of domestic sovereignty checked League officials from addressing either the state-terror of the Yugoslav regime or the asylum given to anti-Yugoslav terrorists by Hungarian authorities. While this study underscores traditional criticisms of the League, namely that it was important but ultimately ineffective, it also indicates the strengths and weaknesses of the legalist framework League officials applied to solving problems of national and international security. The League's arms trafficking and anti-terrorism treaties could not

[18] International regimes are the principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures that govern behavior around a given issue-area. See Stephen Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," *International Organization* 36 (1982): 185; Daniela Donno, *Defending Democratic Norms: International Actors and the Politics of Electoral Misconduct* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4; Daniel Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 7. Political science literature on international regimes peaked in the 1980s. See Stephane Haggard and Beth Simmons, "Theories of International Regimes," *International Organizations* 41 (1987): 491-517; Robert Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches," *International Studies Quarterly* 32 (1988): 379-396. More recent studies of setting norms, rules, etc. have been connected to human rights and arms controls, but are no longer organized under the concept of regimes. I thank William Wohlforth for his helpful advice on this subject.

[19] Jennifer Erickson, *Dangerous Trade: Arms Exports, Human Rights, and International Reputation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Robert Jervis, "Security Regimes," *International Organization* 36 (1982): 357-378.

dictate behavior when they lacked enforcement mechanisms and it increasingly benefited governments to rearm and support foreign terrorist groups fighting their enemies.

Studies of the League's work to criminalize international terrorism have been legal or European in focus. This is because European states, including Soviet Russia, were the leading proponents of state-sponsored terrorism, while European jurists and non-governmental legal organizations initiated efforts to criminalize acts of terrorism.[20] However, the only government to ratify the League's terrorism treaty was the British Government of India, which had separate League membership.[21] During the interwar years, British officials considered India and the province of Bengal to be the center of many terrorist networks. While militant Indian nationalists drew inspiration from the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland, the civil war that followed the Irish war of independence and the creation of Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State deeply divided the Irish republican movement. Membership in the militant Irish Republican Army (IRA) declined in both the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland until the late 1930s when the IRA renewed its activities and attacks inside Great Britain. The widespread use of emergency powers based on British wartime legislation allowed both governments to reestablish order, and helped the government of Éamon de Valera to consolidate power in the Irish Free State.[22] De Valera's

[20] Bennett Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation: The Resolution of the Marseilles Crisis, October 1934 to May 1935," *The Historical Journal* 19, no. 1 (1976): 191-221; Martin David Dubin, "Great Britain and the Anti-Terrorist Conventions of 1937," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5, no. 1 (1993): 1-29; Ben Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism" *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 4, no 1 (2006): 78-102; Reuven Young, "Defining Terrorism: The Evolution of Terrorism as a Legal Concept in International Law and Its Influence on Definitions in Domestic Legislation," *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review* 20, no 1 (2006): 23-102; Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 9.

[21] J.G. Starke, "The Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism," *The British Year Book of International Law* (London, 1938), 214-16; Legal scholars writing in the 1970s argued that the ratification on January 1, 1941 of the terrorism convention by the British Government of India was "probably motivated by considerations of suppressing the nationalist movement of the Indian people." See M.K. Nawaz and Gurdip Singh, "Legal Controls of International Terrorism," *Indian Journal of International Law* 17 (1977): 66-82; V.S. Mani, "International Terrorism – Is a Definition Possible?" *Indian Journal of International Law* 18 (1978): 206-212.

[22] Richard English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 42-54; Mel Farrell, Jason Knirck, and Ciara Meehan, eds., *A Formative Decade: Ireland in the 1920s* (Sallins, IRL: Irish Academic Press, 2015); Brian Hanley, *The IRA, 1926-1936* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002); Durba Ghosh,

government continued to fight for more freedoms for the Irish Free State, a self-governing dominion in the British Empire, but through legal, political channels rather than extralegal political violence.[23]

During the same period, the Government of India endured three anti-British, anticolonial terrorist campaigns, which is why the British government's response to Indian terrorism is the focus of this dissertation. My study indicates that the Government of India specifically signed the League's 1937 terrorism treaty for its arms controls protocols, which were included in the convention at the request of the Indian representative. This argument brings to light the importance of controlling gun-running for British imperial counter-terrorism. London's decision not to sign the terrorism treaty marked a significant departure from previous British imperial policy and deepened a divide between the two governments. In the 1920s, London had advocated multilateral treaties to regulate the global arms trade, as British policymakers recognized that the proliferation of small arms would assist anticolonial groups resisting British rule. By the 1930s, British policymakers in London believed an international arms accord under League control would be futile and gravitated towards bilateral treaties with continental European governments – Germany, France, Belgium – whose ports facilitated arms smuggling.

For scholars of Indian independence and British imperial policy, my study suggests that intragovernmental disagreements about security were one of the factors that helped influence

---

"Terrorism in Bengal: Political Violence in the Interwar Years," in *Decentring Empire: Britain, India and the Transcolonial World*, ed. Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy (New Delhi, 2006), 271; Michael Silvestri, *Ireland and India: Nationalism, Empire and Memory* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Kate O'Malley, *Ireland, India and Empire: Indo-Irish Radical Connections, 1919-1964* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2008); John Maguire, *IRA Internments and the Irish Government: Subversives and the State, 1939-1962* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2008), 2-3, 7-20.

[23] D.W. Harkness, *The Restless Dominion: The Irish Free State and the British Commonwealth of Nations, 1921-31* (New York: New York University Press, 1970); Michael Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations, 1919-1946: International Relations, Diplomacy and Politics* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1996).

Britain's eventual disengagement from India.[24] London officials disagreed with the anti-terrorism policies promoted by Delhi policymakers, especially the creation of a vast detention camp system to imprison alleged terrorists. These disagreements became apparent at the League's terrorism conferences where the British Home Office rejected the terrorism convention on constitutional grounds, declaring that the treaty endangered important common law traditions such as free speech and political asylum.[25] The Government of India signed and ratified the terrorism treaty, arguing that Indian terrorists posed a viable security threat to British rule. By the mid-1930s, London no longer agreed and doubted the efficacy of enforcing anti-terrorism laws that turned the Indian public against British rule, especially when negotiating with M.K. Gandhi offered another route.

Finally, this dissertation contributes to the history of ideas about the evolution of *counter*-terrorism. Scholars of ideas, political movements, ideology, radicalism, and terrorism have not studied counter-terrorism in a rigorous manner.[26] However, examining contemporary policy responses to terrorism reveals how radical movements operate, their sources of funding and arming, and their political strategies and ideological orientations. Fully understanding the history of terrorism requires looking at government counter-actions and how those policies changed the tactics or strategies of terrorist groups.

A government's counter-terrorism policy reflects its understanding of security threats and the best way to defeat internal and external enemies. During the First World War and after,

[24] The armed struggle against British rule in India is not well known. The historian Peter Heehs argues that this is because the image of M.K. Gandhi and the overall success of his methods, civil disobedience and non-violence, led many to believe that India achieved freedom without resort to violence. However, Heehs believes that violent resistance was "preached and practiced" from the beginning of the national movement until its end and had a "significant effect" on its course and outcome. See Peter Heehs, *Nationalism, Terrorism, Communalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1. See also Richard J. Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense: British Intelligence and the Defense of the Indian Empire, 1904-1924* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[25] Dubin, "The Anti-Terrorist Conventions of 1937," 1, 16.

[26] In his study of the global history of terrorism, *Terrorism* (1977), Walter Laqueur gives three pages to "counterterrorism." Bruce Hoffman's *Inside Terrorism* (1998) does not examine counter-terrorism.

Western governments considered radical political movements and terrorist organizations with foreign bases of operation and external support systems that supplied arms and money as the most dangerous. The British responded to transnational terrorism by expanding their intelligence services and building a "surveillance state" at home and abroad. The Americans engaged in limited anti-Soviet espionage with the British and instituted exclusionary immigration to detain and expel radicals who supported revolutionary violence and espoused beliefs that were contrary to American governance and society. The Europeans attempted to construct a cooperative system to fight terrorism through international law and to end the asylum given to militant dissidents by foreign governments. As in 1898 and 1904 at the anti-anarchist conferences, European governments desired to synchronize national anti-terrorism laws, to mandate extradition for political assassination, and to establish information bureaus for the quick exchange of information regarding terrorists.[27]

In the 1920s and 1930s, militant groups actively sought outside backers, highlighting the availability of state-sponsorship for organizations willing to use violence to achieve their ideological and political aspirations. Aligning with a government or relocating to a foreign country for safe haven, however, often resulted in the loss of autonomy for indigenous radical movements or demise at the hands of a fickle backer. State-sponsorship could also be detrimental to an organization's original intentions, as was the case for the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization. Bulgarian tutelage turned the young idealists into a band of assassins for the state.[28]

[27] Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice,* 123.
[28] Laqueur, *Terrorism,* 13.

In Europe, counter-terrorism was tied to "state-sponsored violence" and mass population policies.[29] Soviet Russia and the autocratic regimes of east-central Europe turned counter-terrorism into state-terror, using anti-terrorism laws to arrest and execute political opponents and/or ethnic minorities. Most glaringly, Joseph Stalin carried out the Great Purge as a counter-terrorism measure.[30] The state-directed terror of the interwar years even changed terrorism's meaning. By the beginning of the Second World War, terrorism was once again associated with state violence and the repressive actions of totalitarian regimes against their own populations. This usage reflected terrorism's original definition as a government system of coercion designed by the Jacobins to eliminate "enemies of the people" during the French Revolution's Reign of Terror.[31]

By the mid-1930s, labeling a group a terrorist organization was a powerful weapon for governments. It allowed for indiscriminate arrest, political purges, and stifled voices protesting government repression. Consequently, after the Second World War, the leading criminal jurists on the subject of terrorism such as Raphael Lemkin turned to advocating the 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Unlike the League's anti-terrorism treaties, which served state security, the 1948 conventions safeguarded the civil and political rights of individuals and protected specific groups from genocidal state

[29] Ian Kershaw, "War and Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe," *Contemporary European History* 14 (2005): 108. See also Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Allen Lane, 1998) and Donald Bloxham, Martin Conway, Robert Gerwarth, A. Dirk Moses, and Klaus Weinhauer, "Europe in the World: Systems and Cultures of Violence," in *Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe*, eds. David Bloxham and Robert Gerwarth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 11.

[30] Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010); 73. During the interwar years, Germany protested against terrorism against German minorities at the League of Nations, ostensibly winning a case against Poland in 1930. Adolf Hitler justified the Nazi occupation of Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939 on the premise that he was protecting German minorities from "terrorist bands." See Carole Frink, "The League of Nations and the Minorities Question," *World Affairs* 157, no. 4 (1995): 203 and Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism," 102.

[31] Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 13-15.

violence. The League's successor, the United Nations, did not address international terrorism again until the 1960s.[32]

The dissertation proceeds in six chapters. It starts with the Paris Peace Conference and the establishment of a global arms policy and ends with the League of Nation's last diplomatic conference on suppressing international terrorism. Using intelligence reports, diplomatic correspondence, and the personal papers and memoirs of key policymakers, my dissertation shows that gun-running and the vast illegal arms market supplied by allies and enemies alike fueled European and anticolonial terrorism in the 1920s and 1930s. In the pages that proceed, this dissertation argues that the priority assigned to nationalist foreign policies by Western governments and the emergence of state-sponsored terrorism hindered the international cooperation necessary for dismantling and disrupting the terrorist organizations of the interwar era.

[32] Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 123-124; Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 25-26.

Chapter 1: In the Aftermath of War, 1919-1927

In mid-February 1919 Paris quieted. Previously abuzz for a month as the peacemakers bickered, cajoled, and negotiated the peace treaties to end the Great War, the city finally rested as U.S. President Woodrow Wilson and British Prime Minister David Lloyd George took a brief leave to return home and address domestic concerns. Georges Clemenceau, the French prime minister, known as "the Tiger," remained in Paris.

On the morning of February 19, Clemenceau left in his car to meet with President Wilson's chief adviser, Colonel Edward House, and the British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour at the Hôtel de Crillon. As the prime minister's car turned onto the Rue Franklin, a young man jumped into the street and fired his weapon. The spray of bullets broke the windshield and wounded a police officer. The assassin continued shooting and chased after the vehicle as it drove down the boulevard.[1] One bullet struck Clemenceau between the ribs, missing vital organs but too dangerous to remove. Another bullet hit his chauffeur. The crowd awaiting the prime minister's arrival turned on the assailant, Eugène Cottin, nearly lynching him. In police custody, Cottin confessed to being an "Anarchist" and proclaimed that he had intended to murder the prime minister as "an enemy of the working class."[2] When news of the attack reached Lloyd George, he immediately questioned if Cottin was a Bolshevik agent, and, if so, the effect this would have on diplomatic relations between France and Russia.[3]

Clemenceau recovered. His many visitors found him reclining in an armchair, complaining about Cottin's marksmanship – "a Frenchman who misses his target six times out of

[1] "Attempt On M. Clemenceau. *The Times* [London, England] 20 February 1919.
[2] "The Shooting of M. Clemenceau." *The Times* [London, England] 20 February 1919.
[3] Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2003), 149-50.

seven at point-blank range." The "old republican" refused to allow Cottin to be condemned to death, and the would-be assassin served five of his ten-year prison sentence.[4]

The attack on Clemenceau drew upon an older tradition of anarchist terrorism from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[5] While assassinations of high-ranking officials continued, terrorism changed after the Great War. Transnational networks of revolutionaries transformed into bureaucratic terrorist organizations espousing extremist ideologies, receiving state-sponsorship, and utilizing the millions of small arms manufactured during the war. The mechanized and industrial killing of the Great War nurtured a culture of violence that spilled into the interwar years.[6] Interwar terrorism was directly tied to the revolutions and counter-revolutions of the postwar years, as large-scale violence continued in Europe and the colonies after the armistice of November 1918.

The dangers of the postwar years for the Western powers were escalating even before the attempted murder of Clemenceau. As the peacemakers gathered in Paris, domestic unrest, civil wars, ethnic conflicts, and anti-colonial uprisings erupted around the globe.[7] Influenced by Wilson's Fourteen Points and the Wilsonian and Leninist rhetoric of self-determination, colonial nationalists challenged imperial rule in the newly expanded British and French empires, while irredentist movements demanded homogenous nation-states in Europe. During the interwar

[4] Ibid., 151.
[5] Walter Laqueur, *A History of Terrorism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 1-77; Richard Bach Jensen, *The Battle against Anarchist Terrorism: An International History, 1878-1934* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[6] Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela, eds., *Empires at War, 1911-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4; Donald Bloxham, *The Final Solution: A Genocide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Robert Gerwarth, "Fighting the Red Beast: Counter-Revolutionary Violence in the Defeated States of Central Europe," in *Legacies of Violence: Eastern Europe's First World War*, eds. Jochen Böhler, Wlodzimierz Borodziej and Joachim von Puttkamer (Munich, Germany: Oldenbourg Verlag München, 2014), 209-231; Martin Conway and Robert Gerwarth, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution," in *Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe*, eds. Donald Bloxham and Robert Gerwarth (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 140-75; George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
[7] Peter Gatrell, "War After the War: Conflicts, 1919-23," in *A Companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 558; Martin Thomas, Bob Moore and L.J. Butler, eds., *Crises of Europe: Decolonization and Europe's Imperial States, 1918-1975* (London: Hodder Education, 2008).

years, self-determination evolved into a dangerous and militant nationalism that justified mass population politics and state intervention, resulting in unprecedented levels of state and political violence.[8]

The Bolshevik revolution and Russian civil war further fueled postwar conflict. In March 1919, the Bolshevik leader, Vladimir Lenin, organized the Third Communist International, or Comintern, in direct opposition to the Paris Peace Conference and to launch world revolution from Moscow. For the next seventy years, the "specter of communism" haunted the globe and influenced the security strategies of capitalist governments. Benito Mussolini's rise to power in Italy, followed by Adolf Hitler in Germany, completed the tripartite ideological competition of the interwar years, as liberal democracy, communism, and fascism battled to win hearts and minds and consolidate state power.[9] Terrorism was most prevalent in the ideologically and politically turbulent "borderlands" and "shatter zones" of Europe, as millions of armed soldiers returned home to devastated landscapes plagued by competing nationalist projects and utopian visions imposed by totalitarian regimes.[10] The contours of interwar terrorism and counter-terrorism developed against a backdrop of economic dislocation, political instability, and revolutionary fervor created by the First World War and its legacies.

Despite the voluminous literature that exists on the Paris Peace Conference and the legacies of the postwar settlement in Europe, scholars have not examined the peace treaties in

[8] Norman Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 9.
[9] Kevin McDermott and Jeremy Agnew, *The Comintern: A History of International Communism from Lenin to Stalin* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), xix; Gatrell, "War after the War," 558-59; Walter Laqueur, *A History of Terrorism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 69-77.
[10] Eric Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and* Nation (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010); Böhler et al. eds., *Legacies of Violence*, 1-6; Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012).

relation to interwar terrorism.[11] The Versailles settlement entrenched national grievances against the postwar peace treaties among both the defeated nations and Italy, a former wartime ally, that incited terrorism in the late 1920s and 1930s. While the peacemakers at Paris did not anticipate the extensive revanchist and state-sponsored terrorism that would mark the interwar years, the British delegation managed to convince French and American policymakers that the weapons mass-produced during the war would increase global arms trafficking. By analyzing the creation of an international arms control regime at Paris, this chapter adds a crucial new piece of history to the postwar arrangements that continue to influence the modern world.[12]

As this chapter argues, decisions made at the Paris Peace Conference influenced modern terrorism and counter-terrorism in four important ways. First, the postwar settlements of Versailles, St. Germain, Sèvres, and Trianon converted the multinational domains of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires into national states and created an armed and destabilizing revisionist bloc on the European continent. The defeated powers of Hungary, Bulgaria, Austria, and Germany disputed the postwar peace treaties for the duration of the interwar period and led a campaign against the postwar settlements that directly benefited right-wing terrorist organizations. In addition, German munition firms sold their military material to governments and revolutionaries opposed to Western imperial rule, making the port of Hamburg the central hub for arms smuggling in the 1920s and early 1930s.

[11] Assessments of the Paris Peace Conference began before the ink dried on the peace treaties. Two junior members of the British delegation, John Maynard Keynes and Harold Nicolson, wrote influential critiques of the conference in the interwar years. See John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (London: Macmillan, 1919) and Harold Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1939). The outbreak of the Second World War appeared to justify their negative assessments of the Versailles settlement, which many scholars viewed as responsible for the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. In the 1960s and 1970s, the main belligerent countries released their diplomatic records, leading to new interpretations of the decade of the 1920s. For an overview of the major historiographical debates see Manfred F. Boemeke, Gerlad D. Feldman, and Elizabeth Glaser, eds., *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment After 75 Years* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[12] MacMillan, *Paris 1919,* xxv.

Second, Western policymakers at the Paris Peace Conference missed a crucial opportunity to integrate colonial leaders like Sa'd Zaghlul of Egypt and Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam into the Versailles state system. Instead, the Big Three and their governments dismissed the aspirations of colonial nationalists, allowing communism and the Bolsheviks to make inroads into the colonial world.[13] After the Great War, the British Empire combatted insurrections in Egypt, India, Iraq, Afghanistan, Burma, and Ireland, while France confronted resistance to its imperial ambitions in Algeria, Syria, Indo-China, and Morocco. Anti-colonial advocates found a new ally in Soviet Russia. At the Second World Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow from July 19 to August 7, 1920, Lenin and the Comintern declared their allegiance to supporting "revolutionary movements of liberation." In the years that followed, communist operatives supplied funds, military equipment, intelligence, and foreign fighters to assistant anti-imperial and nationalist uprisings.[14]

Third, the peacemakers in Paris responded to the uptick of anti-colonial and European terrorism by constructing a legal regime that would control the global arms trade and standardize the destruction of weapons and munitions manufactured during the Great War. The international arms control regime established at Paris consisted of two parts: the peace treaties with the ex-enemy states and a new arms trafficking treaty. The peace treaties with the defeated nations of Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria contained provisions that established the first international weapons inspectors, known as Inter-Allied Commissions of Control, and

[13] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), x.
[14] Gerwarth and Manela, eds., *Empires at War*, 1; Martin Thomas, *Fight or Flight: Britain, France, and Their Roads from Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 12-13; Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 1-3; John Patrick Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India: M.N. Roy and Comintern Policy 1920-1939* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 11.

empowered the League of Nations with the right to investigate allegations of rearmament.[15] In September 1919, the wartime coalition of Allied and Associated powers concluded the Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms, known as the Convention of St. Germain or the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919.[16] This treaty supervised the trade of arms over land and sea, and at Britain's urging was applied most forcefully in Africa and the Middle East to keep weapons from reaching anti-colonial terrorists. With these two initiatives, the victorious Allied leaders established protocols and procedures to keep surplus stocks of weapons from being distributed "to persons and states who are not fitted to possess them" and that posed a danger to Western security.[17]

Fourth, and finally, the wartime cooperation responsible for the anti-terrorism strategy established at Paris quickly disintegrated along national security lines. British policymakers had first proposed the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 and continued to assign priority to the treaty for reasons of imperial security. Lenin's decision to support nationalist uprisings against British rule and to use the Comintern to supply revolutionaries with funds and weapons further motivated the British to stop gun-running to their colonies.[18] In contrast, French security depended upon disarming and demilitarizing Germany. A momentarily quiescent Germany and a fear of revolutionary Russia impelled French policymakers to build an alliance of eastern European states known as the Little Entente that would contain Soviet Russia and deter German

[15] The League of Nations was given the Right of Investigation by article 213 of the treaty of Versailles, article 159 of the treaty of Saint-Germain, Article 143 of the treaty of Trianon, and article 104 of the Treaty of Neuilly. The Ottoman Empire was originally subjected to the same provisions under the Treaty of Sèvres (August 1920), but the military victories of Mustafa Kemal abolished the treaty and eventually led to a new treaty, the Treaty of Lausanne, and an independent Republic of Turkey.

[16] The following governments signed the treaty: The United States of America, Belgium, Bolivia, the British Empire, China, Cuba, Ecuador, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, the Hedjaz, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, Siam, and Czechoslovakia.

[17] Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions to the Council, June 12, 1922, C.T.A. 76.1922.IX, R217, Document No 21283, Dossier 16267, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, League of Nations Archives (hereinafter LNA), Geneva, Switzerland.

[18] Gerwarth and Manela, eds., *Empires at War*, 4.

aggression. French policy elites therefore focused on terrorism in Europe and supported the work of the Inter-Allied Commissions of Control as a means of monitoring German militarism and protecting their eastern European allies.[19]

Domestic politics in the United States and State Department obstinacy hindered American support of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. On March 19, 1920, the U.S. Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles for the last time, and the United States subsequently signed separate peace treaties with Germany, Austria, and Hungary in August 1921, establishing friendly relations with those countries in November and December 1921.[20] As a result, the United States did not contribute officers to the multinational force tasked with ensuring the demilitarization and disarmament of the ex-enemy states. Throughout the interwar years, European governments petitioned for greater American involvement in disarmament initiatives, hoping that the American government would reign in its private arms manufactures. European overtures made little headway until the Washington Conference in late 1921, which marked a turning point in American policy and a new era of State Department surveillance of gun-running operations and diplomatic coordination with European governments to control the arms trade.

As great power commitment to the arms control regime languished, the newly created League of Nations became the body charged with enforcing the arms trafficking treaties and the disarmament clauses of the peace treaties. The League's task was daunting, as few countries abided by the arms control statutes. The former ex-enemy nations violated the peace treaties by rearming and providing safe haven and weapons for terrorist organization despite the presence of international weapons inspectors. They were helped in this endeavor by the fascist government

[19] Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, 20; Carole Fink, Axel Frohn and Jürgen Heideking, eds., *Genoa, Rapallo, and European Reconstruction in 1922* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 5.
[20] Alan Sharp, *The Versailles Settlement: Peacemaking After the First World War, 1919-1923*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 40. The United States did not declare war on either Bulgaria or Turkey.

of Italy and the two pariah states of the international system, Germany and Russia. In 1922, Russia and Germany initiated secret military agreements with the Treaty of Rapallo, allowing the two countries to sustain a vast illegal arms market.[21] However, even the principal architects of the arms control regime violated its tenets. Britain, France, and the United States followed the international laws governing the arms trade selectively and only took action against weapons violations when it suited their foreign policies and security imperatives. This chapter proceeds to outline the arms control architecture established at the Paris Peace Conference as well as its unraveling. It argues that national priorities and diverging security concerns hindered the international cooperation necessary for enforcing the international arms regime created in 1919.

Arms Traffic Convention of 1919

British policymakers had proposed a multilateral treaty to control the arms trade at the end of World War I. In March 1917, Lord Islington, the under-secretary of state for India, and the Imperial Defense Committee suggested that an "undertaking should be obtained from all Powers represented at the Peace Conference against the alienation of surplus stocks of arms and ammunition left over at the end of the war." The Foreign Office followed through on this suggestion, drafting a convention that forbade the importation of weapons by enemy states and imperial possessions.[22] In particular, British policymakers focused on deterring arms trafficking in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and Ethiopia.

The Paris Peace Conference offered British policymakers an opportunity to propose an international arms treaty when American and French cooperation seemed likely. British officials considered French apathy the prime reason that pre-war efforts to control gun-running in Africa

[21] Snyder, *Bloodlands,* 9.
[22] Sir H. Read, G.S. Spicer, Mr. Strachey, Mr. Malkin, Sir A. Hinzel, Sir L. Mallet, Lord Hardridge, February 1, 1919, The National Archives (hereinafter TNA), London, England, FO 608/217.

had failed. British statesmen blamed French officials for failing to "exercise any effective control over the import of arms through French Somaliland into Abyssinia whence they have found their way into the neighboring British or Soudanese territories." Now, however, the French wanted to keep arms from moving through Sierra Leone into French West Africa because of recent disturbances following recruitment measures. Between 1915 and 1917, anti-conscription protests had spread through French North and West Africa, and as a result British policymakers believed that the French were in a more "accommodating spirit" regarding an arms treaty. In addition, concerns among American officials regarding gun-running in the more "backward States of South and Central America" suggested that the United States would also sign a convention.[23]

Unexpectedly, internal British divisions hindered progress at Paris. The Ministry of Munitions opposed an arms trafficking treaty on economic grounds because the British government had already entered into a contract with the United States government to sell surplus stocks. In addition, legal advisers cautioned that the government of Egypt "assembled" arms in the Egyptian government arsenal for the use of the Egyptian army and the British army of occupation. Lord Curzon, secretary of state for foreign affairs, made clear that Egypt needed to be outside of the African "prohibited zone" so that the British army could continue to receive arms, ammunitions, and explosives. An inter-departmental conference held at the India Office on February 24, 1919, resulted in a modified arms convention. The reworked treaty now permitted Egypt to assemble weapons for the British army and allowed prior munition contracts to be filled. India Office officials held the meeting at their office in order to ensure that British India's neighbors, particularly Afghanistan and Persia, remained within the prohibited zones and that the many arms left over from the war would not find their way to the region or to Indian

[23] Ibid.; Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, 13.

revolutionary terrorists.[24] Two months later, British and French representatives submitted a joint draft convention for the control of the traffic in arms and ammunition to the supreme war council.[25]

After working with French officials to complete a draft arms trafficking treaty, British officials reached out to the American commission to negotiate peace in Paris. The British assistant under-secretary to the Colonial Office, Herbert Read, held unofficial meetings with President Wilson's colonial expert, George Louis Beer, over lunch at his hotel to discuss the subject. Beer was a member of the Inquiry, a special research group tasked with drawing up recommendations for the peace settlements, and served as the American representative on the Arms Traffic commission. After submitting a number of amendments, including expanding the types of arms banned from export, Beer signified that the U.S. government would sign the arms treaty.[26]

At the end of the summer the arms convention remained unsigned. For Britain this posed a problem because the government was already acting as if the treaty was in force. No other government followed this example. Lord Curzon told Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour that the British government could not "persist in a policy which prejudices British trade to the advantage of foreign competitors."[27] Consequently, Balfour reached out to the French minister of foreign affairs, Stéphen Pichon. Balfour emphasized the treaty's vital importance to the British

[24] A.S. Kanya-Forstner, "The War, Imperialism, and Decolonization" in *The Great War and the Twentieth Century*, eds. Jay Winter, Geoffrey Parker, and Mary R. Habeck (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 249; John Darwin, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East Imperial Policy in the Aftermath of War 1918-1922* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 169.

[25] Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen to William Malkin, February 20, 1919, TNA, FO 608/217; Lord Curzon to A.J. Balfour, February 20, 1919, TNA FO 608/217; William Malkin, February 21, 1919, TNA, FO 608/217; Mr. Balfour to Lord Curzon, February 17, 1919, TNA, FO 608/217; Foreign Office, Report of Inter-Departmental Conference held at the India Office, February 24, 1919, TNA, FO 608/217. The Arms Traffic Convention was one of three treaties created to replace the General Acts of Berlin and Brussels. The other two treaties consisted of a Convention for the control of the Liquor Traffic in Africa and a Convention for the revision of the Berlin and Brussels Acts.

[26] George Louis Beer to Sir Herbert J. Read, Hotel Majestic, Paris, June 6, 1919, TNA, MUN 4/6366.

[27] Lord Curzon to A.J. Balfour, August 27, 1919, TNA, FO 608/217.

government and suggested that it should be signed when the representatives gathered in Paris to sign the peace treaty with Austria. Balfour made it clear that the British government desired the enactment of the arms convention at the earliest opportunity.[28]

British pressure resulted in the enactment of the Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition on September 10, 1919. Twenty-three governments signed the treaty, more commonly known as the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 or the Treaty of Saint-Germain, including the United States, the British Empire, France, Italy, and Japan. The treaty consisted of twenty-six articles. The first five articles addressed the export of arms and ammunition. The next sixteen articles covered the import of arms and ammunition and established "prohibited areas" and a zone of maritime supervision. The last five articles contained general provisions.

The majority of the treaty focused on regulating the arms trade in Africa and Asia, particularly the present day Middle East. The convention extended the Brussels Act of July 2, 1890, and prohibited the importation of arms to all of Africa (excluding Algeria, Libya, and the Union of South Africa), Trans-Caucasia, Persia, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Asiatic territories that formerly belonged to the Ottoman Empire (current day Middle East). In addition, the treaty contained provisions that prohibited the trade and transfer of weapons in a maritime zone, which included the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Persian Gulf. Lastly, signatories of the treaty agreed to publicize the number of export licenses they granted for arms sales. A new Central International Office under the League of Nations was created to gather and publish statistical information on the arms trade.[29]

A protocol attached to the convention attempted to bring the provisions of the treaty into force immediately. The protocol indicated that governments should regard the spirit of the law as

[28] A.J. Balfour to Stéphen Pichon, September 1, 1919, TNA, FO 608/217.
[29] Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition, and Protocol, *The American Journal of International Law* 15 (1921): 297-313.

already applicable and that it would be contrary to the intentions of the High Contracting Parties to adopt any measures that circumvented the convention. The protocol was intended to address the movement of weapons to colonies and protectorates and to stifle political unrest among anti-colonial groups. In 1920, the imperial governments of France, Italy, Japan, Great Britain, and Belgium met in Paris and agreed to carry out the provisions of the treaty in Africa and the Middle East. This meeting signified again that the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 was enacted in response to the growth of revolutionary nationalism and was intended to keep weapons from reaching insurgents and anti-colonial terrorists.[30]

The United States did not take part in the second meeting of 1920 and the Senate never ratified the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. American opposition to the treaty stemmed from the convention's ban on sales to states that had not signed the treaty, as this would have slashed American exports to Latin America. In addition, American national security depended upon a vigorous private arms industry rather than government owned and operated factories. U.S. officials also voiced concerns that the treaty would deter a rebellion against an imperial state, invoking a common American criticism of European imperialism in the interwar years.[31] Lastly, the Arms Traffic Convention followed on the heels of a bitter debate in the Senate over the Treaty of Versailles. The Senate's rejection of the Versailles settlement cautioned the Department of State against proposing another international treaty that appeared to jeopardize Congress's power over domestic security, the Monroe Doctrine, and arms exports.[32]

[30] Ibid., 218; Lord Crewe to Raymond Poincaré, December 1, 1924, SDN 986, The Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères] (hereinafter MAE), La Courneuve, Paris, France.
[31] John Moser, *Twisting the Lion's Tail: Anglophobia in the United States, 1921-48* (London: MacMillan Press, 1999).
[32] Secretary of state to Harding, 2 August 1922: *FRUS 1922*, vol. 1, 551-3, 547-55; David R. Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty: The League of Nations' Drive to Control the Global Arms Trade," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35 (2000): 217-18, 220.

American inaction over the Arms Traffic Convention emerged as a point of political and financial tension between the United Kingdom and United States. After signing the treaty, the British government refused to export to countries that had not signed the arms treaty and the Foreign Office prohibited individuals and corporations from exporting or re-exporting arms to countries within the prohibited zones.[33] With growing bitterness, the British noted that the American government did not control the export of arms by their private firms and that American manufactures benefited handsomely from these contracts. Simmering resentment boiled over in February 1920. Ronald Lindsay, councilor of the British embassy in Washington expressed his government's concern that the United States jeopardized the entire convention by refusing to control the export of privately-owned arms and ammunition. Moreover, he noted, this action set a precedent, and the British might be more inclined to allow Mexico to buy arms in the United Kingdom, a development that would be contrary to the wishes of the United States.[34]

Despite Lindsay's thinly veiled threat, the Department of State took the position that it was not bound to any of the convention's terms unless already sanctioned by existing national law. Frank Polk, acting secretary of state, argued that the American mission to negotiate peace at Paris had made this point clear in October 1919. In return, the United States government had received notice that after an informal discussion the principal Allied and Associated powers understood the position of the United States and interpreted the protocol in the same manner. Polk reiterated that the American government already prohibited arms shipments to any American country embroiled in domestic violence as well as Mexico, China, and Bolshevik Russia. However, the government lacked the authority to control the general export of arms

[33] Foreign Office to Sir C. Kennard, October 24, 1919, TNA, MUN 4/6366.
[34] R.C. Lindsay, British embassy to Robert Lansing, secretary of state, February 3, 1920, TNA, MUN 4/6366; R.C. Lindsay, British embassy, to Frank L. Polk, acting secretary of state of the United States, March 9, 1920, TNA, MUN 4/6366.

except when the country was at war, and the Department of State did not "feel that it would be feasible to reinstate the war time regulations in this respect." Polk nonetheless promised that the United States would adhere to the "spirit" of the convention.[35] The British, however, continued to believe that the attitude of the United States caused a difficult situation and endangered the efficacy of the Arms Traffic Convention.[36]

American withdrawal from the treaty left enforcement in the hands of Britain and France. But the former imperial allies found themselves at odds. French and British interests in the colonial world increasingly came into conflict and the British felt that the French did not adhere to the regulations of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. In the early 1920s, the British ambassador in Paris complained to Raymond Poincaré, the French president of the council and minister of foreign affairs, of multiple French violations of the Arms Traffic Convention in Ethiopia, Arabia, and China.

In December 1922, the British noted that French representatives in Djibouti had allowed Ethiopian officials to transport two thousand rifles and twenty thousand cartridges to Addis Ababa.[37] The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, demanded that the French representatives in Djibouti be reprimanded. Lord Crewe, the new British ambassador at the Paris embassy, relayed Curzon's demands and reminded the French ministry of foreign affairs that both governments had signed the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. Crewe stated that when the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 was being negotiated, the British representatives made it clear to their French colleagues that the British government's "main object" in proposing such a convention was to put "an end to the uncontrolled admission of arms into Abyssinia."[38]

[35] Frank L. Polk to Ronald Lindsay, March 17, 1920, TNA, MUN 4/6366.
[36] Foreign Office to Ronald Lindsay, March 6, 1920, TNA, MUN 4/6366.
[37] Lord Hardinge to Raymond Poincaré, December 5, 1922, SDN 986, MAE.
[38] Lord Crewe to Raymond Poincaré, September 10, 1923, SDN 986, MAE.

Moreover, the British and French governments had come to an informal understanding in diplomatic correspondence that the treaty was operational in the prohibited areas. As a result, no arms were to be imported into Ethiopia without the consent of the governments of Britain, France, and Italy.

French officials argued that the admission of Abyssinia to the League of Nations nullified the provisions of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. A sovereign state had the right to control its own foreign policy and to import such weapons as necessary for its protection. The Ethiopian government took this position as well during the League's Arms Traffic Conference of 1925. British officials disagreed, stating that Ethiopia remained in the prohibited zone regardless of its League membership. For reasons of imperial security and strategic interest, Britain remained committed to the prohibited land and sea zones for the duration of the interwar period and continuously pressed for the great powers to limit the military equipment available to governments in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Britain's position reflected Whitehall's desire to maintain political preponderance in these regions and to lessen the chance that weapons would reach insurgent and terrorist groups operating in weak states with limited government control or surveillance capabilities.

In December 1924, Lord Crewe acknowledged the request of the Hashemite government in Arabia to receive arms and munitions from the French and Italian governments. The British ambassador reminded his colleagues of their obligations under the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 and the agreement of 1920 between the French Republic and the Italian, Belgian, Japanese and British governments to apply the provisions of the 1919 convention to the prohibited areas, which included Arabia. Crewe requested that the French and Italian governments deny export licenses to their munitions firms for the shipment of arms and munitions to the Hejaz "so long as

no government exists in that country capable of giving adequate guarantees of the nature indicated in the Convention of 1919." Crewe stated that Britain was only interested in the strict enforcement of the convention, and that British policy "as regards the present conflict between the Emir Ali [King Hussein] and the Sultan of Nejd [Ibn Saud] for the possession of the Holy Places of Islam is one of complete neutrality."[39] He remarked that the British government did not propose to issue licenses for the export of arms to either party.

Britain's interest in Arabia was anything but neutral. During the First World War, British policymakers had made the decision to sponsor the Hashemites – King Hussein and his sons Faisal and Abdullah – as leaders of the postwar Arab Middle East. Britain's dedication to Hussein stemmed from his mobilization of a military campaign against the Ottoman Empire, which became known as the Arab Revolt. By 1918, British officials regarded Hussein as a burden, who was involving them in a losing conflict with another British protégé, Ibn Saud. Consequently, after the war, the British found themselves supplying substantial subsidies to two warring dynamistic regimes fighting for political and religious hegemony in Arabia. [40]

In the early 1920s, imperial overstretch and nationalist uprisings forced a British retreat in the Middle East. Yet economic and oil interests, along with strategic imperatives involving the defense of India and controlling transit routes to Asia, kept Britain embroiled in the region and tied to Faisal in Iraq and Abdullah in Transjordan. In 1922, Sir Percy Cox, High Commissioner of Iraq, reached a settlement with Ibn Saud and the governments negotiated frontier agreements that defined the territorial boundaries between Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait.[41] Lord Crewe's note to France and Italy was a reminder of Britain's investment in Arabia and desire to maintain

[39] Lord Crewe to Raymond Poincaré, December 1, 1924, SDN 986, MAE.
[40] Kanya-Forstner, "The War, Imperialism, and Decolonization," 249; John Fisher, *Curzon and British Imperialism in the Middle East, 1916-19* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999), 294; Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, 21.
[41] David Fromkin, *A Peace to End all Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989), 424-25, 510, 514, 560, 562.

stability. The British, moreover, did not want the Hashemites to find a new foreign backer that might allow them to further challenge the postwar settlement imposed by Britain. As it turned out, Ibn Saud did not need foreign assistance. He and his Wahhabi followers invaded the Hejaz in 1924 and drove Hussein into exile.

In March 1925, the British government opposed French aircraft shipments to China. French officials claimed that they were sending commercial airplanes, and that their use would be civilian rather than military. The French government demanded that the British immediately stop hindering the delivery of the planes. Britain acquiesced as France promised to uphold the other statutes of the arms embargo in China.[42] The debate over the Chinese arms embargo revealed the extent to which inter-allied cooperation had disintegrated in the postwar years and the difficulty in enforcing an arms control regime when governments justified the sale of military equipment as civilian and outside the jurisdiction of international agreements.

By the mid-1920s, British, French, and American policymakers disagreed over security threats in the colonial world. The British Empire faced serious challenges to imperial rule immediately after the First World War, and consequently, British policymakers continued to press for the enactment of the Arms Traffic Convention. In contrast, anti-colonial unrest in the French Empire emerged later with the Rif War (1925-6), the Syrian revolt (1925-30), the Kongo-Wara rebellion in French Equatorial Africa (1928-31), and the Yen Bay mutiny in Indochina (1930-31). [43] As a result of French and British imperial rivalries, and their different experiences with nationalist uprisings, the two empires did not work together to uphold the international arms regime established in Paris.

[42] Lord Crewe to French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, March 26, 1925, MAE.
[43] Gerwarth and Manela, *Empires at War*, 4, 12; Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, 29-35.

The Americans, in turn, disagreed with the territorial expansion of both the British and French empires after the Paris Peace Conference, a process that was enabled by the mandates system of the League of Nations. State Department officials argued that the "real object" of the Arms Traffic Convention was to "enhance and strengthen the authority of European powers in various regions of the world in which political conditions are unstable – particularly in Africa and in Asia." U.S. officials believed that the treaty represented a "political arrangement to protect existing governments" and render physical opposition impossible in European colonies and mandates.[44]

Inter-allied differences over the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 rendered it ineffectual. In May 1920, the impetus for enacting an international arms control regime shifted to the League of Nations.[45] League officials held the United States responsible for the treaty's failure. Politicians in Geneva argued that the convention would remain a "dead letter" until the American government found its way to ratify it. Without American involvement, League officials argued, no other manufacturing county would unilaterally limit its military production and incur financial losses by purposely diverting trade into other hands.[46]

League officials approached the United States in a variety of ways. In the early 1920s, the council of the League of Nations invited the U.S. government to name representatives to sit on a commission to study the reduction of armaments. The secretary-general of the League guaranteed that the presence of a U.S. representative would "in no way commit the American

[44] S.K. Hornbeck, Office of the Economic Adviser, Department of State, February 8, 1924, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/403-500A15/5, Box 5197, Record Group (RG) 59, U.S. National Archives (hereinafter NARA), College Park, MD.

[45] Van Hamel to secretary-general, May 7, 1920, Regarding Present Traffic in Arms, R 186, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; F.P. Walters to Van Hamel, August 13, 1920, Classement 8, Document 22651, Dossier 4407, R 186, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.

[46] Memorandum by the Legal Section of the Secretariat, Temporary Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, July 27, 1921, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; League of Nations, Report of Sub-Committee A of Commission N 6 (Armaments) 1920, Report on the Arms Traffic Convention, R189, Classification 8, Document No 9531, Dossier 9531, LNA.

Government to whatever opinions may be finally put forward in the report of the Commission." The council further promised that American participation would not encroach upon the government's "liberty of action."[47]

Norman Davis, acting secretary of state, declined the invitation. Davis emphasized that the American government remained "most sympathetic with any sincere efforts to evolve a constructive plan for disarmament which is so necessary for the economical rehabilitation, peace and stability of the world." As the United States was not a member of the League of Nations, the government could not appoint an official to participate in deliberations that adhered to the League's covenant.[48] American officials also maintained their resistance to a treaty that required penalizing private arms producers or that limited the shipment of military supplies to Latin American countries that were not members of the convention.[49]

The Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments (TMC), the League body tasked with reviving the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919, also dispatched Italian and British policymakers to engage State Department officials about the treaty at the Washington Conference of 1921-1922. This approach failed as Signor Schanzer of the Italian delegation reported that American feeling remained hostile.[50] The British Empire delegation never even raised the issue.[51] American officials remained "most suspicious of any European move which

[47] Council of the League of Nations to the Government of the United States Approved by the Council, December 1, 1920, R 189, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[48] Norman H. Davis, acting secretary of state to Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions, December 9, 1920, R 189, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[49] Secretary of state, United States Government to Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, September 12, 1923, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[50] League of Nations, Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, February 23, 1922, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; Eric Drummond, secretary general to prime minister of the British Government, March 6, 1922, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; Carlo Schanzer to Bernardo Attolico, League of Nations, November 29, 1921, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[51] H. Llewellyn Smith, British empire delegation to Bernardo Attolico, League of Nations, November 26, 1921, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; secretary to the Cabinet for prime minister to secretary-general, March 30, 1922, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.

they think may be intended to bring them into European political entanglements," Secretary-General Eric Drummond told Professor Bernardo Attolico, chief of the Disarmaments Section.[52]

The Washington Conference marked a turning point in American opinion about international disarmament efforts. After the conference, U.S. officials began opening the mail from Geneva and sending "observers" to non-political League conferences. In addition, the Republican administrations of the 1920s promoted international arms limitations as part of their larger diplomatic and economic strategies.[53] Eventually the League's overtures for American adherence to an arms treaty based on moral and humanitarian grounds proved successful.[54] In June 1924, Hugh Gibson, minister of the American legation at Berne, informed the secretary-general that the United States would work with the Temporary Mixed Commission to prepare a new convention for the regulation of the traffic in arms that would replace the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919.[55] The TMC responded immediately and called for a new International Arms Conference to be held in Geneva in May 1925. By this time, the U.S. State Department supported an arms accord. Although the War and Navy Departments, along with private manufacturing firms, remained opposed to an international arms treaty, the United States had shifted its thinking on the matter and would be engaged in future League endeavors to control the arms trade.

The upcoming international arms conference also received support from French policymakers. Important shifts in strategic thinking among French political and diplomatic elites had reoriented the government towards supporting disarmament negotiations as a means of

[52] Eric Drummond to Bernardo Attolico, League of Nations, February 10, 1922, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[53] George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 450-56; Walters, *A History of the League of Nations*, 217, 219-20.
[54] Secretary-general, League of Nations to Hugh Gibson, American Legation at Berne, December 14, 1923, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[55] Hugh Gibson, American Legation at Berne to the secretary-general, League of Nations, June 25, 1924, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.

advancing French security requirements.[56] Disarmament treaties offered another way of binding Britain and eastern European allies closer to France in a network of legal and political agreements designed to uphold the status quo and restrain Germany. In addition, a number of anti-colonial uprisings rendered French politicians more willing to support an arms trafficking treaty.

In contrast to the situation in Britain, France's overseas empire had not been popular at home before the First World War. The imperial contribution to the war effort, however, had changed public opinion by demonstrating the importance of the empire for manpower reserves. Challenges to France's bloated empire erupted in the mid-1920s. In 1925-26, the Rif war in northern Morocco and a major rebellion in French Syria put colonial counter-insurgency on the front pages of the Paris press for the first time since the end of the First World War.[57] The Syrian insurgency began in 1925 and prompted French mandate officials to "systematically" disarm the population and strictly control the arms trade, although some smuggling still occurred on the frontiers.[58] The brutal response of the French in Syria led to allegations that the French government had contravened the terms of the Syrian mandate by "arming one section of the nation (the Circassians) and disarming the others."[59]

International outcry over the bombing of Damascus and the petitions of Syrian nationalists prompted the Permanent Mandates Commission (PMC) at the League of Nations to address the issue in 1925-26. Political maneuvering by French politicians, and the support given to them by the British, led the PMC to issue a report that sided with the mandatory power and

[56] Peter Jackson, "France and the Problems of Security and International Disarmament after the First World War." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 2 (2006): 248-49, 265, 276.
[57] Martin Thomas, *The French Empire between the Wars: Imperialism, Politics and Society* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005), 1-8; Kanya-Forstner, "The War, Imperialism, and Decolonization," 248.
[58] Permanent Mandates Commission, Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Session (Sessions XXI-XXX), June 4, 1936, C.170.M.117.1937.VI, LNA.
[59] Austen Chamberlain to Major Leslie Hore-Belisha, August 16, 1926, SDN 568, MAE.

called on the colonial terrorists to put down their arms.[60] As noted by the historian Susan Pedersen, the PMC's decision regarding Syria cost the commission what little credibility it had among Arab nationalists and demonstrated that the great powers could manipulate the organs of the League to support their arming and disarming of anti-colonial insurgents.[61]

In North Africa, the French became involved in a costly war against a former ally, Abd el-Krim of the Rif. Previously, the French had armed Abd el-Krim when he was fighting the Spaniards. Eventually a combined Franco-Spanish assault put down the rebellion, but it required the French government to send 100,000 troops to Morocco. Marshal Pétain, the hero of Verdun, was recalled to command them.[62] As a result of the Syrian revolt, Rif war, and subsequent rural insurrections in Indochina, French officials unilaterally disarmed their imperial possessions and moved closer to the British position of banning the weapons trade in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The shift in colonial policy, however, did not encroach upon France's central security objective of disarming and containing Germany.

Inter-Allied Military Commissions of Control

The second component of the international arms control regime enacted in Paris in 1919 specifically restricted the weapons trade in Europe. The peace treaties that ended the Great War disarmed and demilitarized the ex-enemy countries of Germany, Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria. Each of the peace treaties included provisions that empowered Inter-Allied Military Commissions of Control (IMCC) to monitor compliance with the disarmament statutes of the treaties, and additional provisions that gave the League of Nations the right to investigate

[60] Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 142-68.
[61] Ibid., 168.
[62] Kanya-Forstner, "The War, Imperialism, and Decolonization," 248-252.

allegations of rearmament.[63] All of the Allied governments were to have representatives on the IMCC, which was to be a politically neutral organization of unarmed peacekeepers and weapons inspectors.[64] Originally composed of investigators from Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy and Japan, the commission of control in Germany increasingly came under French and British influence. Brigadier-General J.H. Morgan, a British representative on the Inter-Allied Military Commission of Control in Germany until 1923, wrote that "For the Americans we waited and continued to wait."[65]

The German settlement had been of central importance at the Paris Peace Conference, and the "German problem" continued to influence European affairs even after the ratification of the Versailles Treaty.[66] Germany had asked for an armistice following military defeat at the Second Battle of the Marne, and social and political revolution at home. In August 1919, the newly elected Social Democratic government led by Friedrich Ebert promulgated a new constitution and declared the formation of the Weimar Republic. The young government faced upheavals from the left and right, as German communists launched two uprisings and clashed with nationalist, right-wing paramilitary units, known as the Freikorps, and veteran Reichswehr (German military) troops. During the communist Spartacist revolt, thirty thousand Freikorps members stormed the streets of Berlin, heavily armed with automatic weapons and artillery pieces, and for four days massacred the revolutionaries, killing over a thousand communist rebels. The Weimar government failed to disarm the Freikorps, most of whom were battle-

[63] The ex-enemy powers were subject to the general prohibition of the export of arms, munitions and war material and to accept and observe any convention made by the Allied powers relating to the trade in arms. See League of Nations, Report of Sub-Committee A of Commission N 6 (Armaments) 1920, Report on the Arms Traffic Convention, R189, Classification 8, Document No 9531, Dossier 9531, LNA.
[64] J.H. Morgan, *Assize of Arms: The Disarmament of Germany and Her Rearmament, 1919-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 29, 45.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919-1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 19-20.

hardened veterans, and in March 1920 right-wing nationalists launched a brief coup. A massive nationwide strike by Germany's labor unions ended the insurrection and restored power to Ebert and the Social Democrats.[67]

Despite the violence and upheavals of the early postwar years, Germany emerged from the First World War in a relatively strong position. The Bolshevik revolution and fall of Tsarist Russia removed one of Germany's foremost rivals. The disintegration of Austria-Hungary left Germany almost completely surrounded by small, weak neighbor-states.[68] In contrast to France, Germany's industrial base and productive capabilities remained intact after the war and soon revived. To the concern of French policymakers, Europe's industrial powerhouse also remained heavily armed.

Members of the Inter-Allied Military Commission of Control in Germany found themselves enforcing disarmament clauses over a country with a military force of over 400,000 soldiers, tens of thousands of artillery pieces and trench mortars, approximately 100,000 machine-guns, countless rounds of ammunition, and various types of military equipment.[69] During the 1920s, French officials demanded Germany's compliance with the Treaty of Versailles and insisted that the work of the IMCC not be impeded. British officials, however, began to retreat from supporting the IMCC and disagreed with the French that Germany's disarmament required verification by British (or French) inspectors. The British argued that the enforcement of the Versailles Treaty and its disarmament clauses should be transferred to the newly created League of Nations.

---

[67] Howard M. Sachar, *The Assassination of Europe, 1918-1942: A Political History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 1-30.
[68] Steiner, *The Lights that Failed*, 67-68.
[69] Richard Shuster, *German Disarmament after World War I: The Diplomacy of International Arms Inspection 1920-1931* (London: Routledge, 2006), 1-2.

French security was tied to German disarmament and French policymakers regarded the continuance of the IMCC as "necessary for their national security, while Britain increasingly felt that its maintenance was a hindrance to European security."[70] London officials were largely influenced by the reports of the British ambassador in Berlin, Lord d'Abernon, who stressed that Germany had largely been disarmed and that the French demands were tedious and overbearing.[71] British opinion increasingly reflected this position, and British officials made it clear to their French colleagues that they no longer believed that the IMCC served a constructive purpose in Germany. British policymakers called for the cessation of the IMCC and the institution of a League system of inspection.

In anticipation of the dissolution of the IMCC in Germany and the other ex-enemy states, the Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions began to consider how it would conduct investigations of rearmament. The French delegation argued for permanent committees that could undertake "surprise investigations."[72] The Swedish delegation opposed continual supervision because it "would be incompatible with the spirit of the covenant of the League of Nations to doubt the pacific intentions of any country." Furthermore, Swiss representatives believed that the League should only consider accusations made by government officials, as private sources might be motivated by political or commercial ends.[73] The British

[70] John Fox, "Britain and the Inter-Allied Military Commission of Control, 1925-26," *Journal of Contemporary History* 4 (1969): 143-45.
[71] Hans W. Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1954), 15-16. The Foreign Office resented the appointment of Lord D'Abernon by Lloyd George as the British ambassador in Germany. D'Abernon had been selected because of his financial expertise, a knowledge Lloyd George believed was necessary to mediate the complex problems of reparations payment and reconstruction. See Michael Hughes, *British Foreign Secretaries in an Uncertain World, 1919-1939* (London: Routledge, 2006), 18-19.
[72] Memorandum by the French Delegation, Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions, C.P.C. 79.1924, R214, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[73] Second Memorandum by the Swedish Delegation, Permanent Advisory Commission for Military Naval and Air Questions, September 3, 1924, C.P.C. 77.1924, R214, 1919-1927, Classification8, LNA.

government also argued that the commission of investigation should be impartial and serve only to ensure that disarmament continued under the peace treaties.

In 1924, the council of the League of Nations finalized procedures and protocols for any investigations it would need to carry out once the Inter-Allied Commissions of Control left Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary. Under this plan, the League guaranteed that members of the commissions of investigation would have diplomatic privileges and immunities and the free execution of their duties.[74] The shift away from commissions of control to a League investigation system found support among former neutral states, the defeated nations, and Great Britain. By the mid-1920s, public sentiment outside of France had turned against the postwar settlements, particularly in Britain where the writings of John Keynes and later Harold Nicolson soured views of the Paris Peace Conference and Wilsonian diplomacy.[75] The neutral and ex-enemy states believed that the commissions of control were imposed by the victors and represented only the interests of the great powers.[76] In turn, Britain was ready to revert to its traditional policy of "no permanent military commitments on the Continent."[77] British officials argued that the commissions of investigation better reflected a "League atmosphere" of trust and conciliation.[78] French civil and military authorities opposed turning over control to the League as no League committee would possess the intelligence network of the IMCC or be able to enforce compliance.[79]

[74] Report by Viscount Ishii adopted by the Council on December 11, 1924, R215, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[75] John Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (London: Macmillan, 1919); Harold Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919* (London: Constable & Co., 1933).
[76] Hungarian Minister in Rome to the President of the Council, December 8, 1924, C.17.M.12. 1925. V., R215, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[77] Stephen Schuker, *The End of French Predominance in Europe: The Financial Crisis of 1924 and the Adoption of the Dawes Plan* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 255.
[78] Memorandum by Lord Parmoor, November 1924, R215, Dossier 15365, Document 39353, Classification 8, LNA.
[79] Steiner, *The Lights that Failed*, 247.

Gustav Stresemann, the Weimar Republic's foreign minister from 1923 to 1929, successfully negotiated the end of the control commissions in Germany. He tied the removal of the IMCC to the treaties of Locarno, a series of five agreements concluded between seven European powers in Switzerland on 18 October 1925. Four of the treaties were arbitration conventions between Germany and France, Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. The fifth was a multilateral regional security agreement, known as the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee.[80] Stresemann worked tirelessly for the withdrawal of the Inter-Allied Control Commission, and argued that the Locarno pact demonstrated Germany's commitment to disarmament and a peaceful Europe.[81] Stresemann also knew that League oversight would be easier to breach than that of the IMCC and that German officials would have greater control over rearmament investigations after Germany joined the League of Nations. Germany joined the League in September 1926, leading British officials to agree that the IMCC should be removed. Fears that communism would gain a foothold in Germany if the Weimar Republic remained weak and that the IMCC had served its purpose motivated British policymakers to support the withdrawal of the international weapons inspectors. In sanctifying the end of the IMCC, Austen Chamberlain, the British foreign secretary, made the decision that restoring a balance of power and stability on the Continent superseded Germany's known arms violations.[82]

On January 31, 1927, the Allied Military Control Commission ceased to exist in Germany. The commission was withdrawn despite widespread reports of Germany's violations of the treaty's provisions. Before the control commission's brief suspension in 1923 during the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr, the commission had clashed repeatedly with German

[80] Jon Jacobson, *Locarno Diplomacy: Germany and the West, 1925-1929* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 3.
[81] Gatzek, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany*, 15, 46.
[82] Fox, "Britain and the Inter-Allied Military Commission of Control," 156, 158.

military officials over Germany's failure to surrender surplus arms.[83] In 1924, Brigadier-General Morgan published "The Disarmament of Germany and After," in the *Quarterly Review*. Morgan exposed the pressure within the British government to ignore Germany's evasion of the treaty sanctions and that German military and government officials hindered the work of the commission.[84]

The IMCC's inspections and reports from 1924-26 indicated that Germany was still in default of its treaty obligations. These violations just covered rearmament at home, although it would be learned later that Germany had concluded secret agreements with the Russians to receive arms and training. The inspections by IMCC officers revealed that Germany still had the capacity to produce war material, and that the German army would be able to quickly mobilize reserves from the auxiliary police and paramilitary organizations.[85] Additionally, the German High Command continued to use forbidden arms and maintain fortresses on the eastern front.[86] The French press published sections of the commission's reports, and stressed that the German government and not just the military supported rearmament and attempted to obstruct the inspections.[87]

British and Indian intelligence agencies also reported on the availability and movement of weapons from Germany. The Government of India stressed this point because the arms shipments usually went from the port of Hamburg to the Far East, usually Hong Kong, before making their way to "Indian extremists" waging a terrorist campaign against British rule. [88] The Government of India's Home Department reported that most of the arms found in the possession

[83] Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany,* 15.
[84] Edward Bennett, *German Rearmament and the West, 1932-1933* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 89.
[85] Ibid., 24-25, 79. The Soviets received financial and technical aid in return.
[86] Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany,* 53.
[87] Bennett, *German Rearmament and the West*, 79.
[88] Major J.A. Wallinger to David Petrie, March 4, 1925, L/P&J/12/79, India Office Records, British Library (BL), London, United Kingdom.

of Bengal terrorists were of German make. According to the Intelligence Bureau of India, Hamburg provided the largest market for the trade of illegal arms and at least some of its police were "credibly reported" to be taking bribes from arms traffickers.[89]

In October 1924, Lt. Col. Norris of the Military Inter-Allied Commission of Control in Germany alerted the War Office that "there were Indians in Berlin who were buying large quantities of war material from German armament firms for transport to India"[90] The War Office relayed this information to the India Office.[91] A month later the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS or MI6) concluded that 90 percent of traffic in arms was conducted from Hamburg, and that no effective assistance could be hoped for because the custom officials were in the pay of the shipping companies.[92] British and Indian intelligence reports suggest that Hamburg continued to be a hub for the illegal arms trade until the early 1930s. The historian Richard Shuster also notes that German civilian and military officials illegally exported arms and other forms of artillery to neutral countries, particularly the Netherlands. [93]

Much more has been written about the Inter-Allied Commission of Control in Germany than the other defeated nations.[94] This is because the removal of the IMCC was seen as a precursor to Germany's rearmament under Adolf Hitler and as part of the policy of appeasement that allowed for Nazi aggression. However, by 1928 all of the commissions of control had been removed and this had profound consequences in the Balkans where ultranationalist terrorism and irredentist violence escalated.

---

[89] Home Department, Government of India to His Majesty's under-secretary of state for India, India Office, April 16, 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[90] Memorandum on the Situation in Bengal and the Arms Traffic, Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, October 29, 1924, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[91] War Office to J.W. Hose, India Office, Extract from report received by M.I.A.C.C., Lieutenant-Colonel Norris October 6, 1924, L/PJ/12/78, BL.
[92] Situation in Bengal and the Arms Traffic, Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, November 7, 1924, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[93] Shuster, *German Disarmament after World War I*, 56-61.
[94] Ibid., 4-5.

As in Germany, the control commissions in the former ex-enemy states of Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria reported widespread violations of the military clauses of the peace treaties. In the name of revisionist campaigns against the territorial settlements of 1919, the defeated nations provided refuge for terrorist organizations. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) operated in Bulgaria, while the Ustaša, a fascist Croatian organization, set up terrorist training camps in Hungary and Italy. Austria served as a weapons depot and transit corridor for both the Little Entente and revanchist states.[95] Despite the presence of international weapons inspectors, the defeated nations of the First World War sponsored and harbored the most effective European terrorist groups of the interwar years.

Political violence destabilized Russia and east-central Europe after the First World War. The collapse of three land empires in Europe created a political vacuum and an extensive arc of postwar violence. Some sixteen million defeated soldiers returned home to devastated landscapes grappling with the convulsions of the Russian revolution, the short-lived German occupation, territorial amputation, competing nationalist projects, and disputes between majority and minority populations. Between the Armistice of 1918 and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, over four million people died in the region as a result of civil wars and inter-ethnic struggles.[96] The revolutionary and counter-revolutionary violence that plagued Europe after the Great War forever ended terrorism's exclusive association with leftist groups, as right-wing paramilitary units became the primary proponents of terrorist tactics and political murder for regime change. Although the League of Nations was actively involved in the domestic affairs of the new eastern

[95] Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-1999* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 398-401, 435, 418, 431-35.
[96] Gerwarth and Manela, eds., *Empires at War*, 11; Böhler et al. eds., *Legacies of Violence*, 1-6; Gerwarth, "Fighting the Red Beast," 210.

and central European states, the organization declined to intervene in cases of domestic or international terrorism in the 1920s.[97]

In Bulgaria, this was particularly detrimental. Bulgaria, like Germany, Austria, and Hungary, suffered an increase in right-wing versus left-violence after the Great War. The internecine feuds of the IMRO, however, led to endless rounds of vengeance assassinations, as a pro-Bulgarian faction competed with a pro-communist faction for party control.[98] After the First World War, the first mass peasant party in the Balkans, the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU), formed a government under Aleksandar Stamboliiski. After consolidating his power, Stamboliiski began to attack his party's rivals. His targets included socialists, nationalists, businessmen, intellectuals, army officers, and the IMRO (the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization). The IMRO had been formed in 1893 as a revolutionary committee opposed to Ottoman rule and favoring the creation of an autonomous Macedonian nation. During the Paris Peace Conference, Macedonian nationalists had petitioned for an independent state. However, the Allied powers gave most of the Macedonian heartland to Yugoslavia, except for Petrich in south-west Bulgaria.[99]

In June 1923, the IMRO and Military League, composed of former military officers, launched a coup against Stamboliiski. The IMRO captured Stamboliiski, dismembered him for signing the Treaty of Neuilly, and sent his head back to Sofia in a tin. The new military government in Sofia unleashed a "white terror" against the peasantry and communists. General Ivan Vŭlkov, the fascist strongman behind the regime, mobilized the IMRO against the

[97] Carole Fink, "The League of Nations and the Minorities Question," *World Affairs* 4 (1995): 197-205; Patricia Calvin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920-1946* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 33.
[98] Mark Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice: The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 125.
[99] Glenny, *The Balkans*, 396-402.

Bulgarian people and the communists who at Moscow's urging had launched a failed insurrection. The regime killed between 1,500 and 15,000 people, with most diplomats putting the figure at 10,000. In April 1925, the communists carried out one of the "most spectacular, bloody and self-defeating acts of terrorism in the history of the twentieth century" by blowing up the Sofia Sveta Nedelya Cathedral.[100] The intended target, Tsar Boris III, was not in the cathedral at the time. The bombing killed 160 people and wounded hundreds. No members of government were injured. The "white terror" escalated after the attack. The military government bombed cities, slaughtered civilians, and employed the IMRO as political assassins.[101]

Although inflicted with political violence at home, the Bulgarian government supported terrorist attacks against its neighbors as part of its revanchist campaign against the postwar peace treaties. Bulgarian and Macedonian "comitadji" (irregular soldiers, resistance fighters) carried out raids in Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes). The three states protested and submitted the case to the League of Nations. The League did not pronounce an opinion on the merits of the dispute, but advised the parties to come to an agreement by negotiation.[102]

The Inter-Allied Commission of Military Control continued to operate in Bulgaria, and Austria and Hungary, during this turbulent period. The last commission of control concluded its activities in Bulgaria in January 1928. The French statesman and president of the conference of ambassadors, Aristide Briand, communicated the final report of the commission's liquidation board to the secretary-general of the League, emphasizing Bulgaria's continued violations of the military clauses imposed by the Treaty of Neuilly (as he did with the final report of the Control Commission in Hungary in August 1927). Briand reminded the secretary-general that because of

[100] Ibid., 400.
[101] Ibid., 401.
[102] British Legation, Sofia to Lord Curzon, October 17, 1922, TNA, FO 286/818.

the Neuilly Treaty Bulgaria was bound to submit to any investigation which a majority of the League council deemed necessary.[103]

The countries of the Little Entente twice considered invoking the privileges of the peace treaties that would enable the League of Nations to investigate arms violations. In January 1928, the Governments of Romania, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and Czechoslovakia requested that the League of Nations investigate a large consignment of machine guns sent from an Italian firm to Hungary, which Austrian officials had failed to search and detain. Austen Chamberlain and the British government wrote the French government to ask for their help in pressuring the Little Entente governments to keep the case out of the League of Nations. Chamberlain believed that the League's right to investigate was a "weapon of a very brittle nature and might easily break in the hands of its users if not wielded with the utmost care." [104]

British officials warned the governments of the Little Entente that if the investigation failed in its purpose then the whole procedure would be greatly discredited and more difficult to use in an emergency. Moreover, the British government thought that in this case it would be difficult to collect sufficient evidence to convict the Hungarian government of violating the Trianon treaty. The Little Entente pressed ahead with the case, arguing that it brought the matter before the League Council so that more "serious incidents" would not occur in the future. As the British predicted, the case was found inconclusive and no parties punished.[105]

In March 1933, the Little Entente once again considered bringing a case to the League of Nations concerning the shipment of rifles and machine-guns from Italy to a cartridge factory at

[103] "Military Service in Bulgaria," *The Times* [London, England], 17 January 1928, SDN 1050, MAE.
[104] British embassy, Paris to minister for foreign affairs, January 14, 1928, SDN 1054, MAE.
[105] Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions, Request by the governments of Romania, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Czechoslovakia, February 2, 1928, C.P.C. 249.1928.IX, SDN 1054, MAE.

Hirtenberg (Lower Austria). The governments of the Little Entente argued that the large consignment of arms violated the treaty of Saint Germain, and that the League of Nations should exercise its right to investigate provided for in article 159 of the treaty. The United Kingdom and French governments, however, offered to use their good offices to settle the matter through diplomatic channels. [106] The Little Entente accepted the offer, and the matter was resolved after Austria agreed to return the arms to Italy. [107]

The interference of major powers like Britain and France hindered the efforts of the League of Nations to investigate whether the ex-enemy states were violating the arms statutes of the peace treaties. As a result, militant groups remained armed and national grievances spurred on domestic and international terrorist attacks. Without the enforcement of its arms control protocols, the Western counter-terrorism regime established in Paris in 1919 failed to operate.

Conclusion

In 1919 the peacemakers at Paris instituted a comprehensive legal regime to disarm defeated states and keep surplus stocks of weapons from reaching anti-colonial terrorists. The next year the Armaments Section of the League of Nations, later called the Disarmament Section, reviewed the practices put in place. The committee wrote that the Allied and Associated powers intended the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 to keep "arms of precision" out of the "hands of individuals in the less civilized areas of the world." League officials agreed that rigid control over the traffic in arms was needed to safeguard "the peace, order and security of those areas" and to make them easier to govern. The Armaments Section believed that experience in all "civilized countries during the last few decades has shown the use which persons of evil

[106] Secretariat of the Permanent Council of the Little Entente to Eric Drummond, secretary-general, League of Nations, March 1, 1933, R4199, Section 7A, LNA.
[107] Paul-Boncour, Political Department, ministry of foreign affairs to Bogolioub Jevtitch, minister for foreign affairs of Yugoslavia, February 26, 1933, R4199, Section 7A, LNA.

disposition, such as anarchists and criminals can make of high explosives, automatic pistols, and similar commodities; commodities of which vast quantities must be manufactured and used in time of war."[108]

During the interwar years, the League of Nations emerged as the principal organization concerned with stopping international arms trafficking and keeping surplus munition stocks from being "distributed to persons and states who are not fitted to possess them."[109] Additionally, the League assumed investigatory powers in the defeated nations of Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary after the Inter-Allied Military Commissions of Control ceased to operate.[110] The League's job was made harder by the very Allied governments that had passed the arms control legislation. The security strategies of the British, Americans, and French diverged after World War I, and arming and disarming groups became questions of national priorities rather than international concerns. States outside the League, particularly Germany and Soviet Russia, sold their stockpiles to the highest bidder, especially when doing so aided groups that challenged British and French rule. Nothing encapsulates the complexities of arms controls and terrorism more than the fact that the forced disarmament of Germany incentivized German firms to increase their weapon sales to Indian terrorists.

Inter-allied disagreements damaged the international arms regime of 1919. In the 1920s, Britain prioritized disarming the colonial world to safeguard her empire, particularly British India, and therefore rallied the cause of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. France, in turn, needed to protect her eastern border, and when Britain and America backed away from political

[108] League of Nations, Report of Sub-Committee A of Commission N 6 (Armaments) 1920, Sub-Committee A of Committee N 6, Report on the Arms Traffic Convention, R 189, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[109] Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions, June 12, 1922, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[110] Shuster, *German Disarmament after World War I*, 35; Previously, the IMCC had reported to the Conference of Ambassadors and the Allied Military Committee of Versailles.

guarantees, she turned to the Inter-Allied Commissions of Control as a means of monitoring and disarming Germany. While the United States withdrew from the Inter-Allied Commissions of Control and the innovative use of weapons inspectors in Europe, the State Department oscillated in its commitment to an international arms trafficking treaty. The longstanding principle of "no entangling alliances" reemerged in American diplomacy, but it did not stop the State Department, or business community, from engaging with European partners and the League to address the pressing problems of the day, including the global arms trade. While the State Department waivered in its commitment to the control of small arms, American arms manufactures continued to supply and exports weapons, posing a danger to both the interests of Britain and the League.

Chapter 2: Anti-Terrorism and Empire: The British Experience, 1919-1927

During the first half of the twentieth century, three campaigns of revolutionary terrorism challenged British rule in India. In comparison to the nationalist movement led by the Indian Nationalist Congress and its leaders M.K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, the armed struggle is not well known. British anti-terrorism strategy is even less studied, as the terrorists failed to expel the British by force and did not advertise their defeat. The colonial government, in turn, kept silent because it desired to project an image of benign rule and unquestioned authority, and did not want the Indian revolutionary movement to inspire other anti-colonial groups. Consequently, most scholarship on interwar India focuses on the administration of British rule, the rise of Indian nationalism and its relationship to the Indian National Congress, and the influence of communism on Indian politics, especially in Bengal.[1] Historians of the British Empire and modern India continue to largely dismiss the revolutionary movement as a failure and unimportant to nationalist politics in the interwar years.

A few scholars, however, have begun to challenge this assumption. In 1995, the historian Richard Popplewell published *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, which argued that Indian political terrorism stimulated the growth of British intelligence operations on a global scale and that imperial intelligence helped defend the British Empire during the First World War.[2] The

[1] Thomas Metcalf, *The New Cambridge History of India III, 4: Ideologies of the Raj* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Judith Brown, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-34* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977) and *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); David Laushey, *Bengal Terrorism and the Marxist Left: Aspects of Regional Nationalism in India, 1905-1942* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1975). Scholars consider the Bengal terrorist movement to have reached its height during the first two decades of the twentieth century. See, for example, Hiren Chakravarti, *Political Protest in Bengal: Boycott and Terrorism, 1905-18* (Calcutta: Firma, 1992); Peter Heehs, *The Bomb in Bengal: The Rise of Revolutionary Terrorism in Bengal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993) and *Nationalism, Terrorism, Communalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Dalia Ray, *The Bengal Revolutionaries and the Freedom Movement, 1902-1919* (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1990); Rajat Ray, *Social Conflict and Political Unrest in Bengal, 1875-1927* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984).

[2] Richard Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense: British Intelligence and the Defense of the Indian Empire 1904-1924* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), 1.

scholars Michael Silvestri and Durba Ghosh have drawn upon recent trends in the field of British imperial history to demonstrate the connections between Irish and Indian revolutionaries and to show that revolutionary terrorists in interwar India used British imperial networks to avoid detection and arrest.[3] This chapter incorporates the scholarship of Popplewell, Silvestri, and Ghosh, and agrees that intelligence and law enforcement officials in the Government of India considered political terrorism a viable threat to their authority throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

The contribution of this chapter to the existing literature is to highlight the multifaceted approach of British policymakers to safeguard the external and internal safety of interwar British India. Heavily influenced by intelligence reports, colonial officials considered the movement of small arms into India for an internal rebellion, and the Communist International's use of British communists as agents and agitators, as the greatest terrorist threats facing the Raj. As a result, British counter-terrorism in India turned on instituting arms controls, passport regulations, and domestic anti-terrorism legislation based on the wartime powers of the 1915 Defense of India Act.

Decisions made in Delhi, however, remained subject to London's approval. Government divisions appeared immediately at the end of the First World War. The policies of Prime Minister David Lloyd George and his foreign secretary, Lord Curzon, in Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan had produced a sharp rebuke from the secretary of state for India, Lord Montagu, as they antagonized Indian Muslims and fostered the pan-Islamic movement in India's neighbor states. Just as the Dominion governments renegotiated their relationship with London after the

[3] Silvestri's work highlights how Indian revolutionaries were inspired by the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland, while Ghosh's scholarship reveals that Indian revolutionaries escaped government surveillance and legal enforcement by relying on British imperial networks in Burma to regroup and reorganize. See Michael Silvestri, "'The Sinn Fein of India': Irish Nationalism and the Policing of Revolutionary Terrorism in Bengal," *Journal of British Studies* 39, no. 4 (2000): 479-482; Durba Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal: Political Violence in the Interwar Years," in *Decentering Empire: Britain, India and the Transcolonial World*, eds. Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy (Hyderabad, India: Orient Longman, 2006). Anti-colonial revolutionaries at the time also stressed the connections between Ireland and India; see Eamon de Valera, "Ireland and India," (1922).

war, Montague desired to impart the Government of India with more autonomy in the area of foreign policy. He had achieved this somewhat by gaining separate representation for India within the British Empire Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference and separate membership in the League of Nations. However, Lord Curzon decisively reasserted London's control over India's foreign policy and forced the independent-minded Lord Montague to retire, highlighting India's subordinate place in the British world-system.[4]

London officials also challenged domestic anti-terrorism legislation enacted in India on the grounds that it stifled political protest and fueled the nationalist movement under M.K. Gandhi. Government of India officials found themselves repealing the legislation to appease London and moderate Indian public opinion. Furthermore, the Foreign Office and Cabinet refused to follow Delhi's policy recommendations for arms controls and an overhaul of the empire-wide passport system. During the interwar years, London and Delhi increasingly disagreed over security strategies and foreign policy objectives. These disagreements shaped and impeded counter-terrorism in British India and pushed the Government of India to rely on its intelligence services to gather information that would influence opinion in London.

The divide in London and Delhi over Indian anti-terrorism policy reflected larger transnational disagreements about Western counter-terrorism strategy. Decades of experience against the revolutionary movement led British colonial administrators to argue that effective counter-terrorism depended upon international cooperation. British officials in India were willing to submit to international laws regulating small arms, passports, and terrorist financing, if doing so helped them defeat domestic terrorism. However, officials in the United Kingdom remained cautious about altering national laws or imperial practices to combat terror. London did not

[4] John Darwin, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East Imperial Policy in the Aftermath of War, 1918-1922* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 250-57.

believe that the Indian terrorist movement posed a vital threat or merited enacting coercive domestic legislation that called Britain's liberal democratic culture into question.[5] These same factors – differing views about terrorist threats, an aversion to revoking national laws for intergovernmental regulations under the League of Nations, and ingrained beliefs about the superiority of their own legal and political systems – hindered Western international cooperation throughout the interwar years and allowed weapons and monies to keep reaching terrorist groups of various ideological and political persuasions.

This chapter argues that British counter-terrorism strategy in India was based overwhelmingly on intelligence reports. Intelligence estimates became vital to anti-terrorism initiatives in India because of the improved capabilities of the intelligence services during the First World War and because colonial administrators hoped to use the information to shape policy decisions in London. This chapter first provides an overview of the intelligence assessments received by British government officials and the imperial policies – arms controls and passport regulations – that were implemented because of those reports. It concludes by examining the enactment and rescission of domestic anti-terrorism legislation.

Postwar World

The British Empire reached its largest territorial extent in the years immediately following the armistice of November 1918. The Empire acquired a substantial share of the former German Empire, both in Africa and the Pacific, and expanded into the Middle East, stretching from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. Additional growth seemed possible as

[5] Charles Townshend, "In Aid of the Civil Power: Britain, Ireland and Palestine 1916-48," in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, eds. Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian (New York: Osprey, 2008), 20, 36; *Britain's Civil Wars: Counter-Insurgency in the Twentieth Century* (London: Faber & Faber, 1986). Townshend argues that it has been difficult for Britain to find an appropriate legal response to internal emergency because of its liberal-democratic political self-image and its common law tradition. The same political conception (real or imagined) about Britain's legal system, particularly the defense of civil liberties, shaped anti-terrorism laws at home and abroad.

British armies continued to fight in north Russia and in the Caucasus and Central Asia. However, by 1920 the arduous task of governing and defending the bloated Empire began to worry the British government and the General Staff. [6]

In early spring 1919, massive protests erupted in Egypt after the British deported the nationalist leader Saad Zaghloul. Simultaneous civil unrest gripped the Punjab, just as British India was invaded by Afghanistan and dwindling British and Indian troops found themselves fighting in the Third Afghan War. In May 1920, Mustafa Kemal began to organize Turkish militias to oppose the Allies in Anatolia. In July, a rebellion broke out in Iraq while British influence in Persia continued to decline. The Russian threat reappeared on the northwest frontier of India following the enactment of treaties between the Soviet Union, Persia, Afghanistan, and Turkey in February 1921. Vladimir Lenin declared England the greatest enemy of the Bolsheviks and pledged Soviet support for anti-colonial revolutions. In December 1921, Britain conceded the Irish Free State and abrogated the Egyptian protectorate in March 1922, although Britain retained control over the defense of Egypt and the administration of Sudan.[7] By 1923, nationalist uprisings endangered Britain's new empire in the Middle East and the government found itself dependent upon air power and indirect rule through Faisal in Iraq and Abdullah in Transjordan.

"In no single theatre are we strong enough," bemoaned Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, the Ulsterman charged with the strategic defense of the British Empire as the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. He identified a long list of danger zones from civil war in Ireland to

[6] Keith Jeffrey, "Sir Henry Wilson and the Defense of the British Empire, 1918-22," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 5, no 3 (May 1977): 270.
[7] Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela, eds., *Empires at War, 1911-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4, 12; Martin Thomas, *Fight or Flight: Britain, France, and Their Roads from Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 29-35; A.S. Kanya-Forstner, "The War, Imperialism, and Decolonization," in *The Great War and the Twentieth Century*, eds. Jay Winter, Geoffrey Parker, and Mary Habeck (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 250-52; Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 306-307; Rob Johnson, *The Afghan Way of War: How and Why they Fight* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 175-204.

expanding Soviet influence in Persia and food riots and nationalist ferment in India.[8] What had caused the global crisis that appeared to afflict the British Empire in the postwar years? Did the perpetrators of violence, despite their physical distance and cultural differences, draw inspiration from one another's struggles? [9]

British policymakers did not immediately believe that the postwar disturbances were connected. Opinion remained divided in London, but increasingly officials began to consider that the challenges must be linked together and centrally organized. British speculations focused on a variety of sources: Enver Pasha, Mustapha Kemal, Feisal, pan-Islam, the Germans, Standard Oil, the Jews, and the Bolsheviks.[10] Conspiracy theories grew in popularity. Henry Wilson, for example, believed that the German Foreign Office directed a world-wide conspiracy that brought together "all the elements most hostile to British interests – Sinn Feiners and socialists at our own doors, Russian Bolsheviks, Turkish and Egyptian Nationalists and Indian Seditionists."[11] Conspiracy theories also held credibility with the India Office, while analysts in the Foreign Office and the Middle East Department of the Colonial Office discounted the conspiracy theories as 'mere bogey.'[12] An adversarial relationship between the Foreign Office and the India Office aggravated differences of opinion as well as a desire among Foreign Office officials to downplay

[8] Thomas, *Fight or Flight,* 11.
[9] Martin Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 46-47.
[10] David Fromkin, *A Peace to End all Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989), 453-4.
[11] Keith Neilson, "The British Empire vs. The Hidden Hand: British Intelligence and Strategy and 'The CUP-Jew-German-Bolshevik combination,' 1918-1924," in *The British Way in Warfare: Power and the International System, 1856–1956: Essays in Honour of David French,* eds. Keith Neilson and Greg Kennedy (Farnham, UK: Routledge, 2016), 326.
[12] Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: the Great War and the cultural foundations of Britain's covert empire in the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 206-07.

immediate threats as a cost cutting measure during a period of retrenchment when the British public demanded the end of conscription.[13]

British officials turned to their intelligence agencies for a better understanding of the changed security environment of the interwar years. The Government of India, in particular, used intelligence reports to shape its security strategies and design policy responses. The First World War had elevated the importance of intelligence agencies for safeguarding British India. During the war, intelligence analysts had thwarted an open revolt in the Punjab planned by the Ghadr Party from its outposts in North America and Europe, and disrupted large shipments of arms from German agents to revolutionary terrorists in Bengal. These intelligence victories were crucial to the defense of India; from 1914 onward, intelligence agencies would be permanent fixtures in the security architecture of British India. [14]

The Government of India received information from imperial and metropolitan intelligence agencies. Its own Home Department ran an Intelligence Bureau, and in conjunction with the India Office, oversaw a global intelligence agency, Indian Political Intelligence (IPI).[15] British officials had created IPI in 1909 after an Indian student in London, Madan Lal Dhingra, assassinated Sir William Curzon Wyllie, the political aide-de-camp to the secretary of state for India. Political violence in Great Britain had been quiescent since the Fenian bombing campaign of the 1880s. Just as the "dynamite war" of Irish nationalists had led to formation of the Metropolitan Police's Special (Irish) Branch in 1883, Wyllie's murder resulted in a new imperial

[13] Ibid.
[14] A.C. Bose, "Indian Revolutionaries during the First World War – A study of their Aims and Weaknesses," in *India and World War I*, eds. DeWitt Ellinwood and S.D. Pradhan (New Delhi: Manohar, 1978), 110-111; Stephen Garton, "The Dominions, Ireland, and India," in *Empires at War, 1911-1923*, eds. Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 159; Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 100-215, 331-334.
[15] After the 1935 Government of India Act, IPI became a subsidiary of the Intelligence Bureau, although in practice it was autonomous. UK, Europe and American operations were run by IPI in London. Indian operations were run by the Director of the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India.

intelligence force.[16] IPI had originally focused on Indian "anarchists" in London, a misnomer by British officials unwilling to acknowledge militant nationalism in India, but after the First World War IPI extended its purview to include all revolutionaries who threatened the internal or external security of British India.

During the First World War and after, IPI conducted overseas intelligence operations in Europe, North America, especially the United States, and the Far East. These foreign missions became permanent after the Great War. IPI worked with the Security Service (MI5) and the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, later known as MI6). Intelligence agencies placed covert agents within revolutionary groups and gleaned significant human intelligence from informants. Signals intelligence was of supreme importance in the 1920s, as British codebreakers mastered Soviet ciphers and intercepted telegraph and telephone traffic.[17]

The Government of India also received strategic information from the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest (IDCEU), an inter-agency commission that operated from 1922 to 1927. The IDCEU was an India Office initiative, sanctioned by the Foreign Office, to analyze the causes of "Eastern Unrest" that had swept across North Africa and the Middle East after the war. IDCEU analysts quickly realized the nationalist origins of these movements, their challenge to British prestige, and the threat they posed to British India.[18]

---

[16] Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 125; Thomas Hachey, *Britain and Irish Separatism: From the Fenians to the Free State1867/1922* (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Compnay, 1977), 12-13; Brian Jenkins, *The Fenian Problem: Insurgency and Terrorism in a Liberal State, 1858-1874* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), xiii; Nigel West, *MI5: British Security Service Operations 1909-1945* (London: The Bodley Head, 1981), 33-35; Christopher Andrew, *The Defense of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), xx.

[17] Christopher Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986), 259; Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 310-312; Fridrikh Firsov, Harvey Klehr, and John Earl Haynes, eds., *Secret Cables of the Comintern, 1933-1943* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 3, 19; Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 45; Neilson, "The British Empire vs. The Hidden Hand," 329, 338-39.

[18] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, December 1922, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereinafter TNA), London, England, CO 537/835; M.C. Seton, India Office to permanent under-secretary of state, Colonial Office, December 13, 1922, TNA, CO 537/835.

In December 1921, Edwin Montagu, secretary of state for India, wrote to Lord Curzon at the Foreign Office that several offices collected valuable information on British intrigue but this information was not utilized because of a lack of coordination. Montague believed a single department needed to be charged with putting "the whole of the information together."[19] He suggested that the Inter-Departmental Committee focus on groups that posed a threat to the interests of the British Empire, namely Turkish nationalists, Egyptian nationalists, Indian nationalists, the pan-Islamic movement in Anatolia, Turkey and Asia, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), and Indian revolutionaries in Europe, America and Asia. He recommended that the committee draft reports on the structure of these organizations, their aims and goals, and their inter-connections. He wanted to know whether their activities merited supervision or if it was "safe to ignore them."[20] As noted by the historian Durba Ghosh, the IDCEU was one of the first "British efforts to coordinate the work of its isolated departments and far-flung colonies in fighting what it considered Britain's war on terrorism." [21]

Malcolm Seton of the India Office served as the chairman of the Committee on Eastern Unrest for its duration. The IDCEU consisted of former Arab Bureau affiliates and some of Britain's most powerful politicians, including Maurice Hankey, a seasoned civil servant and secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defense. [22] Meetings of the IDCEU were attended by the Colonial Office, the India Office, the War Office (Military Intelligence Directorate and Military Operations Directorate), Home Office (Scotland Yard), and the Foreign Office. SIS, IPI, and MI5 sent advisers as well.[23] In March 1926, Lord Birkenhead with the concurrence of Foreign

[19] Reconstitution of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, March-May 1926, L/P&J/12/156, India Office Records, British Library (BL), London, United Kingdom.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 270-71.
[22] Satia, *Spies in Arabia*, 206-207.
[23] Reconstitution of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, March-May 1926, L/P&J/12/156, BL. In March 1926, Naval Intelligence declined the committee's invitation to participate in its meetings.

Secretary Austen Chamberlain instructed Seton that the committee should "give consideration to such matters of policy as may from time to time emerge from the evidence which it has examined, with a view either to making recommendations itself or to asking for consideration from the Cabinet or the Committee of Imperial Defense."[24] In addition to policy initiatives, the committee recommended police counter-measures regarding arms smuggling.

In December 1922, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest produced its first report on the proliferation of anti-colonial uprisings after the Great War. The committee believed that a number of pre-war conditions contributed to the unrest, particularly the growth of nationalism and the spread of education and industrial development. The committee suspected that the war and post-war conditions "gave impetus" to the uprisings because of the following factors:

> (a) General disruption directly due to the war
>
> (b) The spectacle of the Great Powers fighting each other and the participation of Orientals in the struggle
>
> (c) The weakening and pre-occupation of the Powers prevented them from maintaining full influence and paying sufficient attention to Eastern affairs
>
> (d) The dismemberment of the Russian Empire and consequent territorial readjustments combined with communist propaganda
>
> (e) The account of arms and ammunition which have found, and are still finding, their way into eastern countries
>
> (f) Economic distress

While all of these factors influenced anti-colonial movements, the Committee wrote that it was of the opinion that the "fundamental cause of unrest in Eastern countries is an intense nationalism, which may be briefly described as an attempt on the part of the various Eastern

[24] M.C. Letrn, India Office to under-secretary of state, Colonial Office, April 7, 1926, TNA, CO 537/838.

peoples to emancipate themselves from any form of control by Europeans." Therefore, it was not "surprising to find an anti-European fanaticism prevalent throughout the East." The committee argued that the prevalent spirit of nationalism had been encouraged to display greater activity as a result of the World War, with its attendant economic distress, and by the revolution in Russia and the calls for self-determination by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson. The committee found no evidence that any single central organization directed the intrigues. However, the shared objective of resisting Great Britain brought various parties together, and gave the appearance of an international aspect to the unrest.

The report cautioned that extremist sections in each state, and certain external agencies seeking to exploit the nationalist movements for other purposes, posed a danger, and required continued and careful watching. While the committee concluded that the various factors that caused the unrest did not constitute an immediate danger to the Empire or India, their cumulative effective undermined Britain's prestige and constituted "a source of real danger if allowed to develop without restraint." Protective intelligence, the committee believed, was vital in this regard. The report recommended strengthening the intelligence services and improving the passport system.[25]

In the early 1920s, the Government of India focused on the relationships between "external agencies" and domestic terrorism. The ideologies of pan-Islam and international communism threatened to link various anti-colonial groups together and provide a united front against British rule. Colonial administrators followed the policy recommendations of the INDEU. For the duration of the interwar period, British officials in India advocated a larger

[25] Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, December 1922, Summary of General Conclusions, TNA, CO 537/835.

intelligence apparatus and more stringent arms controls and passport regulations.[26] The Foreign Office, however, viewed the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest as the mouthpiece of the India Office and discounted their reports on account of the rivalry between the two offices.[27] In the early 1920s, both the government in London and the Government of India focused on the internationalist dimensions of Islamism and communism, but their policy prescriptions differed. Security increasingly became a wedge that drove Delhi and London apart.

Interwar Intelligence Gathering

Security policing after the First World War focused on emergent anti-colonial nationalist groups and the subversive "enemy-within." Interwar intelligence agencies benefited from the bureaucratic advances of the war, which had served to streamline and reorganize military and police agencies, and expanded the pool of qualified individuals available for colonial service and intelligence work.[28] British analysts had first focused on pan-Islam, but by the mid-1920s most surveillance reports and predictive threat assessments emphasized the dangers of communist subversion in the Arab world.[29]

During and after the First World War, British officials and intelligence analysts carefully monitored the growth of pan-Islam. When the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers, the Sultan/Caliph in Istanbul had issued five religious pronouncements or *fatwas* calling upon all Muslims to wage *jihad*, or holy war against the Allies. The Ottoman government intended the proclamations to inspire Muslim unrest in Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan, and India and to bolster

[26] M.C. Seton, India Office to permanent under-secretary of state, Colonial Office, 13 December 1922, TNA, CO 537/835.
[27] Satia, *Spies in Arabia*, 206-07.
[28] Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence,* 14-15; Thomas, *Fight or Flight,* 19-20.
[29] Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence,* 38, 90.

their war effort against the British.[30] The Sultan's call for *jihad* threatened the British Empire with invasion from outside, subversion from within as over a million Muslims lived in the Empire, and a potential mutiny of the Islamic "martial races" that had made up a key component of the Indian Army.[31]

Indian Muslims remained loyal to the British government during the war, but fears of pan-Islam revived with the emergence of the Khilafat movement in India. The Khilafat movement sought to unite Muslim politicians together in order to secure more rights from the British government. The movement erupted at the same time as unrest in the Punjab and the outbreak of the Third Afghan War. The anti-Turkish orientation of the Lloyd George coalition government and the harsh postwar settlement imposed with the Treaty of Sèvres further fueled Muslim protests against the British state.[32] The Khilafat movement came to an end in India in March 1924 when the newly Turkish Republic abolished the Caliphate.[33] Although British intelligence continued to monitor pan-Islam, imperial and metropolitan intelligence agencies reoriented their resources towards undermining Soviet espionage and communist subversion.

After the First World War, the Soviet Union and Communist International replaced the German government as the primary foreign sponsor of colonial subversion. From the outset of the October Revolution in 1917, Lenin declared his hostility towards the British Empire. He repudiated the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, which had ended the rivalry between the British and Russian empires in Asia. His actions reinvigorated a more ideological "Great Game" of imperial rivalry. In December 1917, Lenin called on the peoples of Asia to overthrow their

[30] Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 179.
[31] James Hevia, *The Imperial Security State: British Colonial Knowledge and Empire-Building in Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 254; Bose, "Indian Revolutionaries during the First World War," 110-111.
[32] Darwin, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East*, 247.
[33] John Patrick Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India: M.N. Roy and Comintern Policy 1920-1939* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 20-21.

European masters and pledged Bolshevik support for revolution in the colonial regimes. In August 1919, as communist revolutions failed to consume Europe, Leon Trotsky declared that "We have up to now devoted too little attention to agitation in Asia. However, the international situation is evidently shaping in such a way that the road to Paris and London lies via the towns of Afghanistan, the Punjab and Bengal."[34]

The Second World Congress of the Communist International (Comintern), which was held in Moscow from July 19 to August 7, 1920, confirmed the Comintern's commitment to fostering revolution in the colonial world. In September 1920, the Bolsheviks convened a Congress of Peoples of the East, drawing over 2,000 European and Asian communists and nationalists to the Caucasian town of Baku. The meeting was devoted specifically to the "colonial question." M. N. Roy emphasized that the "future for Communism lay in the colonial world, and not in Europe," while Bolshevik leaders like Grigory Zinoviev and Karl Radek employed the rhetoric of national self-determination to graph Soviet power onto anti-colonial movements in Turkey, Central Asia, Persia, India, and China. The Third International resolved to open up a "second front of the World Revolution" in the colonial world.[35]

The Comintern focused first on establishing relations with Afghanistan and Persia in order to pose a military threat to British India. The main Bolshevik representative in Kabul was Obeidullah Sindhi, a Sikh convert to Islam who had played a prominent role in earlier German plots in Afghanistan. In addition, the Comintern trained Indian agents for subversion and sabotage in two centers: Tashkent and Moscow. In Tashkent, the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Comintern established an Indian Military School and the Bolsheviks provided military training

[34] Leon Trotsky, August 5, 1919 in *The Trotsky Papers, 1917-22*, vol. 1, ed. Jan. M. Meijer (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1964), 621-627.
[35] David Priestland, *The Red Flag: A History of Communism* (New York: Grove Press, 2009), 237-38; Silvio Pons, *The Global Revolution: A History of International Communism, 1917-1991*, trans. Allan Cameron (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 54.

for a group of a hundred or so Muslims who had fled India as a result of the Khilafat movement. In Moscow, the Soviets created the "Communist University of Toilers of the East." This school was for revolutionaries who went to work throughout Asia, though mainly in India.[36]

The Comintern's main Indian agent was Narendra Nath Bhattacharya, alias M. N. Roy. Roy, a former Bengali terrorist, had fled India to avoid arrest in 1915 and spent the majority of the First World War in the United States and Mexico.[37] After the war, Roy was recruited by the Comintern and moved to Moscow where he made his name at the Second World Congress of the Communist International. In 1920, Roy traveled to Tashkent accompanied by twenty-seven wagons carrying arms and ammunition; two wagons of gold coins, bullion, and pound and rupee notes; ten wagons of dismantled airplanes; and the staff of a military training school. His mission was to provide military supplies and financial assistance to the frontier tribes along the Afghan-Indian border. In addition, the Comintern tasked him with building a liberation army from Indian army deserters and other anti-British groups.[38]

None of these projects proved fruitful. In May 1921, the Bolsheviks disbanded the Indian Military School in order to revive economic relations with Great Britain. In October 1922 Amnaullah, Amir of Afghanistan, expelled all of the Indian revolutionaries from Afghanistan. The failure of the Afghanistan government to allow free passage across its territory, which lay between India and Soviet Russia, ended plans to use the Indian frontier area as a revolutionary base. The Central Asiatic Bureau of the Comintern was also abolished. A newly-created Eastern Commission of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI), headquartered

[36] Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 306-309.
[37] Kanya-Forstner, "The War, Imperialism, and Decolonization," 250-252.
[38] Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India,* 11-13, 21.

in Moscow, assumed responsibility for fomenting revolution in Asia. This body was to be assisted by the communist parties of the Western colonial powers. [39]

After the failure of their activities in Afghanistan and Persia, the Bolsheviks concentrated on establishing communist cells within India and expanding the Communist Party of India. Roy reached out to radical Congress members, adherents of the Khilafat movement, the Bengali revolutionary societies, and trade union workers to integrate the Communist International with the Indian nationalist movement. The Comintern also reoriented toward China. In March 1925, Grigory Zinoviev, chairman of the Comintern, reported that China had replaced Persia and Afghanistan as "the central starting-point for action in India." A communist revolution in China would provide moral inspiration for Indian revolutionaries and serve as a strategic base to provide direct assistance. The Comintern slogan was now: "Via revolutionary China to the Federal Republic of the United States of India." [40]

The Government of India responded to the Bolshevik threat by establishing forward bases at Meshed in north-eastern Persia, on the western border of Afghanistan, and to the east of Afghanistan at Kashgar in Chinese Turkestan. General Sir Wilfrid Malleson, a former commander of British forces in Persia, oversaw intelligence operations against the Bolsheviks at Mershed. Malleson organized surveillance networks in Central Asia and watched the movements of Bolshevik agents in Persia. The British Consulate-General under the direction of Colonel Percy Etherton ran the forward base at Kashgar. Etherton maintained officers inside Afghanistan and Soviet Central Asia, and worked to prevent communist agents from entering India. British

[39] Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India,* 20-24.Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 308.
[40] Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India,* 58-60; Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 308-309.

intelligence at Meshed and Kashgar monitored communist radio traffic. Intelligence officials were able to read Soviet codes, including those of the Comintern from 1920 until 1927.[41]

The Government of India also gained information from its intelligence services and police forces operating inside India. In Bengal the police fielded 24,000 full-time constables and 80,000 auxiliaries, while the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) was reconfigured as a counter-intelligence bureau to fight Bengali revolutionary terrorism.[42] The Indian police censored the mail and gained access to Roy's correspondence with his agents. British intelligence organizations operating in the Fast East, North America and Europe provided additional information about communist and pan-Islamic agitators.[43] Although downsized after the war, the imperial and Indian intelligence services drew upon their experience combatting German subversion to keep the Government of India's Home Department well informed about security threats. The next section reviews the information supplied to the Home Department and its policy ramifications.

Threat Perception

After the First World War, British intelligence monitored Soviet and Turkish intrigue in Afghanistan, Persia (Iran), and Iraq. The intelligence analyses received by British India officials portrayed an interventionist Soviet Russia and Turkey organizing cells in Persia, Afghanistan, and Iraq for "forward" action into India. The reports indicated that the Communist International used Soviet consuls in Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, and Persia to disseminate arms, funds, and propaganda to Indian revolutionaries. By the mid-1920s, British intelligence analysts had infiltrated most revolutionary groups and colonial administrators concentrated their efforts on

[41] Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 309-317.
[42] Martin Thomas, *Violence and Colonial Order: Police, Workers and Protest in the European Colonial Empires, 1918-1940* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 45.
[43] Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 297-314.

stopping the movement of weapons to adherents of the Khilafat movement and revolutionary terrorists in Bengal. In addition, Government of India officials desired to reform the empire-wide passport system, so that they could deny entry and deport British communists sent to be agents and agitators by the Communist International.

In the fall of 1922, officials in Indian Political Intelligence (IPI) reported on the Soviet government's progress in Persia. IPI believed that Russia's immediate aim was the "destruction of British influence" and the formation of a Soviet State of Persia. In particular, the Soviet government desired the exclusion of the British from the Northern Oil Concession. While Persians were willing to accept Russia's money, communist doctrines had not taken hold and no signs existed that any class of the community "honestly" desired to turn the country into a Soviet Republic. However, should Persia's central government collapse the Russians would probably "find a pretext for the employment of Red Troops in Persia and possibly for an attempt to install a Soviet Government with the aid of the press which they subsidize and of the communist elements in towns."[44]

IPI suggested that Russia's interest in Persia was tied to its desire to create an Oriental Alliance, especially after the victory of Kemal Atatürk in Turkey. The Soviet bloc in the Middle East would consist of Turkey, Persia, Bokhora, and Afghanistan. According to IPI sources, the Third International at its October 1922 meeting had decided to exploit the various nationalist movements in these countries to achieve the formation of this alliance.[45] IPI argued that Russian intrigue in Persia endangered British India because Russian representatives arranged for the smuggling of Bolshevik agents into India and funded anti-British propaganda in the Persian press. In addition, the Russian consuls at Ardebil and Tabriz distributed arms to tribesmen and

[44] Indian Political Intelligence (IPI), Bolshevik Intrigue in Persia, June – October 1922, L/P&J/12/128, BL.
[45] Ibid.

IPI expected similar actions at other centers. IPI reported that the Soviets had also established secret stores of arms to supply Persian revolutionaries. The cache consisted of 800 revolvers and 1,330 rifles. Additionally, IPI officers believed that the Soviets used their consuls to oversee a system of espionage through Iraq to Bombay.[46]

British and Indian intelligence officers also monitored political developments in the Independent Territory. The IDCEU reported that "mischievous" anti-British elements at work in the Independent Territory made the inhabitants as "responsive as ever to the golden magnet of the Soviet Representative at Kabul."[47] While the pan-Islamic movement seemed to be declining, various religious organizations received considerable funds from abroad, including the United States, India, and Egypt, that allowed them to continue their "pan-Islamic activity and flow of propaganda."[48]

In early 1923, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest noted two setbacks suffered by the Russians in their "Bolshevik campaign against India." First, the Government of India arrested eight Moscow-trained Indian communists. Second, the Afghan government expelled nearly all the important college-educated Indian seditionists and revolutionaries who "had been carrying on their intrigues from that country for some years." [49] The IDCEU cautioned, however, that the Soviets had recruited Mota Singh, a Sikh leader they financed and supported. In addition, Russian representatives had established a summer camp in Afghanistan

[46] Ibid.
[47] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Anti-British Conspiracy and Intrigue in Afghanistan and on the Indo-Afghan Frontier, April 1922-January 1923, L/P&J/12/152, BL.
[48] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Turkish Pan-Islamic Activities, Relations with Russia, September 8, 1923, SIS copies to Foreign Office (Eastern and Northern Departments), War Office (M.I.1.c), India Office, Colonial Office, and Admiralty, L/P&J/12/127, BL.
[49] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Anti-British Conspiracy and Intrigue in Afghanistan and on the Indo-Afghan Frontier, April 1922-January 1923, L/P&J/12/152, BL.

that "appeared to be an advance base for Bolshevik intrigue with regard to India and Independent Territory."[50]

The Inter-Departmental Committee also discussed other "disturbing" developments. Sources indicated that in May 1922 the Soviets had set aside large sums of money and a store of rifles, estimated at 100,000 with ammunition, bombs, pistols, etc. for the armament of a general tribal rising. Additional sources revealed that Soviet agents had been selected by the secretariat for eastern propaganda at Moscow for dispatch to Afghanistan in order to establish contacts with "local revolutionary elements and with Indian malcontents." Moscow had provided the agents with local currency and they were told to collaborate closely with the Soviet representatives at Kabul.

The rise of Turkish influence in Kabul also raised alarms, especially as it was reported from several sources that the Turkish and Bolshevik representatives in Kabul had decided to combine in "energetic anti-British propaganda and intrigue." IDCEU members thought that Turkey wanted to expand pan-Islamic agitation, and that Afghans supported Khilafat agitation in India. Lastly in January 1923, Khushal Khan of Barikab (Peshawar District), a wealthy Californian business man, suspected in connection with the arms trade and revolutionary politics had come to Kabul from Moscow and was working as an interpreter or intermediary with Indians on behalf of the Russian Minister. [51]

The Inter-Departmental Committee carefully analyzed the meetings of the Baku Council because of information that the Council directed Soviet activities in the Middle East. Informants connected to the Baku Council of Action and Propaganda kept British officials aware of the meetings of the Comintern and the changing relationship between Turkey and Russia. In 1922-

[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.

23, Turkish authorities arrested Turkish communists on the grounds that they had taken money from the Soviet government for propaganda and agitation against the Turkish state.[52]

In early 1923, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest Committee began to analyze responses in Moscow to the arrest of Turkish communists and the failure of the Turkish government to support Russia's delegation at Lausanne. In Baku, Sergey Kirov, the current leader of the Azerbaijan communist party, called on Russia to increase propaganda in Turkey and to escalate the number of armed forces in the Caucasus. He argued that the Soviets needed to take more "active measures to combat the ever increasing pan-Islamic propaganda of the Turks throughout Caucasia and Turkestan." Additionally, SIS agents reported that the Third International was trying to exercise greater control over Turkish communists and other groups opposing Kemal.[53]

In early 1925, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest reported that the Baku Council for Action and Propaganda was escalating its activities. In January, the Baku Council dispatched agents to Kabul with the special mission of reorganizing and intensifying Soviet propaganda in Afghanistan and India. They were instructed to form "subsidiary propaganda cells on the Afghan-Indian frontier." The Baku Council stipulated that Soviet propaganda in India was to emphasize the "expulsion of Europeans from the Colonies" and support the nationalist tendencies of the revolutionary Indians.[54]

[52] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Russo-Turkish Relations, March 14, 1923, SIS copies to Foreign Office (Eastern and Northern Departments), India Office, Colonial Office, and Scotland Yard, L/P&J/12/127, BL.
[53] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Russo-Turkish Relations, January 1, 1923, SIS copies to Foreign Office (Eastern and Northern Departments), India Office, Colonial Office, War Office (M.I.1.c.), D.N.I., and Air Ministry, L/P&J/12/127, BL.
[54] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Soviet Eastern Policy, Communist activities against India directed from the Baku and Kabul Centers, February 26, 1925, Copies to Foreign Office (Mr. Bland and Northern Department), War Office (M.I.1.c.), India Office, and IPI, L/P&J/12/177, BL.

The IDCEU also found that the Baku Council supported the establishment of a new propaganda school in Persia. The purpose of this school was to train agitators to work in existing cells in Turkestan, Khiva and Bokhara. Attached to this school was a special class for militant workers who would take a course for six months to prepare them for "terrorist work in foreign 'colonies,' chiefly India, as well as for organizing militant detachments for action." The Baku Council selected young Muslim communists in particular for this class.[55] IDCEU also noted that the Baku Council was extending its activities to western China and Kashgar. The Kashgar center was to exploit new channels of communication with India by employing Chinese and Indian traders who had permanent business connections with Northern India. The traders were to transfer money, propaganda, literature, and secret instructions between Indian revolutionaries and Soviet agents.[56]

In July 1925, the IDCEU reported that the Baku Council for Action and Propaganda held another meeting with various Comintern organizations. The meeting resulted in a decision to organize a permanent military department within the Council for the purpose of "instruction in the theory and application of civil and colonial warfare in order to create a cadre of revolutionary fighters drawn from colonial and Eastern elements." The Council voted to organize a special "strikes" department that would train instructors to organize strikes in imperial colonies, and agreed to begin organizing revolutionary cells in government departments of foreign powers, particularly in defense organizations, police, post offices, telegraphs and finance departments. The Baku Council decided to first focus on Afghanistan, Persia, India, China, and Turkey.[57]

[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Intensification of Soviet Eastern Propaganda; Militant Conference at Baku, August 4, 1925, Copies to Foreign Office (Mr. Bland, Northern and Far Eastern Depts.), War Office (M.I.1c), India Office, Colonial Office, and Scotland Yard, L/P&J/12/177, BL.

IPI also commented on the Communist Militant Conference at Baku in July 1925. The agency believed that no important representatives from India, Afghanistan, or the Far East had attended. IPI remarked that although the conference was of a "secret nature, much time was lost in the official exchange of the usual Communist greetings and in academic discussions," while also noting that the Baku Council continued to stress the importance of tying communist doctrine to nationalist goals.[58]

In November and December 1925, the IDCEU focused on the activities of the Kabul Center. The Baku Council had sent nine "propaganda" agents to Kabul to strengthen the Indian work of the Kabul Center. The agents sent to the Kabul Center included a number of Armenians from the Van Province who were chosen for their exceptional knowledge of Eastern languages. The Committee on Eastern Unrest reported that the Kabul Center planned to recruit Muslim and Hindu agitators for dispatch to India, focusing on Bombay and Lahore in particular. The Kabul Center also assisted the Baku Council with establishing a regular system of couriers for the transfer of funds and propaganda literature to India via Afghanistan as well as the dispatch of arms and munitions to Indian terrorists through specially designated centers on the Indian frontier. [59]

The IDCEU summarized the difficulty faced by the Kabul Center in securing reliable passports for its couriers and agents in India. The Kabul Center suggested that the Comintern set up a Bureau for forging passports and buying up Afghan and Persian documents. The Comintern declined to follow this suggestion, arguing that the Baku Council already had a fully equipped passport forging section. This Kabul Center resented this response and believed that the

[58] IPI, Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Communist Militant Conference at Baku, September 9, 1925, Copies to J.W. Hose, India Office and Captain Miller, Scotland Yard, L/P&J/12/177, BL.
[59] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Communist Activities in India directed from Kabul, November 6, 1925, Copies to Foreign Office (Mr. Bland and Northern Department), War Office (M.I.1.c), India Office, and Scotland Yard, L/P&J/12/177, BL.

Comintern failed to understand the "needs of the moment" and the necessity of obtaining proper documentation for agents to carry out their tasks. The Baku Council sent 100,000 rubles to Kabul as a compromise, enabling the Kabul Center to purchase Afghan passports.[60]

In December 1925 the Kabul Center established new cells in Afghanistan and the North West Frontier of India in order to secure a line of communication between agents in Afghanistan and India. The Committee on Eastern Unrest believed that these " official steps to gain control over the Afghan Government are part of the general Comintern plan, which provides, first, for the consolidation of Russian influence in Afghanistan, and second, for the establishment of an autonomous Afghan Republic under absolute control of the Moscow Government." The policy was of primary importance to the Soviets as its fulfillment would guarantee a Soviet hinterland in the Middle East, and would help prepare for "direct revolutionary action" in India. In the case of counter-action by Great Britain, Afghanistan would play an essential role in sustaining the Comintern's position. The Kabul Center needed to maintain a network of Soviet espionage and propaganda activity on a grand scale in India, and to undertake the political subjugation of Afghanistan as an intervening buffer state. [61]

The India Office also worried that the Riff War in Morocco would reignite pan-Islamic agitation in the Middle East and India.[62] In August 1925, Scotland Yard's G.M. Liddell reported that the British communist Arthur Field had started a Muslim Committee for the Defense of the Riff to raise money and protest the war in France and Spain. Field endeavored to "make the position of the Riffs an international question, which would have to be dealt with by some international body." Field called for the absolute independence of the Riffs, and believed this

[60] Ibid.
[61] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Communist Activities Against India Directed from Kabul, December 14, 1925, Copies to India Office, War Office (M.I.1.c.), L/P&J/12/177, BL.
[62] The Earl of Birkenhead to Spanish ambassador, embassy of Spain in London, April 16, 1925, L/P&J/12/230, BL.

stance would elicit strong Indian support and embarrass the British Government. He also wrote to the Third International for support.[63] MI5 and Special Branch monitored Field, read his correspondence, and infiltrated meetings of the League against Imperialism to monitor anti-colonial sympathizers.

In 1927 the IDCEU turned its attention to Iraq. After the war, the Soviets had set up a propaganda center in Kermanshah.[64] In the mid-1920s, the Third International began carrying intrigue into Iraq through the Kurds, Assyrians, and the Ulema. IDCEU surmised that the Comintern desired to establish a subversive cell in Iraq, and to connect this cell with Persia and possibly Turkey. In March 1927, the Air Ministry concluded that "a contaminating Soviet influence" was being "quietly" introduced in Iraq, but it was unclear if the Communist International had succeeded in setting up a Soviet network in Iraq.[65]

After the First World War, Indian Political Intelligence was a global and permanent intelligence agency. The organization worked with the Secret Intelligence Service to monitor anti-colonial nationalism, international communism, and pan-Islam in the Middle East and Central Asia. Members of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest analyzed the intelligence information. The committee's reports reviewed the various terrorist groups opposing British rule and stressed any intragroup connections or foreign support. As an India Office initiative, IDCEU operated primarily for the protection of British India. While the IDCEU was less successful in persuading London officials, the Government of India followed IDCEU's recommendations to maintain intelligence capabilities, disrupt gun-running, and secure India's borders from communist infiltration.

[63] G.M. Liddell, Special Branch to Gerald Villiers, Foreign Office, August 10, 1925, L/P&J/12/230, BL.
[64] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Bolshevik Intrigue, June 10, 1923, L/P&J/12/152, BL.
[65] Air Ministry to Colonel C.A. Smith, India Office, March 24, 1927, TNA, AIR 5/485.

Policy Responses: Arms Controls, Passport Regulations, and Domestic Legislation

The intelligence reports from Indian Political Intelligence and the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest persuaded the Government of India to enact measures to disrupt the flow of weapons into India. Immediately after the war, Turkey and Afghanistan found a willing munitions market in Germany and Austria. German firms offered military equipment to the "Turks, Russians or whoever will buy them," only stipulating that the armaments not pass through Germany. The Afghan government also reached out to the French and Italian governments for arms. British India officials believed that these weapons would be smuggled across the border to Indian revolutionaries, and actively tried to limit the amount of military equipment reaching their new neighbors.[66]

By 1924 Indian officials concluded that the illegal arms trade had reached huge proportions and that most weapons entered India by way of ships. In January, the Calcutta Police reported that Bolshevik agents in China had helped transport a large consignment of arms, ammunition, and high explosives from M.N. Roy's party in Berlin to the Calcutta revolutionary party. The weapons had been shipped to India in cases containing Chinese and Japanese toys.[67] Revolutionaries also smuggled arms through the French possessions of Chandernagore and Pondicherry. The French territories had long been a nuisance to Indian officials because revolutionaries continually fled to the territories to escape the British police and to publish subversive works undeterred.[68]

IPI also issued summaries on the arms trade. Intelligence officers concluded that a considerable traffic in arms moved from Marseilles to China, and on a smaller scale to Egypt and

[66] J.W. Hose, India Office to Cecil Kaye, Director Intelligence Bureau (DIB), August 10, 1921, L/P&J/12/44, BL.
[67] Calcutta Police, January 29, 1924, L/PJ/12/78, BL.
[68] IPI, Activities of Revolutionaries in Bengal Subsequent to August 31, 1924, L/P&J/12/253, BL

India.[69] French authorities reported that arms smugglers in Marseilles mostly sent revolvers to China, along with ammunition of various kinds for small arms and revolvers. In addition, American agents provided machine-guns that were fraudulently shipped to China under various disguises.[70] In May 1924, Soviet representatives transported to Afghanistan (evidently for India) 800 British rifles, 6 machine guns (type unknown) and 24 cases of cartridges. This consignment was dispatched from Tashkent to Mazar-ei-Sherif in two consignments on two separate occasions.[71]

Consequently, in 1924, the Government of India spent a "considerable sum of money" to ascertain the sources on the Continent from which smugglers secured their supplies. Officials learned that smugglers obtained weapons primarily from Hamburg, Antwerp, and Marseilles. Police at these ports either failed to enforce laws that restricted the sale of arms or no laws existed (Antwerp until 1933). Most of the large consignments of arms derived from Hamburg, and traveled first to the Far East, generally Hong Kong, Singapore, or Shanghai before reaching India.[72] Closer to home, gun-runners in Kabul distributed revolvers to various parts of British India, particularly Punjab.[73]

The lukewarm response of authorities in Germany, Belgium, and France to punish arms traffickers pushed Indian officials in a new direction, negotiating directly with steamship companies and Customs officials. The Government of India instructed private shipping companies to persuade their captains to take all possible steps to ensure that members of their crews did not transport small arms into India. In addition, the British custom authorities were

[69] IPI to J.W. Hose, India Office, The Smuggling of Arms to India, October 6, 1924, L/PJ/12/78, BL.
[70] J.W. Hose, India Office to Foreign Office, Scotland Yard, War Office, Colonial Office, and IPI, Arms Traffic between France and the Far East, October 1924, L/PJ/12/78, BL.
[71] J.A. Wallinger, IPI to J.W. Hose, India Office, October 14, 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[72] J.A. Wallinger, IPI to David Petrie, Intelligence Bureau, March 4, 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[73] Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, Report on Police Administration in the North-West Frontier Province for 1925, L/PJ/12/81, BL.

advised to pay special attention to vessels that sailed from continental ports to London and then India.[74] In India, government officials provided secret service money to the Collectors of Customs at the leading sea-ports, so that they could "extend and tighten up the arrangements for the interception of illicitly imported arms." The Indian Home Department made sure that the new authority that oversaw customs, the Central Board of Revenue, was aware of the grave danger of arms smuggling and the need for vigilance at the ports.[75]

Following an October 1924 memorandum on the illicit traffic of arms, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest held a meeting at the India Office to address Islamic movements in North Africa and the ties between arms smuggling and Bengal terrorism.[76] IPI officials used the meeting to outline the deficiency of customs officers in London to adequately search ships for arms. The committee decided that Commissioners of Customs and Excise would notify authorities about any seizures of arms and that Scotland Yard would follow-up such cases with an investigation.[77]

In addition, IDCEU appointed a sub-committee to examine the question of illicit traffic in arms to the East, particularly India.[78] The sub-committee met on November 10, 1924, at MI5 headquarters. Major Wallinger of Indian Political Intelligence ran the meeting. He informed the sub-committee that arms traveled on vessels from the European continent to the East, which

[74] Home Department, Government of India to all local governments, November 19, 1932, L/P&J/12/93, BL
[75] David Petrie, Intelligence Bureau to J.A. Wallinger, IPI, December 4, 1924, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[76] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Memorandum on the Situation in Bengal and the Arms Traffic, October 29, 1924, L/PJ/12/91, BL. This meeting was attended by Sir Malcom Seton, Col Sir Vernon Kell, MI 5; Col S.F. Musptratt, War Office; Mr. Hose, India Office; Mr. J. Murray, Foreign Office; Mr. G.L.M. Clauson, Colonial Office; Mr. H.R. Palmer, Nigeria Office; and representatives of SIS and IPI. Regarding Islamic movements in North Africa, IDCEU concluded that Al Ashar University in Cairo played a central role in disseminating Eastern influence through Africa. The committee suggested that a liaison officer from Nigeria be placed in Cairo and Jeddah during pilgrim season in order to collect information on pan-Islam and its influence in Nigeria.
[77] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, India Office, November 7, 1924, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[78] The following were nominated as members of the sub-committee: Colonel Sir V.G.W. Kell, MI5, War Office (President); Major J.A. Wallinger, India Office; Lieut. Colonel S.G. Menzies, M.I.1.c; Captain G. Liddell, Scotland Yard; Major W.A. Phillips, M.I.5, War Office. Mr. J.E. Sutton, a principal of the Board of Customs attended the meeting to assist the Committee, at the request of Colonel Kell.

often touched at British ports for the purpose of completing their cargo or taking coal. He emphasized that London customs officers should interrogate the captains and crews of these vessels to ensure that no weapons were being transported. In cases where customs officials found arms, Wallinger suggested that representatives from the War Office, India Office, or Scotland Yard should be sent to the ships to carry out investigations. The sub-committee decided it needed more information on the origins of the arms in transit for the East and tasked Major Wallinger and the War Office's Colonel Menzies with designing a scheme to place a number of agents in foreign ports, starting with Hamburg, Germany.[79]

In June 1925, Scotland Yard held a meeting to discuss a proposal by IPI to place an Indian agent in Hamburg. The German port continued to supply the majority of weapons that reached India.[80] SIS and Scotland Yard voted against the recommendation, and decided instead to place agents on various ships that docked at foreign ports. These agents would infiltrate the crews and report any information regarding arms smuggling to IPI.[81]

And yet the guns kept coming. In July 1925, the Government of India wrote the governments of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and Burma that officials were alarmed by the light penalties being imposed on convicted arms smugglers. The Government of India argued that smugglers would continue to move weapons into India if they did not face severe repercussions. Delhi instructed the local governments to bring their magistrates inline and ensure that they imposed adequate sentences for gun-running cases.[82]

Arms smuggling continued because it was a lucrative business. The arms trade followed the drug trade, which had tended to move opium from Calcutta, Bombay, and other Indian ports

[79] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, MI5, War Office, November 10, 1924, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[80] The Viceroy, Home Department, to secretary of state for India, January 5, 1925, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[81] Meeting, Scotland House, June 19, 1925, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[82] Home Department, Government of India to the governments of Madras, Bombay, Bengal and Burma, July 13, 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.

in exchange for cocaine in Singapore, Hong Kong, Hamburg, Antwerp, New York, and other European and American ports. Information supplied to an Intelligence Bureau agent by an informant in 1927 indicated that for the last few years most smugglers had trafficked arms and ammunition instead of cocaine because they "were getting four to five times more profit than the cocaine." [83] Moreover, smugglers stayed attuned to legal repercussions. When customs officials and the police in Calcutta began cracking down on arms smuggling and imposing hefty jail sentences, smugglers reoriented their operations to Bombay where officials rarely checked cargo or punished arms cases. [84]

Gun-running remained a central concern for the government of India because the "objects of the traffic are beyond dispute. The arms are wanted for the furtherance of terrorist aims and for no other reason." [85] By the end of the 1920s, Indian officials knew that Europe supplied most of the arms to India, and that weapons were generally smuggled on vessels in small numbers rather than large shipments. Government officials, however, had not been able to completely stop the illicit arms trade because authorities at major Continental ports failed to enforce their arms trafficking laws.

Passports

The Government of India also wanted to control the movement of foreign fighters and communist agitators into India. In the early 1920s, Indian officials considered denying passports to Indians who wished to travel to Germany. The government believed that Indian revolutionaries in Germany plotted against British rule and had established "a night school for the manufacture of bombs and explosives." The Government of India requested that local

[83] Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, Calcutta to Director, Intelligence Bureau, Delhi, January 22, 1926, L/PJ/12/81, BL.
[84] Intelligence Bureau to IPI, August 11, 1927, L/P&J/12/93, BL.
[85] Deputy Inspector General of Police for Railways and Criminal Investigation, Burma, August 30, 1935, L/P&J/12/93, BL.

governments undertake an extensive background search of Indians who applied for passports to Germany and only grant passports to those who had an unquestionably "good character."[86]

In November 1922 the Home Department reiterated its concerns about Indians traveling to Germany to local government officials and administrations. Authorities at the Home Department remarked that since the removal of the travel embargo a considerable number of Indians, generally students, had traveled to Germany, and once there were exposed to the dangers of "Indian irreconcilables" and revolutionary doctrines. The Government of India asked that all local governments inform their officials that "passports for Germany or Switzerland should not be granted without close scrutiny and careful inquiry into the antecedents and the bona fides of the applicant." Moreover, passport authorities needed to be aware that Indians could first travel to Switzerland, the United Kingdom, or another country in Europe before proceeding to Germany. In addition, the Government of India dictated that local government provide the Home Department and India Office with a list of names of those denied passports to Germany or Europe, and the full reasons for such a refusal.[87]

The next year the India Office began advocating stricter immigration controls because officials learned that Indians travelling to Germany were being "trained in Bolshevik activity." In January 1923, the India Office wrote the Government of India that a number of reports from Europe and intercepted letters in India indicted that Bolshevik agents were aggressively recruiting "able and determined persons" from India for training. The India Office believed that the Intelligence Bureau knew the men sent from Europe to fetch recruits and the men in India that the Bolsheviks contacted to find recruits and arrange for their journeys. The India Office

[86] LPO Somell, Home Department, Government of India to William Duke, under-secretary of state for India, India Office, September 7, 1922, L/PJ/12/98, BL.
[87] Home Department, Government of India to all local Governments and Administrations, November 13, 1922, L/PJ/12/98, BL.

wanted the Government of India to deny passports to any suspected Bolshevik recruits because the "association of internal conspiracy with the activities of a foreign enemy Government" appeared to the secretary of state "to be extremely dangerous." [88]

In the mid-1920s, the Government of India and India Office turned their attention to preventing the entry of British communists into India. While the current system worked well for aliens, the empire-wide endorsement system meant that the Government of India could not prevent the entry of British subjects into India. The India Office, therefore, requested that the Home Office supply the Passport Office with a list of known British communists, and that Scotland Yard work with the Passport Office to monitor requests from individuals suspected of "communist proclivities" to visit India and Hong Kong.[89]

The Passport Office confirmed that it would liaison with the Metropolitan police and carefully examine all applications for passports to travel to India and Hong Kong. Any suspicious cases would be reported to Scotland Yard. However, the Chief Passport officer cautioned that this approach depended on knowing beforehand whether an individual applicant had any connections to the Communist Party. He believed that the Communist party was aware that authorities denied the empire-wide endorsement to known communists, so it was likely that lesser known agents of the Communist party would be instructed to apply for passports for a holiday on the continent of Europe.[90]

In June 1927, Lord Birkenhead, secretary of state for India, wrote the Foreign and Home Offices that the recent increase in British communists entering India indicated that the passport system needed to be strengthened. The Foreigners Act empowered the Government of India to

[88] J.E. Ferard, India Office to Home Department, Government of India, January 18, 1923, L/PJ/12/98, BL.
[89] B.E.W. Childs, New Scotland Yard to H.S. Martin, Passport Office, April 8, 1927, L/P&J/12/312, BL.
[90] Hubert Martin, Passport Office to Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, New Scotland Yard, April 11, 1927, L/P&J/12/312, BL.

deport foreigners, but British subjects could not be expelled from India unless they had broken the Indian Passport Regulations or were reduced to a state of vagrancy. Lord Birkenhead stated that the increase in communist activity in India and its connection to "subversive agencies directed against British rule in India" threatened the government. British India's security was tied to the passport system, and passport authorities in the United Kingdom needed to be more circumspect about granting an empire-wide endorsement or travel visas for India. [91]

Foreign Secretary Austen Chamberlain replied that he was "prepared to take such steps as are possible to meet the Earl of Birkenhead's wishes, always provided that His Lordship is prepared to assume full responsibility in Parliament for the action taken."[92] The Home Office contacted the Commissioner of Police for his views before replying to the secretary of state. The police commissioner believed that it would be impossible to forestall every possible communist application. The Home Office's letter to the India Office reflected his position.

The Home Office promised Lord Birkenhead that authorities would make every effort to ensure that "no Communist interesting himself in Indian affairs shall escape inclusion from the list of persons to whom Empire wide endorsements are not to be granted." However, the Home Office cautioned that Communist party instructions determined where most communists traveled, and a person may not indicate any personal interest in India before requesting a passport. It would be difficult for the police to know in these cases if a lesser known communist had been selected for a particular mission.[93]

The India Office also suggested that the Government of India enhance its border control checks to better examine passports and interrogate suspicious individuals. The Government of

[91] Lord Birkenhead to under-secretary of state, Home Office, June 10, 1927, Copies to Foreign Office and chief passport officer, L/P&J/12/312, BL.
[92] Austen Chamberlain, secretary of state for foreign affairs to under-secretary of state, India Office, May 25, 1928, L/P&J/12/312, BL.
[93] E. Blackwell, Home Office to under-secretary of state for India, India Office, July 1, 1927, L/P&J/12/312, BL.

India was reluctant to follow this advice, as the "existing somewhat cursory system of examination causes some degree of resentment among travelers." Indian officials thought it "unwise to tighten up this procedure in a way which is likely to cause irritation and thus possibly provoke an agitation against the passport system itself, the retention of which is so essential a part of our defense." Instead, the Government of India argued that the intelligence system in England needed to better monitor British communists and that the responsibility lay with passport authorities in London. [94]

Domestic Legislation

In addition to arms controls and passport restrictions, the Government of India relied on domestic anti-terrorism laws to arrest and detain revolutionary nationalists. The anti-terrorism legislation derived from the wartime Defense of India Act, modelled on the Defense of the Realm Act, which led to the detention of a thousand suspected terrorists, in the interest of Britain's imperial and national security.[95] The terrorist movement was strongest in the province of Bengal where anti-British agitation dated to 1905. During the First World War, political violence escalated. While the majority of Indian forces were fighting in Europe and the British war effort was faring badly both on the Western front and against the Turks in the Near East, internal terrorism perpetrated by Hindu *bhadralok* (upper caste, educated elite) threatened to undermine British rule in India.[96]

Twentieth-century terrorism in Bengal was characterized by its tactics, armed *dacoities* (robberies) and assassinations or assassination attempts of high-ranking government and police officials. Indian revolutionary terrorists in Bengal generally engaged in relatively small-scale

[94] Home Department, Government of India to J.E. Ferard, India Office, October 27, 1927, L/P&J/12/312, BL.
[95] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 275.
[96] Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense,* 5-6; Garton, "The Dominions, Ireland, and India," 159; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 273.

acts of covert violence rather than open insurrection because of a lack of sophisticated weaponry. The British Arms Act of 1878 had effectively disarmed the populace and made it nearly impossible for Indian revolutionaries to organize large-scale operations.[97] At the end of World War I, British officials feared that the expiration of the Defense of India Act would revive terrorist outrages. Consequently, in 1917, the Government of India appointed a committee under a Scottish judge, Mr. S.A.T. Rowlatt, "to investigate revolutionary conspiracies" and to suggest policies for controlling terrorism. The committee's reports indicated that Bengal, Bombay Presidency, and the Punjab remained dangerous centers of revolutionary activity and that the government should maintain emergency powers in those areas. The committee recommended the extension of wartime controls, including trials of seditious crimes without juries. [98]

The Liberal secretary of state for India, E.S. Montagu, sanctioned the Rowlatt Bills embodying these suggestions with great reluctance. While he believed they were "most repugnant," he believed that the legislation was necessary to stamp out "rebellion and revolution." The Government of India, however, relied on the official majority to get the legislation through the Imperial Legislative Council in early 1919. Every Indian member voted against the law. Although the Rowlatt Act drew upon the Defense of India Act, as well as the much older Regulation III of 1818, it contradicted many of the central tenets of British legal tradition by denying either due process or habeas corpus. In addition, the speed at which the Government of India moved to implement the legislation magnified its shock effect and increased opposition.[99] In addition, the Government of India Act of 1919, which derived from

[97] Peter Heehs, "Terrorism in India during the Freedom Struggle," *The Historian* 55 (1993): 469-70.
[98] Judith M. Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 196.
[99] Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars,* 133. The Government of India was under the misapprehension that the Defense of India Act powers would lapse six months after the end of the war.

the so-called Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, gestured towards limited self-government but fell short of the expectations of most Indian politicians. [100]

M.K. Gandhi formed the non-cooperation movement in 1920 in response to the Rowlatt Act, also known as the Revolutionary and Anarchical Crimes Act, and the Amritsar massacre of 1919. This civil disobedience campaign succeeded in bringing together an unprecedented degree of unity among the various religious groups of India. Many militant revolutionaries also joined the movement.[101] In response to the massive protests against the Revolutionary and Anarchical Crimes Act, the Government of India issued a Royal Proclamation in 1919, which released hundreds of Bengali terrorists who had been interned under the Defense of India Act in early 1920. The government's amnesty was gradually extended to most of the leaders of the revolutionary movement.

The years between 1918 and 1920 saw a dramatic decrease in terrorist crime. In 1919, the police recorded only one revolutionary crime, and in 1920 no such crime was recorded. Intelligence officers at the time attributed the reduction of political violence in India solely to the granting of wider powers to the police. The police could now deal with terrorist organizations by interning an alleged terrorist before he committed a crime, and could also arrest leaders, recruiters, and minor members as soon as they were mentioned by reliable agents.[102] Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, however, also played a vital role in the decline of terrorist crime, as many revolutionaries joined in civil disobedience rather than armed resistance.

Following the decrease in terrorism, the Government of India repealed almost all the laws used against the terrorist movement.[103] Some of those released fled (or "absconded" as British

[100] Brown, *Modern India*, 198; Garton, "The Dominions, Ireland, and India," 152-78.
[101] Biswakesh Tripathy, *Terrorism and Insurgency in India, 1900-1986* (New Delhi: Pacific Press, 1987), 41.
[102] H.W. Hale, *Political Trouble in India, 1917-1937* (Allahabad: Chugh Publications, 1974 [Simla, 1937]), 4-5.
[103] Tripathy, *Terrorism and Insurgency in India*, 41.

officials put it) to Burma to avoid being detained, while others became involved in Congress politics at the provincial level.[104] After 1922, the *bhadralok* constituted a majority membership in the two main political parties of the Indian National Congress, the Anushilan and Jugantar parties. In addition to supporting the organized violence of revolutionary terrorists, many members of the *bhadralok* participated in the largely peaceful *Swadeshi* movement of boycotting British goods. [105]

For British officials the years after the First World War represented a new phase in the Bengali terrorist movement because of the active involvement of political revolutionaries in congressional politics and local congressional committees, such as the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. These legal political organizations allowed Bengali terrorists to expand their networks, draw in more recruits, secure new ways of financial funding, reorganize into terrorist cells, and garner public sympathy. British officials feared such developments because terrorists could now use legal political and governmental apparatuses to further their causes, and importantly, deter any legislation aimed at suppressing armed resistance. [106] Civil anti-terrorism laws had represented a key mechanism in British counter-terrorism doctrine. If militant revolutionaries comprised a majority in the Bengali Congress, then the Bengal government could not ensure the continuance of criminal laws that outlawed terrorism and punished those who committed armed *dacoits,* assassinations, or assassination attempts of high-level government officials.

In March 1922, the Government of India arrested Gandhi for sedition and for encouraging anti-British agitation. His arrest and the decline of the non-violent non-cooperation movement led to a revival of political violence. The second campaign of Bengali terrorism lasted

[104] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 277-78, 282.
[105] Ibid., 273.
[106] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 277-78; Hale, *Political Trouble in India,* 5-6.

from 1922 to 1927. During this period, Subhas Chandra Bose began to strongly influence the Bengal Congress party and in 1927 formed the New Violence Party and the Bengal Volunteer Group in 1928.[107] In this period, revolutionaries increasingly drew inspiration from the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland, which helped to intellectually justify the use of physical force. The New Violence Party encouraged Bengali youths to study the methods of the Irish Republican Army and the writings of Dan Breen and Padraig Pearse.[108]

The recurrence of crime in the 1920s led the government to believe that terrorists no longer feared legal reparations, and that "unless immediate action [was] taken Bengal would again be exposed to the dangers of the previous outbreak of revolutionary crime."[109] In 1924, the police arrested numerous revolutionaries that they believed to be part of a widespread conspiracy to assassinate police officers, high government officials, and suspected members of their own organizations.[110] Among high-level British officials of the Government of India, the rise in violence in the early 1920s led legislators to call for new legal measures to contain the threat posed by Bengali terrorists, and to admit that the Bengal Provincial Congress now supported the terrorist cause.

On 25th October 1924, the governor-general of Bengal, Lord Reading, enacted the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance in order to give the Bengal government special powers for arresting and detaining revolutionaries and terrorists. In 1925, a Supplementary Act was added to the ordinance.[111] The Bengal government and the viceroy of the Government of India wanted to codify the powers of these two acts in permanent legislation. The London-based India Office

[107] Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 145.
[108] Ibid., 146.
[109] Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 8.
[110] Ibid., 10.
[111] After the Supplementary Act was passed in 1925, the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance became known as the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act.

opposed these measures, however, and the Cabinet hesitated to extend "special powers" to the Bengal government or the Government of India to deal with the "conspiracies of violence."[112] While the India Office and Cabinet assented to allowing the Government of India to assume powers to search for arms and explosives, government officials in London worried that the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance suggested that the British government was not willing to cooperate with Indian political parties for Indian self-government.

Lord Oliver in particular wanted to avoid the accusation that the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925 was an attempt to suppress the *Swaraj* political party. The Cabinet believed that the Bengali Government, and the Government of India to a lesser degree, had a "constant tendency to identify not only the Swarajist political Party, but the whole of the progressive movement in India with the Bengali terrorist organisations and their conspiracies."[113] The Cabinet was also aware of the vehement opposition among Indians towards the set of ordinances. By the end of November 1924, there had been over a hundred public meetings to protest the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance and numerous resolutions passed which condemned the ordinance as "repressive and calculated to stifle legitimate political activities." [114]

In January 1925, the Bengal government introduced a bill in the Bengal Legislative Council to make the Criminal Law Amendment Act permanent legislation. The Legislative Council, however, refused to introduce the bill, and the Bengal Provincial Council voted to repeal the Criminal Law Amendment Act.[115] The decision of the Legislative Council to oppose the anti-terrorism legislation led the governor-general to enact the Criminal Law Amendment Act through a special ordinance that allowed for the measures to remain in force for five years.

[112] Memorandum by the secretary of state for India, September 1924, TNA, CAB/24/168.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Hale, *Political Trouble in India,* 11-12.
[115] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 280.

The powers conferred by this act, however, were not as wide or far-reaching as those under the Defense of India Act because defendants could appeal their sentences to the High Court, a provision not allowed for under the wartime legislation.[116]

Nevertheless, the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance and the Supplementary Act represented unprecedented legislation, as the government enacted these laws during peacetime rather than wartime. The measures allowed the government to detain and arrest alleged terrorists without warrant or trial, to maintain surveillance, and to try cases under a closed Special Tribunal rather than a public jury trial. The government intended for the ordinances to suppress the terrorist campaign by allowing local police and law enforcement officials to target minor figures in the revolutionary movement. By arresting members of the rank-and-file, the government and police believed they could undermine further reproduction of Bengali terrorist cells.[117] Terrorist crime decreased significantly following the enactment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act in 1924-25. Between October 1924 and the end of 1928 only one murder by terrorists occurred. The police and Bengal government strongly believed that the legislation deterred political violence and argued for the act to remain in force.[118]

Conclusion

In 1919, the Government of India faced many dangers, including war with Afghanistan and internal unrest. Protests erupted in the Punjab, the Khilafat movement expanded, and revolutionary terrorism revived in Bengal. British officials turned to their intelligence agencies to monitor these threats. Intelligence analysts successfully infiltrated revolutionary groups and provided officials with information regarding the expansion of pan-Islam and international

[116] Hale, *Political Trouble in India,* 11-12.
[117] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 279.
[118] Hale, *Political Trouble in India,* 11; Memorandum by the secretary of state for India, 1933, Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, L/P&J/12/397, BL.

communism. Intelligence reports painted a picture of escalating danger with the Communist International moving funds, guns, and foreign fighters to Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Persia, and Iraq for rapid deployment into India. The communist cells in these countries also disseminated propaganda and weapons to India revolutionaries and encouraged the nationalist movement to overthrow the British Raj.

Heavily influenced by intelligence reports, the British counter-terrorism strategy in India depended on three parts: arms controls, passport restrictions, and domestic anti-terrorism legislation. However, as colonial administrators learned with the Rowlatt Act, domestic anti-terrorism legislation that appeared repressive to Indian and London politicians was scrutinized and quickly revoked. As a result, local governments relied on special powers and temporary emergency legislation. These five-year ordinances worked when in place, but they also allowed terrorist organizations to regroup in other provinces and return once the emergency powers expired. The intelligence assessments of IPI and reports of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest also influenced the Government of India to advocate arms controls, enhanced policing at European ports and on ships, and stricter passport regulations.

Although London officials and police agencies had not always followed the policy or police recommendations of the IDCEU, its closure in 1927 ensured a greater divide between London and Delhi. While the Government of India continued to prioritize anti-terrorism measures, London focused on moderating the mainstream Indian nationalist movement. The inter-departmental committee had been intended to pool information regarding the various terrorist threats facing the British Empire and to allow different offices to collaboratively design an imperial counter-terrorism strategy. After it was disbanded, information sharing between Delhi and London decreased and their security prescriptions moved further apart.

Chapter 3: The USA and the Communist Threat, 1919-1927

On March 1919, the Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin created the Third Communist International, or Comintern, to help the nascent communist parties of the world unite and overthrow the capitalist system. Headquartered in Moscow, the Communist International was in theory a transnational organization comprised of likeminded revolutionaries. In practice, the Soviet party dominated the organization and the Comintern advanced Soviet foreign policy objectives. Radicals in the United States responded to Lenin's call for world revolution by organizing two communist parties in September 1919. Both the Communist Party of America, led by Charles Ruthenberg, and the rival Communist Labor Party, led by John Reed and Benjamin Gitlow, vied for Moscow's attention and advocated the overthrow of the American government.[1]

In the United States, 1919 was a year of epidemic unrest. Union strikes, race riots, and political violence gripped the nation. In late April, political terrorists sent bombs through the mail to prominent politicians, judges, and state officials. Ultranationalist groups like the American Protective League, veteran organizations, and business associations responded by attacking May Day celebrations. State authorities passed sedition laws, banned red flags, and used criminal anarchy laws to arrest writers espousing violence. On June 2, bombs exploded in eight cities, including at the house of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. Palmer declared war on the radicals and warned of an imminent revolutionary uprising. He organized a special section in the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation, the Radical Division, headed by the young

[1] Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov, eds., *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 5, 7, 21-22; Fridrikh I. Firsov, Harvey Klehr, and John Earl Haynes, eds., *Secret Cables of the Comintern, 1933-43* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 7-8; See also Jon Jacobson, *When the Soviet Union Entered World Politics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994); Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism* (London: The Bodley Head, 2009); David Priestland, *The Red Flag: A History of Communism* (New York: Grove Press, 2009); Silvio Pons, *The Global Revolution: A History of International Communism, 1917-1991*, trans. Allan Cameron (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

and ambitious lawyer, J. Edgar Hoover. The Justice Department launched two dragnet raids in November and December 1919, arresting between 5,000 and 10,000 suspected subversives and deporting hundreds. Palmer and his agents relied on the deportation provisions of U.S. immigration law first established in 1903 after the assassination of President William McKinley by a self-proclaimed anarchist. Congress expanded and broadened the law over the 1900s. By 1918, federal immigration legislation enabled the government to expel aliens who advocated the overthrow of government with force or violence, or who belonged to organizations associated with these views.[2] As with anarchist terrorism in the early 1900s, the United States government employed exclusionary immigration legislation as a form of counter-terrorism to detain revolutionary ideologies at the border.

The mass arrests and deportations of the Red Scare convinced the new communist parties to go underground. Leaders changed their names and residences, members met in secret locations in small groups, and party papers were printed secretly. The communist parties undertook these initiatives to safeguard foreign born communists from deportation and to prepare for a revolutionary uprising. In 1921, the Communist International pressured the two American parties to merge, renaming the organization the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) in 1929, and demanded that American communists organize an aboveground party apparatus, while still maintaining a covert arm. The Soviet Union continued to secretly fund the American communist party, while the CPUSA's secret wing assisted Soviet espionage operations.[3]

---

[2] Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919-1943* (Copenhagen: University of Cophenhagen Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000), 26-27; Melvyn Leffler, *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 14-15.

[3] Klehr, Haynes, and Firsov, eds., *The Secret World of American Communism*, 6-7, 17-19. The release of Soviet Comintern records in the 1990s underscored the close relationship between the CPUSA and Communist International. This relationship had long been a source of debate. The orthodox view of the CPUSA as subordinate to the Comintern emerged in the immediate postwar years of the Second World War. Revisionists then challenged

During the Red Scare, the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation (BI), known later as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), oversaw political surveillance operations, working with the Military Intelligence Division (MID) of the War Department's General Staff and the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), the intelligence arm of the U.S. Navy.[4] By 1921, the Army had curtailed its security and counterespionage components, and the Navy had eliminated its Negative Intelligence Branch. Three years later corruption scandals led to a major shakeup at the Justice Department. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge appointed Harlan Fiske Stone as his attorney general and tasked him with cleaning up the Bureau of Investigation. Stone shut down the Radical Division because of its rampant wiretapping and warrantless arrests during the Red Scare and appointed a new acting director, J. Edgar Hoover. Stone demanded that the BI stop conducting surveillance on American citizens and aliens because of their race, ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, affiliations, or activities.[5] In the 1920s, domestic and foreign intelligence-gathering shifted to the Department of State.

Two offices in the Department of State oversaw the collection, analysis, and interpretation of intelligence relating to the Soviet Union and the Communist International. The first, the Office of the Under-Secretary of State, was a continuation of the wartime Office of the Counselor. During the war, Frank L. Polk had headed the office, serving as State's chief intelligence coordinator and liaising with the British and French embassies to run counterintelligence operations. Polk desired to institutionalize intelligence as a major

---

this view by emphasizing domestic aspects of the American Communist movement over the influence of the Comintern. Most recently, "neo-orthodox" scholars have reasserted the importance of the Comintern and cite records in Russian archives to support their case. See Hugh Wilford, "The Communist International and the American Communist Party," in *International Communism and the Communist International 1919-1943*, eds. Tim Rees and Andre Thorpe (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1998), 225.

[4] Schmidt, *Red Scare*, 18; Raymond J. Batvinis, *The Origins of FBI Counterintelligence* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 29-39.

[5] Batvinis, *The Origins of FBI Counterintelligence*, 43-44; G.J.A. O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery: A History of U.S. Intelligence, Espionage, and Covert Action from the American Revolution to the CIA* (New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991), 326-327; Schmidt, *Red Scare*, 18.

responsibility of the under-secretary after the war. He created a special unit, known as U-1, to carry on intelligence coordination and foreign liaison work. In addition, the State Department created the Office of the Chief Special Agent to help the Office of the Under-Secretary of State run investigation cases. Leland Harrison served as the diplomatic secretary for both offices. In this position, he oversaw investigations of organizations and individuals suspected of subversive activity in the United States and abroad. Harrison also acquired British and German codes for the Black Chamber, a cryptographic unit headed by Herbert Yardley that Polk had developed with the Military Intelligence Division during the war. [6]

In 1920, Post ended his brief tenure as under-secretary of state and returned to private legal practice. The Office of the Under-Secretary of State, staffed by a cohort of men who had attended Ivy League schools and worked together in the State Department fighting German subversion and espionage during the First World War, continued to collect foreign and domestic intelligence for another seven years. In June 1927, Secretary of State Frank Kellogg abolished U-1 and the Office of the Chief Special Agent.[7] Kellogg divided up the intelligence responsibilities and assigned them to State's individual geographic area divisions, an arrangement that suited the Division of Eastern European Affairs.[8]

In addition to the Office of the Under-Secretary of State and Chief Special Agent, the Division of Eastern European Affairs and its longstanding bureau chief, Robert Kelley, intercepted and analyzed Moscow's instructions to the communist parties of the world. The majority of information regarding the Communist International derived from the U.S. legation at

[6] Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage: From Secret Service to CIA* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 42; Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Cloak and Dollar: A History of American Secret Intelligence*, 2nd ed (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 60-63; O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery*, 336.
[7] Letters sent by the U.S. embassy in London to the Office of the Counselor, 1924-1928, Department of State Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Record Group (RG) 59, Archives II, U.S. National Archives (hereinafter NARA), College, Park, MD, USA; Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage*, 128-29.
[8] O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery*, 336.

Riga, Latvia. The American mission at Riga served as the eyes and ears for spying on Soviet Russia and the Communist International before the establishment of the U.S. embassy in Moscow in 1934.[9] The division remained in operation until 1937 when Secretary of State Cordell Hull merged the Division of Eastern European Affairs with the Division of Western European Affairs. Protesting the consolidation, the American diplomat, William Bullitt, Jr. wrote Hull that the "division built up by Kelley in our Department of State was by far the most efficient agency in any government of the appraisal of the activities of the Third International, to say nothing of the situation within the Soviet Union."[10] The under-secretary of state, Sumner Welles, however, abolished the Division of Eastern European Affairs and packed Kelley off to Ankara, Turkey.[11]

After the Second World War, both scholars and practitioners largely dismissed the State Department's intelligence operations as incompetent and amateurish. General George C. Marshall, for example, remarked that "prior to World War II, our foreign intelligence was little more than what a military attaché could learn at dinner, more or less over the coffee cups."[12] However, the work of the Office of the Under-Secretary of State paints another picture. Historians of American intelligence, like Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, have highlighted the close

[9] The work of the Division of Eastern European Affairs is better known than the Office of the Under-Secretary of State and Chief Special Agent because of the staunch anticommunism of Robert Kelley and his influence on young foreign service officers and future cold warriors like George Kennan and Charles Bohlen. Many officials in the Division of East European also published memoirs about their experiences working with Kelley and serving in Riga and Moscow. See, for example, Joseph Davies, *Mission to Moscow* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1941); George Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967); Charles Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929-1969* (New York: Norton, 1973); George Baer, ed., *A Question of Trust: The Origins of U.S.-Soviet Diplomatic Relations: The Memoirs of Loy W. Henderson* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1986). See also Natalie Grant, "The Russian Section: A Window on the Soviet Union," *Diplomatic History* 2 (1978); Hugh De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence: The American Foreign Service, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War, 1933-1947* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979); Thomas Troy, "'Ah, sweet intrigue!' Or Who Axed State's Prewar Soviet Division?" *Foreign Intelligence Literary Scene*, vol. 3, no. 5 (1984).

[10] William C. Bullitt to Cordell Hull, July 19, 1937, Reel No. 15, Cordell Hull Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (LC), Washington, D.C., USA.

[11] O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery*, 326-327.

[12] Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage*, 131; Hearings. "Department of Armed Forces," 79th Congress., 1st sess., Senate Committee on Military Affairs, October 18, 1945, Washington, DC., 1945, p. 61 quoted in Harry H. Ransom, *The Intelligence Establishment*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1970), 48; Marshall's remarks were intended to justify the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) by stressing the under preparedness of the American government during the interwar years.

Anglo-American intelligence relationship during the First World War. Before the United States entered the war, British Naval Intelligence provided Edward Bell, the second secretary of the American embassy in London with information about German espionage and subversion, which he passed to Frank Polk and the Office of the Counselor. With the approval of President Woodrow Wilson and Secretary of State Robert Lansing, Polk worked with Sir William Wiseman and the Secret Intelligence Service to run covert operations, including one in Russia using the British writer W. Somerset Maugham.[13] Yet, the role of U-1 after the First World War remains "obscure."[14]

This chapter carries the story forward using the records and correspondence of Boylston Beal, a Boston lawyer and Harvard graduate, who worked at the American embassy in London and supplied U-1 with information from British intelligence regarding the Communist International and the Soviet government. Historians have generally stressed the different experiences and domestic responses of the British and Americans to the Bolshevik revolution.[15] However, as this chapter reveals, American and British policy elites and intelligence agencies viewed the Communist International as a common enemy that merited intelligence-sharing, even as the two countries competed in a naval buildup and disagreed in other areas of foreign policy. Given the level of anti-British sentiment in the United States after the war, which the historian John Moser argues helped to defeat the Treaty of Versailles in the Senate, this relationship was

[13] O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery*, 241-263; Jeffreys-Jones, *Cloak and Dollar*, 60-80. Descriptions of German subversion and espionage in the United States, along with British intelligence operations, may be found in Barbara Tuchman, *The Zimmermann Telegram* (New York: Viking, 1958) and W.B. Fowler, *British-American Relations, 1917-1918: The Role of Sir William Wiseman* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1969). In 1928, W. Somerset Maugham published *Ashenden: The British Agent*, a series of fictional short stories based on his spy days in Russia when he attempted to help the Russian Provisional Government defeat the Bolsheviks.

[14] O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery*, 336.

[15] See Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 259-294.

extraordinary and reflected close personal relationships established during the war.[16] This chapter argues that the Department of State's access to British intelligence regarding the Communist International provided American officials with a much broader understanding of communism's global reach and helped to entrench a view of the Soviet Union as a state-sponsor of foreign terrorist groups.

Anglo-American information sharing, however, did not develop into a common counter-terrorism policy. The two governments remained divided over British imperialism. The U.S. Congress and American public largely supported an independent Ireland, and American liberals including Samuel Gompers' American Federation of Labor and a number of church groups, called for Indian independence.[17] Despite highlighting Soviet assistance to revolutionary anti-colonial movements, British intelligence services failed to convince the State Department that Irish and Indian diaspora groups residing in the United States represented terrorist organizations.

The closure of U-1 in the Office of the Under-Secretary of State shifted the accumulation and interpretation of political intelligence to the Division of Eastern European Affairs. The division remained opposed to recognizing the Soviet Union because of the USSR's support of foreign terrorist groups and interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. While some information sharing with British security services and attachés continued, anti-communism coordination between the two governments declined and both London and Washington gravitated towards more nationalized security policies in the late 1920s and 1930s.

---

[16] John Moser, *Twisting the Lion's Tail: Anglophobia in the United States, 1921-48* (London: MacMillan, 1999), 12; David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance 1937-41: A Study in Competitive Co-operation* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 1-3; 7-36. Reynolds's introduction and first chapter provide an overview of the transatlantic rivalry that marked the interwar years, as the British and Americans disagreed about grand strategy, economic policy, and decolonization.

[17] Moser, *Twisting the Lion's Tail,* 21-23. The historian Alan Dawley also notes that American progressives like Jane Addams condemned U.S. occupations in Central America and the Caribbean as imperialistic. See Dawley, *Changing the World,* 301.

The Red Scare

The Red Scare was a short, but intense period of antiradicalism in American history that lasted from the spring of 1919 until May Day 1920. Government and vigilante violence against "Reds," an umbrella term for any subversive group, reflected the "100 per cent Americanism" of the war years when the Committee on Public Information had preached patriotism and the government-sponsored American Protective League had alerted Americans to the dangers of sabotage and sedition. The federal government, in turn, ensured loyalty by enacting extensive sedition and espionage legislation, and by broadening immigration law in October 1918 to allow the government to exclude and deport aliens who were anarchists or believed in the violent overthrow of the American government. After the Bolsheviks signed a separate peace with Germany and Bolshevik-inspired revolutions erupted in central and east Europe, communism emerged as the great threat facing the nation. In March 1919, the Bolsheviks created the Third International to carry the revolution forward, and by September 1919 two domestic communists groups inside the United States raised the red banner. As strikes, riots, and bombs exploded across the nation, government officials and patriotic groups mobilized to defeat the revolutionary enemy within and to stamp out radicalism. [18]

A series of spectacular bombings ushered in the Red Scare. In April 1919, a mail bomb exploded in the house of Georgia senator Thomas Hardwick, co-author of the Immigration Act of 1918, injuring his maid and wife. Federal postal authorities subsequently found 36 package bombs intended for prominent politicians, judges, and industrialists. New York police officials immediately claimed that an IWW-Bolshevik plot was behind the attack. Two months later, on June 2, 1919, a coordinated attack rocked eight American cities, as bombs exploded

[18] Robert Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), 12-17; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 204.

simultaneously in New York, Boston, Newtonville (Massachusetts), Philadelphia, Paterson, Washington, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh. Identical fliers, printed on pink paper, and signed "The Anarchist Fighters," littered the ground of bomb sites. The most "politically powerful" of the bombs exploded in Washington, DC, killing the bomber and blowing away the front part of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer's R Street Northwest townhouse. Palmer and his family escaped unhurt, but deeply shaken.[19]

In the wake of the attacks, a frightened Congress appropriated $500,000 to the Bureau of Investigation (BI), forerunner to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to deal with the "terrorist menace." Palmer went to work reorganizing the Justice Department to catch the bombers and to stomp out foreign left-wing groups. The war provided him with a reservoir of men experienced in ferreting out domestic enemies. Palmer added a new assistant attorney general, Francis P. Garvan, a former chief investigator of the Alien Property Bureau, and appointed William J. Flynn, a famous detective and former Secret Service chief, as director of the Bureau of Investigation. In mid-June, a twenty-four year old lawyer, J. Edgar Hoover, took over the General Intelligence Division (GID), better known as the Radical Division, after his job as an attorney in the Alien Enemy Registration Section had been abolished.[20]

The General Intelligence Division oversaw investigations of radicals and collected all available information concerning subversive groups. Hoover set up an index file of over 200,000 cards on radical leaders, publications, and organizations. The GID combed through 625 radical newspapers, including 251 "ultra-radical" publications. Hoover expanded his purview to the

[19] Stanley Coen, *A. Mitchell Palmer: Politician* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 204; Schmidt, *Red Scare*, 26; Charles McCormick, *Seeing Reds: Federal Surveillance of Radicals in the Pittsburgh Mill District, 1917-1921* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 102.
[20] McCormick, *Seeing Reds*, 103, 110, 148; Edwin Hoyt, *The Palmer Raids, 1919-1920: An Attempt To Suppress Dissent* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1963), 37; Curt Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 79; Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer*, 207.

study of the international communist movement, reading Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, and other socialist and communist authors. The GID reported to Garvin and Palmer and was responsible for tracking and gauging the strength of American radical organizations.[21] Although the Radical Division had been created to solve the bomb cases, Hoover immediately established close ties with the Department of Labor. The majority of members of American communist and anarchist organizations were foreign-born, about 90 percent, from southern and central Europe. Hoover instructed his Washington staff of thirty and about sixty special agents in the field to focus on deportation cases.[22]

Exclusionary immigration legislation offered a way for the Justice Department to deport menacing foreigners, but Hoover needed the assistance of the Department of Labor.[23] The Department of Labor's Bureau of Immigration, in turn, lacked the manpower for large-scale investigations. In the arrangement that emerged, the Immigration Bureau provided the warrants and special funds, while the BI investigated, captured, and conducted the preliminary questioning of alien radicals. Then immigration officials completed the deportation proceedings.[24] The deportation cases turned on the Immigration Act of 1918. This law made membership in an anarchist organization a deportable offense. Anarchism was defined as advocating the overthrow of government by force and violence. In 1920, Congress broadened the law to include possession of radical literature or financial contributions toward anarchist organizations. The deportation provisions of immigration law, however, were under the sole

[21] Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer*, 207; Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 166-68.
[22] Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer*, 217; Higham, *Strangers in the Land,* 227.
[23] Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer*, 223.
[24] McCormick, *Seeing Reds*, 110, 148; J.E. Hoover, Special Assistant to the Attorney General to Anthony Caminetti, Commissioner-General of Immigration, October 24, 1919; Anthony Caminetti, Commissioner-General of Immigration to J.E. Hoover, Special Assistant to the Attorney General, October 31, 1919, RG 85, Box 2803, Archives I, NARA.

jurisdiction of the Labor Department's Immigration Bureau. The Justice Department had no legal basis for its involvement in the so-called Palmer Raids of November 1919 and January 1920.[25]

On November 7, 1919 federal agents arrested hundreds of Russian immigrants connected to the Union of Russian Workers. Deportation hearings quickly followed, and on December 21, 1919, the USS *Buford*, nicknamed the "Soviet Arc," left New York harbor carrying 249 alien residents, including Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman. Attorney General Palmer defended the deportations of Goldman and Berkman, calling them "terrorists at heart" who "would not hesitate to resort to force and violence."[26] The Justice Department next turned to its primary target among radical groups – the Communist and the Communist Labor parties. On January 2, 1920 the Justice Department launched a second dragnet. Agents raided homes and offices of alleged communists in 33 cities, arresting between 5,000 and 10,000. Meanwhile, Palmer lobbied Congress for the passage of peacetime sedition bill and the New York Senate refused to sit five duly elected socialist senators.[27]

Until the spring of 1920, the Bureau of Immigration's top administrators went along with the Justice Department. With Secretary William Wilson's blessing, acting secretary of labor, Louis Post, voided thousands of deportation warrants against communist alien radicals arrested in January. Palmer had Post arraigned on impeachment charges for hindering the deportation cases. However, a major intelligence failure by the Radical Division helped to discredit Palmer as an expert on radicalism and turned the tide against the Red Scare.

---

[25] E.P. Hutchinson, *Legislative History of American Immigration Policy, 1798-1965* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 444-45; Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer*, 218.
[26] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Rules, "Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer on Charges Made Against the Department of Justice by Louis F. Post and Others, on June 1, 1920," *Investigation of Charges Against the Department of Justice* (66th Cong., 2d Sess., 1920), 10.
[27] Schmidt, *Red Scare*, 26-27; U.S. Congress, House Committee on Rules, *Hearings on H.Res. 522, Investigation of the Administration of Louis F. Post, Assistant Secretary of Labor, in the Matter of the Deportation of Aliens* (66th Cong., 2d. Sess., 1920), 35.

In the spring of 1920, the Radical Division issued alarming warnings about impending general strikes, assassinations, and bombings scheduled for May 1, 1920. Major cities mobilized their police forces for the emergency. The New York police of 11,000 remained on duty for the whole night with extra security forces stationed outside public buildings and the homes of public officials. In Boston, the police posted several automobiles armed with machine guns around the city. May Day came and went without incident. "No bombs, no riots, no assassinations. Not even a noisy meeting."[28] On May 28, 1920, members of the National Popular Government League, aided by Post's lawyer Jackson H. Ralston, published *To the American People: Report Upon the Illegal Practices of the United States Department of Justice*. Signed by twelve respected legal professionals, the sixty-seven page report charged the Justice Department with conducting arrests and searches without warrants, holding aliens incommunicado, forging evidence, using agent provocateurs and distributing political propaganda.[29]

Just as fears about the red menace began to fade, the worst terrorist attack in American history until the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 ripped through downtown Manhattan. On September 16, 1920, a man drove a wagon filled with a large dynamite bomb, equipped with a timer, and packed with cast-iron slugs to the corner of Wall and Broad Streets in the financial center of New York. As the bells of Trinity Church chimed the noon hour, the bomb exploded, striking a lunchtime crowd and killing thirty-eight people and wounding hundreds more. Property damage exceeded $2 million. An official investigation lasted three years, but like the 1919 bombing cases produced no convictions.[30] While Burns, head of the Bureau of Investigation, and Hoover believed that a Soviet or American communist plot was behind the

[28] McCormick, *Seeing Reds*, 148-49, 176; Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer*, 235.
[29] McCormick, *Seeing Reds*, 176; Kenneth Ackerman, *Young J. Edgar: Hoover, the Red Scare, and the Assault on Civil Liberties* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2007), 355; Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer*, 238-39.
[30] Beverly Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded: The Story of America in its First Age of Terror* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1; Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti*, 205-06.

bombing, later historians have argued that Mario Buda, an anarchist follower of Luigi Galleani and a close friend of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti carried out the attack. Galleani, an immigrant from Italy, had built up a small group of militant anarchists, but in January 1919 immigration authorities deported him from the United States.

As he left, Galleani urged his followers to seek revenge against the federal government. Revolutionaries from his group most likely sent the mail package bombs of April 1919 and carried out the dynamite attacks of June 1919. Buda's retaliatory bombing of Wall Street foreshadowed a number of domestic and foreign bombings that occurred to protest the trial and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, two young Italian immigrants controversially charged with murder in Massachusetts. Over the 1920s their case and guilty verdict during the Red Scare, seemingly a conviction of political beliefs rather than evidence, emerged as a cause célèbre for the international left.[31]

By spring 1920, the main constituents that had fostered the Red Scare no longer supported its continuation. The Wall Street bombing did not reinvigorate government-directed antiradicalism. Industrialists turned against the deportations as employers feared that the antiradical campaign would permanently stigmatize alien workers as radicals and lead to immigration restriction, thereby cutting off the flow of cheap labor. Press outlets, particularly the *New York Times*, feared that Congress would enact a federal sedition law that might be used against them. The media outlets abandoned their premonitions of a revolutionary uprising and began questioning the government's repressive policies.[32]

[31] Richard Bach Jensen, *The Battle against Anarchist Terrorism: An International History, 1878-1934* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 360; Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded*, 207-211; Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti*, 205-06; Moshik Tempkin, *The Sacco-Vanzetti Affair: America on Trial* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
[32] Schmidt, *Red Scare*, 39; Klehr, Haynes, and Firsov, eds., *The Secret World of American Communism*, 7.

From January 19 to March 3, 1921, a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee held hearings into whether the Justice Department had engaged in illegal activities or violated the constitution. Bipartisan strife hindered a resolution and in January 1923 the Senate Judiciary Committee washed its hands of the matter. Only in 1924 on the heels of extensive corruption charges made against the Warren Harding administration did Attorney General Harlan Fiske Stone order the Bureau of Investigation to end its unrestrained political surveillance.[33] In May 1924, Attorney General Stone appointed Hoover as acting director of the Bureau of Investigation. Stone made it clear that the Bureau of Investigation would be completely "divorced from the vagaries of political influence."[34] He announced a series of reforms that included prohibiting wiretaps, dissolving the GID, ending the Bureau's ties with private detective agencies, and stopping the dissemination of antiradical propaganda. These changes were intended to regulate the Bureau's unregulated domestic intelligence investigations and refurbish the Justice Department's reputation after the Teapot Dome scandal.[35]

After the Red Scare, political surveillance shifted to the Department of State where officials monitored the political activities of Americans abroad and intercepted letters to and from foreign and domestic radical organizations. By the end of 1920, most countries in the world had a communist party. While the Comintern publicized many of its activities, the deliberations of its leading bodies, including the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI), remained secret. In particular, the organization sought to obscure the connections

[33] Schmidt, *Red Scare*, 314-324.
[34] The Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, History, 1933-35, Box 191, Papers of Homer S. Cummings (HSC), Special Collections Department, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA; Memorandum for the Attorney General, June 23, 1933, Box 174, HSC.
[35] Kenneth O'Reilly, *Hoover and the Un-Americans: The FBI, HUA, and the Red Menace* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 13-23. O'Reilly maintains that the FBI continued to collect political intelligence after 1924, but that assistance to the Herbert Hoover White House did not begin until November 1929. In May 1938, the House of Representatives established a Special Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities which revived the FBI's surveillance machinery and allowed the Bureau to disseminate political information acquired through domestic intelligence investigations.

between the Communist International and domestic communist groups, as the political and financial dependence of the latter on the former might spur charges that the groups were tools of Moscow and unpatriotic.[36]

By the end of the Red Scare, however, most Americans associated terrorist activity with communists and the radical left. This assumption built off older stereotypes about militant anarchists, Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies), and Russian social revolutionaries, but was given new life with the creation of the Communist International and the terror bombings of 1919-1920. Even after the arrests and deportations of the Red Scare the federal government continued to worry about Soviet intrigue and interference at home and abroad. Authorities turned to immigration law to safeguard the homeland and enhanced security capabilities abroad to monitor the threat. The immigration acts of 1921 and 1924 for the first time put a cap on the number of foreigners from outside the Western Hemisphere allowed to settle in the United States. Congress intended the national origins quotas of the 1921 and 1924 laws to stabilize America's ethnic composition and to limit immigration from southern and eastern Europe. This legislation allowed Britain and Germany to keep sending immigrants, while keeping out alleged Italian anarchists and Russian Bolsheviks and their revolutionary doctrines.[37] The State Department, in turn, increased its surveillance of the Communist International and monitored the organization's activities from its missions abroad. Foreign officers in Riga and London dispatched information back to Washington where the Office of the Under-Secretary of State and Division of Eastern European Affairs analyzed and interpreted the intelligence, hardening the

[36] Memorandum for the Attorney General, June 23, 1933, Box 174, HSC; Schmidt, *Red Scare*, 327; Tim Rees and Andrew Thorpe, eds., *International Communism and the Communist International, 1919-43* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1998), 1; Firsov, Klehr, and Haynes, eds., *Secret Cables of the Comintern, 1933-43*, 13, 18.
[37] Heale, *American Anticommunism*, 88; Hutchinson, *Legislative History of American Immigration Policy*, 211.

department's stance against the Soviet regime because of its sponsorship of foreign terrorist groups.

Dispatches from London

Like the Americans, the British government focused on internal "subversive" threats immediately after the First World War. The main enemy was Bolshevism and Soviet subversion within the United Kingdom and empire. In 1919, the War Cabinet and Home Secretary established a new department, Directorate of Intelligence, for "collecting and dealing with intelligence relating to disturbances (whether arising out of labor troubles or otherwise), seditious meetings and conspiracies, and revolutionary movements both at home and abroad." Basil Thomson, assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan police and head of the Special Branch, was put in charge of the agency. In this position, he issued daily reports on labor unrest and prepared "periodical digests of home and foreign intelligence as to seditious propaganda and revolutionary movements."[38] In addition, Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police and the Security Service (MI5) produced surveys on revolutionary movements in Great Britain, highlighting any indications of foreign support for communist agitators in the United Kingdom. The Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) provided foreign intelligence, while the Cipher School (GC&CS, today known as GCHQ) analyzed intercepted messages from Comintern headquarters in Moscow to clandestine radio stations abroad.[39]

Despite sharing information with the American embassy in London, British intelligence was deeply divided after the war. Bureaucratic infighting reflected fears among MI5 and SIS that

[38] Edward Troup to B.B. Cubitt, April 1919, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereinafter TNA), London, England, WO 32/21382; Edward Troup to Winston Churchill, April 1919, TNA, WO 32/21382.

[39] Christopher Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986), 259; Firsov, Klehr, and Haynes, eds., *Secret Cables of the Comintern, 1933-43*, 20. Signals intelligence collected by GC&CS allowed the security services to identify secret members of the British Communist Party, couriers traveling from Moscow, and the names of British and colonial communists studying at the Lenin School in the USSR.

their organizations would be merged or axed as a cost cutting measure from Whitehall. The Directorate of Intelligence and MI5 especially stepped on each other's toes. Thomson and his agency had responsibility for civil subversion and dealing with domestic revolutionary movements until 1931. After that, responsibility went to Special Branch. MI5 was "only concerned with Communism as it affects the Armed Forces of the Crown." However, Vernon Kell, the longstanding director of MI5, argued that the Security Service's responsibility for military counter-subversion entitled it to monitor civilian pro-Bolshevik movements, as these groups were attempting to subvert the armed forces.[40]

After the First World War, the American and British governments shared information on the deportation proceedings of alleged radicals. In July 1919, the Department of Labor requested to be notified through the British embassy and the Department of State of the details of all cases in which the British government proposed to "deport to this country American citizens connected with the Industrial Workers of the World or with Bolshevist or anarchist propaganda."[41] The Department of Labor also notified the British embassy when U.S. officials deported British subjects for advocating the unlawful destruction of property.[42]

Scotland Yard also provided information on an *ad hoc* basis to the State Department. In September 1920, the police agency informed American officials that Moscow and the Communist International planned to establish their headquarters in Mexico for the dissemination of Bolshevik propaganda throughout North and South America. Scotland Yard reported that a

[40] Keith Jeffrey, *The Secret History of MI6* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2010), 141-145; Christopher Andrew, *The Defense of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 140-42; and *Her Majesty's Secret Service,* 243; Donald Cameron Watt, "British Intelligence and the Coming of the Second World War in Europe," in *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*, ed. Ernest May (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 241-46.
[41] John W. Abercrombie, acting secretary of state to secretary of labor, July 12, 1919, RG 85, Box 2803, Archives I, NARA.
[42] John W. Abercrombie, acting secretary to secretary of state, February 27, 1919, RG 85, Box 2803, Archives I, NARA.

Bolshevik agent was en route to Moscow and that the funds provided by the Soviet Union would be used to ferment a Bolshevik movement on the American continent. [43] The State Department received additional reports that the Mexican government and Communist International endeavored to "undermine American capitalism and to annihilate its influence in Mexico." The Comintern wanted to make Mexico the center of communistic activities for the United States.[44] Reports came from foreign attachés and private individuals connected to companies working in Mexico, especially in the petroleum industry.

The appointment of a Boston lawyer, Boylston Beal, to the American embassy in London reinvigorated American and British information sharing established during the First World War. Beal served first as a secretary of the London Chapter of the Red Cross during and after World War I and then as an attaché in the American embassy. His letters went to the Office of the Under-Secretary of State and the Chief Special Agent. These offices under the direction of Frank Polk and later career diplomats Arthur Lane and Alexander Kirk oversaw the investigations of organizations and individuals in the United States and abroad suspected of subversive activity.[45]

Beal and his contacts in the British government and intelligence agencies shared information on the Communist International, American and British communists, and Soviet counterfeiting operations. However, the close relationship had its limits. Requests from Beal and his "friends" in British intelligence for the State Department to investigate Indian and Irish revolutionaries in the United States met with limited success. British requests for information on Irish and Indian nationalists derived from the First World War when British secret services

[43] Scotland Yard to Special Agent in Charge, September 20, 1920, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency: The Murphy Collection on International Communism, 1917-58, Box 1, Archives II, NARA.
[44] John Dyneley Prince, from Commandant St. Denis, the French Military Attaché in Copenhagen, to secretary of state, December 23, 1924; A.C. Frost, American consul to secretary of state, May 14, 1926, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, The Murphy Collection on International Communism, 1917-58, Box 1, Archives II, NARA.
[45] Office of the Counselor and the Chief Special Agent, 1915-28, RG 59, Archives II, NARA.

operated inside the United States and learned to stress the connections between the German government and these groups. After the war, British intelligence highlighted the Bolshevik connection and worked to enlist U.S. intelligence in monitoring anti-colonial nationalists and determining when revolutionaries were dispatching agents and arms back to India and Ireland.[46] Despite the Anglophile admirations of most American officials in the Office of the Under-Secretary of State, the department did not always acquiesce to violating civil liberties to monitor anti-colonial revolutionaries.

The British found a more receptive audience when they provided information about the Communist International. In the mid-1920s, Beal began providing American officials with information on American citizens traveling in Europe who had contact with anarchists and communists in the United Kingdom, the names of members of the Anglo-American Section of the Comintern, and the addresses of American radicals who received instructions from the Red International Labor Union to carry out Bolshevik propaganda work in the Philippines and in China. He also supplied the State Department with copies of the secret reports prepared by the Home Office, MI5, and Special Branch on revolutionary organizations operating in the United Kingdom.[47] Beal's reports included information that outlined the organization of the Soviet government and the Communist International. He provided the State Department with charts of the Executive Committee of the Third International, the names of American representatives on the Executive Committee, and information on the Society for the Promotion of Cultural Relations with Soviet Russia and its connections to subversive activities.[48]

---

[46] Jeffreys-Jones, *Cloak and Dollar*, 64-68.

[47] Boylston Beal to Norman Armour, April 11, 1924; Boylston Beal to Norman Armour, April 23, 1924; Boylston Beal to Norman Armour, May 21, 1924, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent. Archives II, NARA.

[48] Boylston Beal to Norman Armour, April 1, 1924; Boylston Beal to Norman Armour, April 23, 1924; Frederick P. Hibbard to Arthur Lane, September 29, 1924; Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, July 27, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

British security agencies tailored the information they shared with Beal and by extension the State Department to American interests that coincided with British interests. British intelligence informed the State Department that Lovett Fort Whiteman, an African American activist, would be in Europe to meet with the Communist Party in Great Britain and that he wanted to organize a World Congress of Negro Peoples. Concerned about anti-colonial movements, the police in Britain asked the State Department to keep them apprised of Whiteman's movements.[49] In May 1926, Beal wrote State Department officials that "Our friends tell me that it has come to their knowledge that one Kamal Hamud at the American University, Beirut, Syria, is proposing to place an order with the Communists here for a quantity of literature." He proposed that the State Department warn university authorities, and that following a conversation with the chief of the Near East division, Allen Dulles, on the subject, he was relaying this information to the American consulate in Beirut.[50] Engaged in anti-communist initiatives throughout the Middle East, British intelligence hoped that by sharing this information the Americans would take a more interventionist stance to keep communist propaganda from reaching Syria and disseminating outward.

Beal's letters also stressed events in Latin America because he knew the region was of primary interest to the State Department. He supplied American officials with information on the Chilean government's crackdown on communists and the underground retreat of the Chilean Communist Party.[51] After British authorities raided the All-Russian Co-operative Society (ARCOS) in London, Beal provided the State Department with secret documents found on

[49] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, May 27, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[50] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, May 12, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[51] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, March 31, 1927, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

British communists that included information on Comintern agents operating in South American countries.[52] The intelligence supplied by British police officials came at a price though, as Beal relayed requests from the British for information on American citizens that threatened British interests. In June 1927, Beal told American officials that Ignatius G. Semehiouk, a naturalized American citizen of Russian origin who was a member of the Russian Communist Party, was an "an active and important link in the system of Communist propaganda in Egypt and adjacent countries." Beal wrote that after State Department officials read his attached memorandum then perhaps they would have "enough proof of this man's activities to justify your going into the matter further."[53] Beal argued that security concerns justified the State Department's spying on an American citizen and providing that information to a foreign government.

The British police also stressed the destabilizing effects of Soviet counterfeiting and asked for American assistance in shutting down the illegal presses. In October 1925, Beal wrote the State Department that Moscow was forging American, Canadian and British bank notes.[54] After British intelligence learned that an international bank in Shanghai owned by the National City Bank of New York was receiving Soviet funds, Beal asked the State Department to obtain copies of suspected accounts from the bank's head office in New York. The information, he argued, would be of interest to both the Americans and British and provide "definite proof of Bolshevik fomentation of the disorders" that "our respective authorities" in China could use to their advantage.[55] London officials also asked the State Department for technical advice regarding counterfeiting. American embassy officials in London sent the State Department a $20

[52] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, June 18, 1927, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[53] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, June 23, 1927, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[54] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, October 28, 1925, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[55] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, October 10, 1925, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

bill to determine if it was a forgery. The banknote was part of a bundle of 1,000 notes that British police believed were forged by a continental agency.[56] Anglo-American cooperation on suppressing counterfeiting against Soviet forgery culminated in a 1929 Geneva conference. The conference resulted in a League of Nations treaty, the International Convention for the Suppression of Counterfeiting Currency, which entered into force on February 22, 1931, and remains in place. Both the United States and United Kingdom signed the treaty, but the government of the United Kingdom did not ratify the convention until on July 28, 1959. The United States government has yet to ratify.[57]

Anglo-American information sharing also had its limits. Since the First World War, British and American officials had disagreed over the activities of Irish revolutionaries in the United States and the refuge given to militant Irish nationalists remained a point of tension. In March 1926, Beal wrote the State Department that one of his most prominent friends had called on him to tell him that British intelligence felt that the center of Irish disaffection against the Free State Government was shifting to the United States. Beal wrote "My friend told me that he felt there were schemes on foot in the United States for giving help and assistance to those in Ireland who were unfavorable to the present Free State by either raising money for that purpose or by sending arms and ammunition to Ireland." Beal emphasized that communist influence was escalating Irish disaffection because he felt that the State Department would only supply information on Irish groups in the United States who acted under the "order of the 'Reds' and were plotting for the overthrow of established government in Ireland and elsewhere."[58]

[56] F.A. Sterling to Alexander Kirk, September 8, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[57] "International Convention for the Suppression of Counterfeiting Currency," United Nations Treaty Collection, see https://treaties.un.org/pages/LONViewDetails.aspx?src=LON&id=554&chapter=30&clang=_en
[58] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, March 25, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

More commonly, British officials asked for information on Indian groups in the United States that they believed financed and supported anti-colonial terrorists. During the First World War, British intelligence had stressed the German sympathies and contacts of Indian revolutionaries in the United States, particularly the leaders of the Ghadr ("Mutiny") party. In May 1918, a federal jury in San Francisco convicted twenty-nine members of the Ghadr party for conspiring to foment revolution in India in violation of U.S. neutrality. The "Hindu conspiracy" trial resulted in prison sentences for most of the defendants. The government, however, did not arrest Indian revolutionaries who steered clear of German connections and rejected revolutionary methods.[59]

After the war, the British stressed the communist affiliations of Indian nationalists and Beal kept U.S. officials informed about communism's encroachment in India and the activities of Indian revolutionaries in the United States.[60] In 1924, Beal wrote of a case in which Indians in Mexico were transmitting funds through the United State to India, and relayed a request from "our friends" to have the State Department quietly ascertain how much money had been moved to India.[61] In addition, Beal funneled informational requests from the British police about Indian revolutionaries who traveled or resided in the United States and American organizations such as the Indo-American Information Bureau and the National League of India that supported "Indian extremists."[62] In May 1925, he asked Arthur Lane at the State Department to conduct a background search on an American citizen, Evelyn Roy, the wife of the Indian revolutionary

[59] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 85.
[60] Boylston Beal to Norman Armour, April 29, 1924, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[61] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, August 5, 1924, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[62] Frederick Hibbard to Arthur Lane, October 3, 1924; Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, January 12, 1925; Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, January 31, 1925; Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, February 20, 1925; Frederick P. Hibbard to Arthur Lane, October 3, 1925, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

M.N. Roy. Beal wrote that Roy used a Mexican passport, promoted anti-British and pro-communist publications, and financially supported her husband, a member of the Executive of the Third International. Additionally, Roy subsidized a literary salon in France, the "Comité pro-Hindu," whose members strongly criticized the deportation of communists from India and the policies of French colonial authorities in India.[63]

Beal also provided descriptions of revolvers which were "irregularly imported into India" and which "got into the hands of Bengal revolutionists." Beal told Lane that "Our friends would be most grateful if any inquiry might be made of the manufacturers of these revolvers, as to the hands through which they passed until they left America. Will you please see if you can let have something for their information."[64] Lane disagreed with using the State Department to conduct investigations of Indian revolutionaries in the United States, and told Beal that this type of work fell outside the State Department's province.[65] In January 1926, Beal wrote his new contact at the State Department, Alexander Kirk, to ask for information on an Indian in California and remarked that "I remember having a talk with Arthur Lane about these East Indians in America and his telling me that the feeling was that he could not go too far on Indian lines. Still I cannot help feeling that there are strong indications of Bolshevik influence in India, and I feel sure that, if it seemed right and proper to send information from time to time (I rather think that they appreciate our feeling and so very seldom ask for information), it would be appreciated."[66]

Occasionally the close relationship between Beal and British intelligence caused the State Department trouble, as when authorities in India kept two American women under surveillance

[63] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, May 29, 1925, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[64] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, September 17, 1925, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[65] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, June 13, 1925, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[66] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, January 11, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

for their alleged connections to Indian revolutionaries and searched their belongings on departure. After this incident, Lane wrote Beal that "under the circumstances you may wish to consider the advisability of asking your friends to use great caution in investigating the activities of and keeping under surveillance American citizens abroad. Otherwise, as in the present case, unpleasant reactions are bound to ensure and we will have no end of difficulty in getting ourselves out of hot water." Lane also cautioned that if "any publicity comes of this case it will not help the well-known cause of Anglo-American relations."[67]

Beal similarly relayed information from the State Department to British officials and law enforcement. He provided British intelligence with copies of the Senate's hearings on the Soviet Union and additional notes from the Committee on Foreign Relations.[68] He also took up the matter of a contract entered into by the Canadian Government for the sale of Lee, Enfield rifles at Kingston, Ontario, that were to be shipped to St. Johns or Halifax, and then to Russia and Bulgaria. Beal told Lane that he took up the matter "with my friends, impressing on them the extreme secrecy of the matter and the delicacy of the situation" and cautioned that if they approached the Canadian government directly that "the source of their information be kept absolutely secret."[69]

In March 1926, Captain Guy M. Liddell of Special Branch and later MI5, "one of the cleverest and most intelligent," of Beal's friends planned to travel to the United States for his honeymoon and wanted to visit Washington, DC. Beal wrote that Liddell desired to meet "some of the men in the Department who are interested in the same sort of work in which he is

[67] Arthur Lane to Boylston Beal, May 5, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[68] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, June 3, 1924, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[69] Boylston Beal to Arthur Lane, November 13, 1924, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

engaged." In particular, Liddell wanted to discuss a secret report prepared by Special Branch on the Russian Trade Delegation and Revolutionary Organizations in the United Kingdom, and the use of sailors to transmit revolutionary material between European and American ports.[70]

As British and American officials learned, revolutionaries in the United States and United Kingdom also coordinated their activities. The I.W.W. headquarters in Chicago kept in touch with the Independent Labor Party in the United Kingdom and held joint protests over the arrest and deportation of individuals for political offenses.[71] The case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Italian immigrants and anarchists, found guilty of murdering a paymaster and his guard during a robbery of a shoe factory in South Braintree, Massachusetts produced a large outcry in the United Kingdom. The rejection of the men's appeals sparked further protests in the summer of 1927, as many in Britain wrote and visited the American embassy in London to dispute the impending execution of the two men. In May 1927, the Department of State wrote the American embassy in London to be vigilant in view of the threats of violence against American missions, including a recent attempt to blow up the embassy at Buenos Aries and allegations that bombs were sent to U.S. embassies at Montevideo and Berne.[72] Protests against the Sacco and Vanzetti case and execution led to bombings in three different American cities in August 1927, and attacks on American consulates, embassies, and banks in France, Bulgaria, and Argentina. Sporadic revenge attacks occurred until September 1932 when a dynamite explosion destroyed the home of Judge Thayer, the man who had presided over the trial. [73]

[70] Boylston Beal to Alexander Kirk, March 29, 1926, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[71] Boylston Beal to Norman Armour, May 3, 1924, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.
[72] Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti*, 3-4; Boylston Beal to Captain G.M. Liddell, July 22, 1927, TNA, MEPO 38/97.
[73] Heale, *American Anticommunism*, 94; Jensen, *The Battle against Anarchist Terrorism*, 360-364.

The U.S. embassy in London received a large number of bomb threats, including one from a "Fascista Club" that stated: "A few lines to warn you that your embassy will be blown up should Sacco & Vanzetti are executed. This decision and voting took place last night and bombs are already under preparation. It will be a terrific explosion. Viva l'Italia."[74] No bombings occurred, but British sympathizers and communists held a number of demonstrations protesting the Sacco and Vanzetti case. In mid-August 1927, the I.C.W.P.A. (International Class War Prisoners Aid) organization held a protest meeting at Hyde Park and marched to the American embassy to protest outside. Special Branch reported that "There was apparently no organized attempt to carry out the proposed all night vigil, or to enter or do damage at the American embassy. The meeting in the Park consisted of about 5000 to 6000 persons, and when the procession was formed there appeared to be approximately 1000 to 1200 demonstrators, but including the crowd of onlookers there appeared to be at least 8000 to 9000 persons in the vicinity of Grosvenor Gardens on the arrival of the procession."[75] On August 23, 1927, Sacco and Vanzetti were electrocuted, six years after their trial in the midst of the first Red Scare.

The close relationship between the British police and American embassy officials during the Sacco and Vanzetti demonstrations reflected a decade of information sharing about militant and revolutionary groups. Beal's personal contacts in Special Branch and British intelligence provided him and the State Department with information on the Communist International and reinforced a belief that communism's expansion threatened American interests at home and abroad. However, even allied governments disagreed over labeling revolutionaries as terrorists, as the State Department limited the information it provided Beal and the United Kingdom about the activities of Irish and Indian nationalists operating inside the United States.

[74] Ray Atherton to Lt. Col J.F.C. Carter, New Scotland Yard, August 8, 1927, TNA, MEPO 38/97
[75] Inspector, Special Branch, Metropolitan Police, August 11, 1927, TNA, MEPO 38/97

Dispatches from Riga

At the end of the 1920s the Division of Eastern European Affairs eclipsed the Office of the Under-Secretary of State as the main channel for receiving formal and informal information on the Communist International. Under Robert Kelley's tenure the division grappled with the intellectual origins of terrorism in Russia and the Comintern's use of terrorist tactics to achieve policy goals. Kelley, a graduate of Harvard and the Sorbonne, had served as a military attaché in Denmark, Finland, and the Baltic States before resigning from the army and joining the State Department in 1922. In four years he was appointed chief of the division. Kelley established a State Department training program for foreign service officers to study Russian language, culture, and history in Europe. Kelley's colleague, Robert Murphy, maintained detailed files on Soviet propaganda and subversion within the United States, which the division housed in its extensive library on the Soviet Union.[76]

The Division of Eastern European Affairs was the youngest politico-geographic division in the State Department. The division's name reflected the official recognition by the United States in July 1922 of the new states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and the continued non-recognition of the Soviet Union. De Witt Poole, formerly the chief of the Division of Russian Affairs, was appointed the first chief of the Division of Eastern European Affairs. Poole had tracked the progress of radicalism in the United States and abroad since the end of World War I, and he directed his division to produce regular summaries on radicalism for the secretary of state, assistant secretaries, division chiefs, and other department officers of similar rank.[77]

[76] O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery,* 326-327.
[77] De Witt Poole, Division of Russian Affairs to secretary of state, December 4, 1919, RG 59, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 840.00B/4 – 840.4061, Box 8678, Archives II, NARA.

Only two men succeeded Poole as chief of the Division of Eastern European Affairs: Evan Young (1923-1925), a former commissioner to the Baltic provinces, and Robert Kelley (1925-1937). Almost all of the officers appointed to the division had previous military or diplomatic experience in eastern European countries. The division's work fell into two categories: American relations with the new post-war states of Eastern Europe and American relations with the unrecognized Soviet government.[78]

The U.S. Legation in Riga, Latvia opened in 1922 and represented the single U.S. diplomatic mission for the Baltic states of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania and unofficially the Soviet Union. The Legation at Riga was the largest and most important mission in northeastern Europe. Its staff consisted of a minister, two regular diplomatic secretaries, a consular officer detailed for special work in the Legation, an interpreter who was an intelligence officer during the war, a disbursing officer, two American clerks, one of whom was an experienced business expert and an economic expert in Russian matters, and an array of translators and messengers. As with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, the work of the Legation fell into two divisions - the Baltic work and the Russian work. The minister supervised both sections, but the staff was divided accordingly. Translators and interpreters who established relationships with local officials and other information services (IS) provided the bulk of confidential material that reached the State Department.[79]

The reports from Riga portrayed the Communist International as an intervening and violent force attempting to change domestic affairs in foreign countries. This information primed officials in the Division of Eastern European Affairs to view the Communist International and

[78] Division of Eastern European Affairs, History and Personnel, *The American Foreign Service Journal*, February 1933, Robert F. Kelly Papers (RFK), Georgetown University Manuscripts, Georgetown University Library.
[79] Inspector F.R. Dolbeare, General Report, Legation Riga, August 8, 1925, RG 59, Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts 1906-39, Box 128, Archives II, NARA.

Soviet government as inciting militant revolutionaries to carry out terrorist acts. In 1923, Riga officers wrote the State Department officials about events in Bulgaria and the Soviet government's desire to spread communist propaganda in European countries. Officials in Riga informed the State Department that after the downfall of the government of Aleksandar Stamboliiski in Bulgaria, the Communist International had issued proclamations calling on the Bulgarian proletariat to rise and overthrow the new government. Previously, the Soviet government had viewed Stamboliiski's Bulgaria as Russia's "secret ally in the Balkans."[80]

The reports of the Riga legation indicate that American foreign service officers were deeply suspicious of the involvement of the Soviet Union in the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Charles Wilson at the U.S. mission in Bulgaria informed the State Department that the "only Soviet organization in Bulgaria has been the so-called Soviet Red Cross, which at the request of Dr. Nansen and the International Red Cross of Geneva was allowed to come to this country for the purpose of repatriating Russian refugees, although it was a secret to nobody that its work was chiefly political." After the fall of Stamboliiski's government, all of the members of the Red Cross were arrested and deported from Bulgaria. Wilson reported that the new Bulgarian government had "discovered absolute proof" that Red Cross officials were "collecting information concerning the adversaries of Bolshevism in Bulgaria, both Russians and Bulgarians; were entertaining close relations with the Bulgarian Communist Party, and were centralizing information concerning Bolshevik propaganda in all the Balkan states."[81]

[80] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state Washington, July 31, 1923, Box 24, Natalie Grant Wraga Papers (NGW), Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.
[81] Charles S. Wilson, Sofia, Bulgaria to secretary of state, Washington, August 13, 1923, M-340, Records Of The Department Of State Relating To Political Relations Between Russia And The Soviet Union And Other States, 1910-1929 [microform], Roll 2, Archives II, NARA.

The Soviets were also suspicious of the Red Cross. In September 1923, officials in Riga informed the State Department that "It would appear that greater care is being exercised by the Bolsheviks in granting visas to enter Soviet Russia and that foreigners in the country are being closely watched." A translation of a circular of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to diplomatic representatives of the USSR revealed that "no further visas are to be granted to persons connected with the International Red Cross Committee."[82] The Legation obtained documents from the chief of Petrograd Section and People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs that detailed the fear among Soviet officials that representatives of the International Red Cross Committee were "taking advantage of their presence in Russia and their exterritorial rights to carry out secret duties assigned them by foreign information organizations." [83]

Officials in Riga also reported that the Comintern was actively disseminating propaganda among European armies, particularly French, Italian and Polish troops, and that the Red International of Trade Unions (Profintern) had decided to combat Fascism by means of "arming detachments of workmen in all countries." The Profintern voted to supply the workmen with arms and ammunition and to dispatch the supplies through unions of metal-workers and seamen. Agents working for the Riga legation also noted that the precautionary measures adopted by the Executive Committee of Communist International made it more difficult to obtain "fully detailed and checked information regarding the more important branches of work of the Comintern."[84]

By the mid-1920, reports from Riga stressed that the Communist International was expanding its reach and interference in foreign governments. The legation provided the State Department with confidential reports on Bolshevik plans for the destruction of military stores abroad; Communist propaganda activities in Eastern Countries; the formation of Bolshevik

[82] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state, September 28, 1923, Box 24, NGW.
[83] Ibid.
[84] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state, July 31, 1923, Box 24, NGW.

sabotage organizations in foreign countries; and the plans of the G.P.U. (secret police) to extend its work in the Middle East, increase propaganda in Central Asia, and use the Soviet Trade representative in Persia for political purposes.[85] In April 1924, the Riga legation reported that Grigori Voitinsky, a Comintern official, proposed creating special "shock" groups to move systematically through foreign countries spreading propaganda. These groups would be under the direction of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, but they would operate independently of the regional Communist Party committees. The Legation's report also documented Voitinsky's suggestion to employ propaganda agents as "Red commercial travelers" in Persia and Afghanistan. [86]

In order to gather more information on the Soviet Union, officials at the Riga Legation established close ties with the Estonian and Latvian Foreign Offices. These relationships developed early in September 1923 when the Latvian Secret Service provided the Riga Legation with a report on the espionage and propaganda activities of the Soviet Mission.[87] Norman Armour at the State Department decided to share the information with the Justice Department, but to protect the involvement of the Riga legation. Armour declared that "It has not been our policy in the past in sending material of this nature to Justice, ever to give the channel through which it has been received, in other words, not to bring the Legation into the matter at all." The State Department thus provided the Justice Department with only the report prepared by the

[85] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state, April 11, 1924; J.C. White to secretary of state, September 23, 1924; F.W. B. Coleman to secretary of state, February 29, 1924, RG 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, Diplomatic Posts, Latvia, Archives II, NARA.
[86] F.W. B. Coleman to secretary of state, April 28, 1924, RG 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, Diplomatic Posts, Latvia, Archives II, NARA.
[87] Evan Young to Norman Armour, September 21, 1923, M-340, Records Of The Department Of State Relating To Political Relations Between Russia And The Soviet Union And Other States, 1910-1929 [microform], Roll 2, Archives II, NARA.

Latvian police.[88] The Riga legation maintained close relations with the Estonian and Latvian Foreign Offices throughout the 1920s because they provided legation officials with information on conditions in Soviet Russia. The legation, however, refrained from requesting the same information from the Lithuanian Foreign Office because the Vilna question motivated Lithuanian officials to secure close relations with the Soviet government.[89]

Foreign intelligence in the late 1920s also indicated that the Comintern continued to dispatch its agents to the United States. In April 1928, the Division of Eastern European Affairs learned that the Comintern "ordered the dispatch of six agitators from the Far East to the United States, with instructions to work among employees in textile industries and in important centres." The information supplied to Kelley and the Division of Eastern European Affairs stated that the Comintern would supply the agents with American passports and that the "agitators" would be graduates of the Lenin Institute for Propaganda. Lastly, the necessary funds would be paid through Mexican banks, and the agents would take different routes, leaving from Shanghai, Kobe, Hong Kong and Manila to reach the United States.[90]

Understanding Terrorism

The Division of Eastern European Affairs grappled with the relationship between terrorism and the Communist International. In the early 1920s, the Soviet foreign commissariat pursued "peaceful coexistence" with other governments, and undertook traditional trade and diplomatic agreements, while the Communist International sponsored revolution abroad in

[88] Norman Armour to Evan Young, September 25, 1923, M-340, Records Of The Department Of State Relating To Political Relations Between Russia And The Soviet Union And Other States, 1910-1929 [microform], Roll 2, Archives II, NARA.
[89] Louis Sussdorff, Jr. to secretary of state, October 18, 1928, RG 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, Diplomatic Posts, Latvia, Archives II, NARA.
[90] Ray Atherton to Robert Kelley, Division of Eastern European Affairs, April 20, 1928, RG 59, Office of the Counselor / Under-Secretary and the Chief Special Agent, Archives II, NARA.

Europe and Asia.[91] The American missions in London and Riga reported on the Comintern's intervention in the domestic affairs of other nations, depicting the Communist International as a nebulous network of communist cells directed from Moscow to carry out acts of terrorism. The Comintern's instigation of foreign revolutions had been one of the prime reasons that President Wilson and his new secretary of state, Bainbridge Colby, had refused to recognize the Bolsheviks in August 1920.[92] Throughout the 1920s and into the early 1930s, Kelley and the Division of Eastern European Affairs maintained that the United States should not recognize the Soviet government because of the interference of the Comintern in world affairs and in the United States.[93]

Foreign intelligence received by Kelley and the Division of Eastern European Affairs indicated that the Soviet government and Comintern supported communist groups in foreign countries that employed violence to overthrow an established government. In October 1923, officials in Riga transmitted two enclosures to the State Department. The enclosures provided translations of secret orders seized by the Estonian secret police during a raid of the Estonian Section of the Communist International. The documents revealed the extent to which the Comintern had assisted the illegal communist organizations in Estonia in launching a coup to overthrow the government. According to the first enclosure, the Communist International and Soviet mission at Tallinn had assured Estonian communists that if they were arrested the Soviet government would demand their release on the grounds that they were Russian citizens. However, the Comintern stressed that the communists in Estonia needed to shield the activities of the Soviet Mission and ensure that weapons would not be traced back to Russia. The

[91] Tim Rees and Andrew Thorpe, "Introduction," in *International Communism and the Communist International 1919-1943*, eds. Tim Rees and Andre Thorpe (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1998), 1-3; Jacobson, *When the Soviet Union Entered World Politics*, 7, 16-19, 28-31, 44-45, 51, 120.
[92] Leffler, *The Specter of Communism*, 16.
[93] Robert Kelley to secretary of state, December 16, 1926, Box 3, Folder 4, RFK.

Communist International promised that: "The Communist Party of Estonia can entirely depend on the help of Russia and continue to work in order to establish in the near future a free Soviet Republic. As to that there cannot be any doubts or delays."

The second enclosure focused on the failed attempts of communists in Estonia to overthrow the Government in 1922. According to the secret orders, during the "May Day procession, three Communist terrorists [had] fired upon the Estonian police." One of the terrorists was captured and stated that he "had been sent to Estonia by the Foreign Section of the Cheka (All-Russian Extraordinary Commission; now called the State Political Administration) with instructions to commit terroristic acts against members of the Estonian Government and the police force." He confessed that thirty-eight communist terrorists with similar orders had been sent before him to Estonia. In addition, the Estonian secret police had evidence that the Foreign Section of the Cheka had sent a communist spy to Estonia.

The legation also reported on the execution of the Estonian communist Viktor Kingissepp in 1922 for treason. According to the Estonian police, Kingissepp directed "scores of organizers, spies, and terrorists, who were operating throughout the country with a view of overthrowing the Government by force." The Riga legation reported that the Soviet commissariat for foreign affairs had approached the Estonian representative at Moscow and "verbally threatened that, in the event of Kingissepp's execution, Soviet Russia would divert its transit trade from Estonia to other countries." The Soviet Union carried out this threat for several months after Kingissepp's execution and draped the Soviet Mission in mourning. [94]

In April 1924, F.W. B. Coleman provided the State Department with a confidential report concerning Bolshevik plans to form a terrorist group in Romania. Coleman reported that the

[94] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state, October 1, 1923, M-340, Records Of The Department Of State Relating To Political Relations Between Russia And The Soviet Union And Other States, 1910-1929 [microform], Roll 2, Archives II, NARA.

Commission for Combatting Fascism had decided "to organize a terrorist group among the secret workers who are being sent to Bessarabia and the local communists for the purpose of carrying out terrorist acts against persons at the head of the Romanian Government." The Commission emphasized that members of the terrorist group should be natives of Bessarabia and not Soviet citizens, and that a Bessarabian communist should lead the group. The Commission promised to provide financial subsidies to members of the terrorist organization and to give their families shelter in Soviet Russia. A supplementary amount of 200,000 gold rubles, over and above the assignation to the Romanian Communist Party, had been allotted for the above purpose.[95]

In May 1925, the Comintern's general instructions for carrying out terrorist acts in foreign countries came into the possession of the Riga Legation. The translated documents indicated that the instructions originated with the Balkan Section of the Communist International, but had been approved by the Executive Committee during its April 1925 meeting. The Comintern's Executive Committee decided that the most important instructions for terrorist activity would be drafted in the form of fundamental regulations:

> (1) Terrorist activity is divided into two categories:
>
> > (a) Individual terrorist acts directed against individual persons and groups
> > (b) Acts having as their object the paralyzing of military and other aggressive, or defensive forces in any state.

The Executive Committee stressed that terrorist acts should only be directed against definite categories of persons, namely members of government political parties, high-ranking military officials and administrators. Furthermore, attacks should be limited and only carried out when absolutely necessary. The Executive Committee recommended that communist parties draft a detailed plan of terrorist activity. The plan should specify targets, including individuals and

[95] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state, April 26, 1924, RG 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, Diplomatic Posts, Latvia, Archives II, NARA.

organizations. The Comintern emphasized that communists needed to determine public opinion before carrying out an attack and that targets should not include "persons enjoying popularity among the wide masses of the population, as this may arouse feeling in the country." Instead, an assassination should meet with "tacit approval of the population or at least indifference."

The instructions also suggested that attacks target all members of specific government departments or administrations, as this would make it difficult to fill government posts and "lead to demoralization and disorganization of the government and administrative apparatus." In addition to removing persons or groups at the head of the government or occupying prominent administrative posts, the Executive Committee recommended organizing attacks on junior officials of the administration or army, including rank and file police, militia, and soldiers:

> Removal of this category of persons would produce demoralization among the lower ranks, incite them against their officers, and, if synchronized with well-organized active anti-government propaganda, would introduce final disintegration into the bulwarks of every government – the army and police.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International decided to send the instructions on terrorism to all sections. However, unlike general literature of the Comintern, the instructions were to be printed at a private typography selected by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party and sent abroad through special agents. [96]

The Comintern's general instructions on terrorism reveal a great deal about the definition and objective of terrorist acts in the 1920s. According to this document, the Communist International stressed that communists should target top government officials, but also the rank and file to demoralize the police and security forces of a country. Moreover, communists needed to ensure that they assassinated unpopular government figures, so as not to sway public opinion against the overthrow of a government and the institution of a communist regime. From these

[96] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state, May 28, 1925, Box 24, NGW.

instructions, it appeared to legation and State Department officials that terrorism was an established tool of the Communist International.

In September 1925, however, the legation at Riga came into possession of cipher tables found on an agent of the Communist International arrested in Riga. He carried an article that described the "clumsy lies about the Communist International's tactics of individual terrorism." The article included a message from the secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, Otto V. Kuusinen, stating that the "notorious lie factory of the white guard Russian émigrés has again produced an unusually crude forgery." Kuusinen's letter responded to an article published in an émigré newspaper in Riga that reported that the last Enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International had decided to adopt a policy of "individual terrorism." Kuusinen claimed that the émigré press was broadcasting the forgery through the whole "bourgeois press," especially in France and England.

Kuusinen wrote that the Enlarged Executive Committee had adopted a definite decision in regard to individual terrorism, but "one which was quite the reverse of that expected by the counter-revolutionary émigrés in Riga and Paris." To make his point he quoted a passage from Comrade Grigory Zinoviev:

> In some sections of the Communist International (Bulgaria, Poland), there recently arose the danger of a terroristic 'derailment.' As a result of the regime established by the hangman Zankow, the Bulgarian workers were seized with a certain enthusiasm for a terroristic defense, such as found expression, for example, in blowing up the Sophia church, despite the sharply adverse attitude which the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria displayed with regard to individual terrorism. In Poland also terroristic tendencies became temporarily noticeable.
>
> The Communist International most decidedly rejects individual terrorism. In rejecting this method of warfare, it is guided exclusively by principles of revolutionary expediency. The Communist International, however, has nothing in common with the bourgeois attitude toward the question of using revolutionary violence.

> Every class conscious proletarian knows that without the use of revolutionary violence the bourgeoisie cannot be overthrown and the world cannot be freed from the yoke of capital. Only as an armed power can the working class free humanity from the disgrace of capitalism. For precisely this reason, however, the Communist rejects individual terrorism, as individual acts [when] attempted to substitute for mass combat, can only demoralize our movement, divide our forces, and reduce our dynamic power. [97]

The article recovered on the arrested Communist agent in Riga contrasted with the general instructions on terrorism the Riga legation translated in May 1925. The article suggested that while Soviet officials continued to advocate revolutionary violence they did not condone individual terrorism. Instead Zinoviev's statements cautioned against individual acts of terrorism because they threatened to discredit and divide the Communist International. Zinoview's position echoed earlier sentiments made by Leon Trotsky, who also opposed individual terrorism and called for collective action to overthrow capitalist governments.[98] The Comintern's power in the 1920s was in the realm of ideas and propaganda, and it was tasked to officials in the State Department to determine whether the Communist International supported foreign terrorist groups or if the recovered documents were forgeries. Considering that Soviet intelligence had created a fictitious Monarchist Association of Central Russia, better known as the Trust, to disseminate false information and infiltrate the organizations of Russian political émigrés in Paris, this was not an easy task.[99] Yet, by 1927, the State Department had received numerous reports from British intelligence and American embassies and consulates that portrayed the Soviet Union as a sponsor of international terrorism. Among officials such as Robert Kelley that view did not

[97] Comintern Ciphers, Riga, Latvia, September 24, 1925, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, The Murphy Collection on International Communism, 1917-1958, Russia and Communist International, Box 45, Archives II, NARA.
[98] Trotsky's writing on the subject includes "Why Marxists Oppose Individual Terrorism" (1911) and *Terrorism and Communism [Dictatorship versus Democracy]: A Reply to Karl Kautsky* (1920).
[99] Douglas Porch, *The French Secret Services: From the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1995), 118-119.

change, even after the Franklin Roosevelt administration recognized the Soviet Union in 1933 and shut down the Division of Eastern European Affairs four years later.[100]

Conclusion

The first Red Scare had two profound legacies. First, it entrenched a belief that radical aliens posed a threat to American society and that exclusionary immigration legislation, with its exclusion and deportation provisions, would protect the homeland. Second, the backlash against the Justice Department for violating the civil liberties of American citizens ended its political surveillance operations. During the 1920s, the State Department possessed a monopoly over the accumulation and interpretation of foreign and domestic intelligence regarding the Communist International and the Soviet Union. Two offices oversaw this work: the Office of the Under-Secretary of State and the Division of Eastern European Affairs. The former relied on its wartime connections with British intelligence for information, while Kelley's department gleaned most of its intelligence from American embassies and consulates in eastern Europe, especially the Riga legation.

The State Department's engagement in anti-Soviet espionage is important because it highlights an understudied intelligence relationship between the Americans and British. This relationship drew upon personal connections established during the war and was actively pursued by the British, who shared intelligence information with American embassy officials in London and at the State Department. British officials and security services also attempted to persuade the State Department to monitor Irish and Indian revolutionary nationalists by emphasizing their "extremist" ideologies and communist connections. This was a tactic learned during the Great

[100] Broader American opinion about the Soviet Union changed over time. The historian Peter Filene argues that Americans were "fickle" and "self-contradictory" in their understanding of the Soviet Union. See *Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 275.

War when the British had stressed the foreign support given by the German government to anti-colonial groups. As a result of these disagreements, the United States and United Kingdom shared information regarding the Soviets, but did not develop a common counter-terrorism strategy.

In 1927, Secretary of State Kellogg shuttered the foreign intelligence sections of the Office of the Under-Secretary of State, leading to a decline in joint anti-communism initiatives by the American and British governments. The Division of Eastern European Affairs assumed primary responsibility over collecting and interpreting foreign and domestic intelligence. As was the case with Indian Political Intelligence and the Home Department of the Government of India, the intelligence information received by Kelley's division hardened their stance against the Communist International and the Soviet Union. The legation and embassy reports entrenched a belief among federal officials that the Soviet Union was a state-sponsor of terrorism and that Soviet ideology was violent and expansionist. The State Department's strong association of terrorism with the Soviet government contributed to strained diplomatic relations between the two countries until the early 1930s.

Chapter 4: The Search for a Common Approach: The League of Nations, 1919-1927

In May 1925, the League of Nations convened a Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War in Geneva, Switzerland. Count Henri Carton de Wiart, the former prime minister of Belgium, presided over the conference and welcomed the forty-four delegations in attendance. The United States, Germany, Egypt, and Turkey, all League outsiders, sent representatives. The only major power and arms producer missing was the Soviet Union. Six weeks of meetings resulted in a new Arms Traffic Convention. Eighteen states, including the United States, Britain, France, Italy, and Japan signed the multilateral treaty to control the global arms trade on June 17, 1925.[1]

Challenging the prevailing view that all interwar disarmament schemes were a massive failure, scholars have recently proposed that the limited League initiatives of the early 1920s succeeded in establishing tentative regimes of control over the trade in armaments.[2] These historians, like David Stone and Andrew Webster, are part of a larger revisionist trend in League scholarship that celebrates the international organization's long-term successes and its promotion of intergovernmental collaboration.[3] This positive image of the League contrasts with scholarship of the post-World War II years when international relations scholars overwhelmingly

[1] David Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty: The League of Nations' Drive to Control the Global Arms Trade," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35, no. 2 (2000): 221-22. By 1933, twelve states had ratified the 1925 Arms Traffic Convention: Australia, Britain, Denmark, Egypt, France, Latvia, Liberia, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and Venezuela. French ratification was contingent upon ratification by Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Japan, Sweden, and the United States. British ratification was contingent upon the same powers and Austria, Germany and Spain. The United States finally ratified the convention in 1935, but this had no effect on it coming into force. See Andrew Webster, "Making Disarmament Work: The Implementation of the International Disarmament Provisions in the League of Nations Covenant, 1919-1925," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 16, no. 3 (2006): 569, fn 70; "Arms Sale Parley opens in Geneva," *The New York Times*, 5 May 1925.

[2] Webster, "Making Disarmament Work," 551; Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 213-14.

[3] Susan Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations," *American Historical Review* 112 (2007): 1108-09, 1110, 1116. The newest scholarship on the League of Nations has focused on the mandates system, minority rights treaties, and the technical articles. The technical articles dealt with regulating transnational traffics, such as opium, refugees, prostitutes, as well as health care, the drug trade, intellectual property rights and labor policy. Many nonmembers of the League were involved in the League's technical areas.

criticized the League of Nations and dismissed its work. Since the end of the Cold War, historians have rediscovered the League's innovations in areas such as health care, the drug trade, intellectual property rights, and labor policy, leading to new studies that focus on the League's involvement in state-building and world governance rather than peacekeeping and collective security.[4]

The arms traffic conference of 1925 does not support revisionist arguments about the League. The convention never entered into force and the illicit and licit arms trade flourished during the 1920s and 1930s. League initiatives failed to halt it and weapons continued to reach irredentist and ultranationalist terrorist organizations in Europe and revolutionary nationalists in the colonies and China. This chapter focuses on arms controls because regulating weapons transfers was a crucial component of interwar counter-terrorism and the primary reason for its failure.

The circuitous path of the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War reflected the evolving security and foreign policy concerns among the great powers in the 1920s. The idea to regulate arms traffic originated with British policymakers in March 1917 and resulted in the 1919 Convention for the Control of Trade in Arms and Ammunition. The League took up the initiative during the 1920s, and a critical change in French security thinking that accepted multilateral treaties as security guarantees enabled the Disarmament Section to propose a new treaty to regulate the arms trade. Finally, the acceptance of international arms limitations by Republican administrations in the United States enabled the State Department to participate in the 1925 conference, leading almost all of the major arms producing nations to sign the treaty. The treaty, however, lacked

[4] Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations," 1091-92; Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 213-14.

enforcement mechanisms outside of publicity and remained a dead letter, languishing in national legislatures and never ratified.

Even so, the treaty did have a lasting legacy: the public and private information it collected on gun-running. The involvement of the U.S. government in the Arms Traffic Conference impelled the State Department to undertake a global study of arms trafficking. The resulting records, hitherto unexamined by scholars, highlight the unhindered movement of weapons in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, and the involvement of old allies and new foes in supplying military materiel. In addition, from 1926 onward, the Disarmament Section of the League compiled and published information on the global arms trade as a Statistical Year-Book of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition. The last edition in 1938 contained data on sixty countries and sixty-four colonies, protectorates and mandated territories.[5] The public and secret information collected for the Arms Traffic Conference and afterward indicated mass violations of the European peace settlements and revealed a world awash in guns.

On the surface, the arms traffic conference and convention of 1925 appear to be examples of successful international cooperation and diplomacy. However, concerns about security, sovereignty, and economic trade hindered unanimity among national delegations and undermined the treaty. The failure of the arms traffic conference to establish international controls over the arms trade allowed governments to continue supporting militant groups and provided the fodder for a revival of political assassinations and international terrorism in the early 1930s.

To the League

British negotiators first raised the issue of controlling the small arms trade at the Paris Peace Conference. Under the leadership of the Liberal politician Lord Islington, the Committee

[5] Webster, "Making Disarmament Work," 563-64.

of Imperial Defense's Sub-Committee on the Arms Traffic determined that the massive wartime buildup of arms and ammunitions and their potential dissemination to colonial subjects posed a danger to British regional control in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa. In March 1917, the Islington Committee recommended that the British Foreign Office pursue a multilateral small arms agreement to keep governments from selling their surplus stocks of small arms. The result was the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 signed in Saint-Germain-en-Laye on September 10, 1919 by twenty-three countries, including the United States, the British Empire, France, Italy, and Japan.[6]

The United Kingdom also enacted domestic firearms legislation. In February 1918, Sir Ernley Blackwell set up a committee to consider "the question of the control which it is desirable to exercise over the possession, manufacture, sale, import and export of firearms and ammunition in the United Kingdom after the war…." Both the Islington and Blackwell committees viewed the vast quantities of surplus weapons left over from the war as a source of danger to the British Empire. Lord Islington's subcommittee warned that surplus weapons could come into the hands of – "Savage or semi-civilized tribesmen in outlying parts of the British Empire" and "The anarchist or 'intellectual' malcontent of the great cities, whose weapon [was] the bomb and the automatic pistol."[7] The Blackwell committee agreed and concluded that unregulated weapons should not reach Ireland or flood the international market. The committee's recommendations for internal legislation reached parliament on 19 April 1920.

[6] Sir H. Read, G.S. Spicer, Mr. Strachey, Mr. Malkin, Sir A. Hinzel, Sir L. Mallet, Lord Hardridge, February 1, 1919, The National Archives (hereinafter TNA), London, England, FO 608/217; Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition, and Protocol, *The American Journal of International Law* 15, no. 4 (1921): 297-313; Simon Ball, "Britain and the Decline of the International Control of Small Arms in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Contemporary History* 47, no. 4 (2012): 812-813.

[7] Colin Greenwood, *Firearms Control: A Study of Armed Crime and Firearms Control in England and Wales* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 36-45.

The Earl of Onslow introduced the firearms bill in the House of Lords, arguing that the bill had two objectives, firstly to hinder firearms from coming into the hands of "criminals or otherwise undesirable persons." Secondly, to enable the British government to control the overseas trade in arms, thereby fulfilling their "obligations under the Arms Traffic Convention recently signed in Paris." The bill's consideration in the House of Commons led to a discussion about the constitutional right to keep arms and if the state had the right to "deprive private individuals of the weapons which Heaven had given into their hands." However, the House did not view the bill as infringing constitutional rights. The Firearms Act of 1920 created a licensing system for firearms that still operates and allowed the government to come into accord with the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919.[8]

As an extension of British policy, the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 prohibited the importation of arms and ammunition into certain "prohibited areas" and established a zone of maritime supervision. These areas included the continent of Africa, excluding Algeria, Libya, and the Union of South Africa, and Transcaucasia, Persia, Gwadar, the Arabian Peninsula, and "continental parts of Asia" that were part of the Turkish Empire on August 4, 1914. The maritime zone consisted of the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.[9] The Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 fulfilled British prewar aims to extend the 1890 Brussels Convention and to enlist French cooperation in controlling the arms trade in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and Ethiopia. Before the First World War, Britain had relied on both multilateral agreements, such as the December 1906 treaty to regulate arms in Ethiopia between Britain, France, and Italy, and military force with the British blockade of Muscat, Ottoman to

[8] Ibid., 52-55, 240.
[9] Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition, and Protocol, *The American Journal of International Law* 15, no. 4 (1921): 302.

control arms smuggling.[10] After the war, British policymakers gravitated towards multilateral treaties. With anti-British uprisings erupting in India, Ireland, and Egypt in 1919, the dangers were all the more pressing. The rebellions suggested that the proliferation of arms, particularly the automatic pistol, threatened to undermine British power and spur terrorist attacks against British officials.[11]

The British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour and his legal advisers ensured that the provisions of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 would be immediately upheld by attaching a protocol to the treaty. The protocol required governments to follow the treaty's requirements regarding the disposal of large stocks of arms and munitions even before the convention was ratified. British policymakers subsequently strengthened the protocol by signing additional intergovernmental agreements that regulated the arms trade in the colonial world. In 1920, the imperial governments of France, Italy, Japan, Great Britain, and Belgium met in Paris and agreed to carry out the provisions of the Arms Traffic Convention in Africa and the Middle East. British policymakers undertook these agreements to keep modern weapons from reaching revolutionary nationalists and to disarm anti-colonial groups challenging British rule.[12]

The U.S. government opposed the protocol on the grounds that the imperial powers used its statutes to crush insurrections and never ratified the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. The treaty's provisions required that governments restrict the sale of arms to recognized governments. American officials believed that this requirement enabled the imperial powers to keep modern weapons out of their colonies and to hold them in submission by denying arms to

[10] Ball, "Britain and the Decline of the International Control of Small Arms in the Twentieth Century," 817-19.
[11] The Brussels Convention of 1890 sought to end the slave trade in Africa. Articles in the agreement prohibited the export of arms to all of Africa.
[12] A.J. Balfour to Stéphen Pichon, September 1, 1919, TNA, FO 608/217; Lord Crewe to Raymond Poincaré, December 1, 1924, SDN 986, The Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères] (hereinafter MAE), La Courneuve, Paris, France; Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 218.

revolutionaries or rebels. State Department officials did not view the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 as a "bona fide endeavor really to restrict the traffic of arms, but rather as a political arrangement to protect existing governments while leaving them free as between themselves to make and supply all the arms they wish." S. K. Hornbeck, a member of the Office of the Economic Adviser in the Department of State went further, arguing that the "real object" of the treaty was to "enhance and strengthen the authority of the major European powers in various of the regions of the world in which political conditions are unstable – particularly in Africa and in Asia; the method envisaged is that of overcoming political opposition by rendering physical opposition impossible."[13]

The treaty furthermore threatened to slash American exports of military supplies to Latin America, as the convention banned arms sales to states that had not signed the convention. War and Navy officials opposed this stipulation. Military leaders argued that the United States government may wish to assist a "revolution against despotism," especially in Latin America, and in such a case, the government would need to send arms shipments to unrecognized governments or belligerents.[14] In addition, the State Department hesitated to introduce legislation that would penalize private arms producers, or to ratify a treaty under League authority. As a result, Secretary of State Charles Hughes rejected requests from British policymakers to ratify

[13] S.K. Hornbeck, Office of the Economic Adviser, Department of State, February 8, 1924, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/403-500A15/5, Box 5197, Record Group (RG) 59, U.S. National Archives (hereinafter NARA), College Park, MD; Ball, "Britain and the Decline of the International Control of Small Arms in the Twentieth Century," 818-823.

[14] Frank Kellogg, Department of State to Hugh Gibson, American Legation at Berne, April 4, 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67–500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA; Betty Glad, *Charles Evans Hughes and the Illusions of Innocence: A Study in American Diplomacy* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 251-52.

the Arms Traffic Convention or to join in an international system of arms control as requested by League of Nations officials.[15]

The French, Belgians, Italians, and Japanese also violated the arms treaty and protocol by granting export licenses for firearms and ammunition headed to the prohibited zone. To the annoyance of the British, fellow imperial powers circumvented the convention's provisions by claiming that the firearms and ammunition they exported were not "arms and munitions of war."[16] While the British retreated from multilateral agreements and moved towards bilateral negotiations, the League of Nations took up the cause of international arms control. League officials worried about the large shipments of arms reaching the Baltic States, Poland, and the Black Sea countries, as these weapons potentially aided Bolshevik armies and spurred on postwar conflict. By May 1920 a Directors' Meeting decided that the council of the League of Nations should inquire into the number of export licenses granted by signatory states for the export of arms and ammunitions, and the particulars in terms of quantities and destination.[17]

In August 1920 the Permanent Advisory Committee on Military, Naval and Air Questions (PAC) formally took up this task. The committee requested that all members of the League of Nations supply the PAC with information regarding the export of arms and munitions and proposals for the formation of a Central International Office.[18] Signatory governments of the convention, however, responded in the same vein as the British Foreign Office that they could not provide information as the treaty "had not yet been ratified by any of the Signatories and was

[15] Secretary of State, United States Government to Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, September 12, 1923, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, League of Nations Archives (hereinafter LNA), Geneva, Switzerland.
[16] Ball, "Britain and the Decline of the International Control of Small Arms in the Twentieth Century," 823.
[17] Van Hamel to secretary-general, May 7, 1920, Regarding Present Traffic in Arms, R 186, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; F.P. Walters to Van Hamel, August 13, 1920, Classement 8, Document 22651, Dossier 4407, R 186, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[18] Secretary of the Permanent Advisory, Commission of the League on Military, Naval and Air Questions to Sunderland House, Curzon Street, London, August 26, 1920, R 186, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.

only in partial operation as the result of an informal modus vivendi."[19] The early initiatives of the PAC failed to produce results as powerful nations resisted arms reductions and used their position on the League council to hinder arms controls.

The PAC, composed exclusively of military officials loyal to their national governments, reported to the council rather than the larger assembly. The PAC consequently advanced the interests of the great powers, especially French demands that the commission focus first on disarming Germany.[20] The smaller nations of the League assembly resented the inaction of the PAC, as did the general public in Britain and France. In the summer of 1921, the assembly organized an alternative body to oversee disarmament: the Temporary Mixed Commission on Armaments (TMC). The TMC represented a new innovation. Staffed by leading experts in politics, economics, business, and labor, the commission stood in stark contrast to the military officials of the PAC. Intentionally designed to be an international body of private citizens free from national obligations, the assembly believed that the TMC would expect to progress on international disarmament.[21]

The French immediately viewed the TMC as a threat and moved to limit the commission's authority. First, the French stripped the TMC of a permanent secretariat, permanent organs, or a mandated schedule of meetings. Next, the French government appointed René Viviani, an elder French statesman, as the president of the commission. Viviani steered the committee's work towards non-controversial issues that suited French interests.[22] Three of the TMC's first four meetings were held in Paris, where the commission elaborated on the

[19] R. Sperling, Foreign Office, September 9, 1920, R 186, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[20] Peter Jackson, "France and the Problems of Security and International Disarmament after the First World War." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 2 (2006): 252-53; F.P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 217, 219-20; Webster, "Making Disarmament Work," 553-54.
[21] Webster, "Making Disarmament Work," 553-54.
[22] Peter Jackson, "France and the Problems of Security," 254-55; Andrew Webster, "'Absolutely Irresponsible Amateurs': The Temporary Mixed Commission on Armaments, 1921-24," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 54, no. 3, (2008): 376-77.

difficulties of achieving disarmament, especially without the involvement of the United States, Germany, or Russia. The commission also undertook a statistical survey of national armaments, expanded the League's "right of investigation" within the ex-enemy powers, and emphasized the importance of establishing international controls over the global arms trade and the private manufacture of armaments.[23] Under League and TMC leadership, disarmament expanded from the British preoccupation with small arms to include all military weapons and equipment.

British opinion concerning the TMC was divided. Certain British delegates, such as the liberal social reformer and former permanent secretary of the ministry of munitions, Hubert Llewellyn Smith, supported the TMC and advocated controlling the private manufacture of arms. The Foreign Office, in contrast, viewed the emphasis on regulating the private manufacture of arms as misplaced and the TMC's lack of national accountability as dangerous and amateurish. The Admiralty and Foreign Office worked to ensure that any changes to the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 would not enable the flow of small arms to "natives and specified disturbed districts," and that the general question of private manufacture of arms would be dealt with as a distinct subject.[24] With the great powers divided about the utility of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919, arms control efforts languished until the appointment of Robert Cecil, a British politician and principal architect of the League of Nations, to the TMC. He added new energy and vigor to the commission's work at the same time that the French and Americans changed their stance against an arms trafficking treaty.

During the early 1920s, French security policy evolved towards a new multilateralist strategy of security based on mutual assistance pacts and compulsory arbitration rather than a

[23] Webster, "'Absolutely Irresponsible Amateurs,'" 376-77; Webster, "The Transnational Dream," 503-04.
[24] Alex Flint, principal assistant secretary to the Admiralty, Admiralty to War Office and Air Ministry, 1 January 1923, TNA, CAB 16/59; Ball, "Britain and the Decline of the International Control of Small Arms in the Twentieth Century," 824-25; Webster, "'Absolutely Irresponsible Amateurs,'" 374.

traditional balance of power. After 1922, French policymakers shifted to using disarmament negotiations as a means of obtaining security guarantees and acquiring a British commitment to underwrite the European status quo.[25] The electoral victory in May 1924 of the Cartel des gauches, a coalition consisting of the Radical Party, the Socialist Party, the Republican Socialists, and a few ex-communists, completed the reorientation of French security policy under the government of Édouard Herriot. Herriot advanced a foreign and security policy based on "arbitration, security, disarmament." The internationalist approach of the Cartel des gauches to foreign policy and security prioritized international law and the League of Nations. French support for a new arms control treaty reflected the government's emphasis on disarmament negotiations to enlist Anglo-American cooperation and to strengthen the coercive powers of the League of Nations.[26]

The United States government began to consider international arms limitations after the Washington Conference of 1921-1922. Disarmament found broad support among various constituents. Church groups, women's organizations, and the postwar peace movement held rallies to reduce armaments, while Congress supported Senator William Borah's resolution to call for a conference to address the growth of the American, British, and Japanese navies. President Warren Harding and his Secretary of State Charles Hughes organized the Washington Conference in response to public pressure to address the naval buildup. Hughes's charismatic leadership led to the first major international agreement on arms reduction ever negotiated. After the Washington Conference, U.S. officials also began working with the League of Nations, particularly on non-political issues. While still cautious about binding political agreements, the

[25] Jackson, "France and the Problems of Security," 248-49, 265, 276; Peter Jackson, *Beyond the Balance of Power: France and the Politics of National Security in the Era of the First World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 424.
[26] Jackson, *Beyond the Balance of Power*, 1, 7, 418-427.

Republican administrations of the 1920s promoted international arms limitations as part of their larger diplomatic and economic strategies.[27]

The shift in American opinion proved decisive for organizing a new conference to consider an international treaty to regulate the arms trade. Officials at the League of Nations had long blamed U.S. policymakers for the failed Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. Politicians in Geneva argued that the treaty would be a "dead letter" until the American government ratified the treaty and enacted legislation to control the large scale manufacture and export of arms.[28] Without American involvement, League officials claimed, no other manufacturing county would unilaterally limit its production and incur financial losses:

> The full execution of the Convention and the Protocol has been hindered by the absence of the necessary statutory authority over the control of exports of arms, in the United States of America, a country where arms are manufactured on a large scale. In the case of arms which belonged to the American Government the executive authorities were in a position to carry out the provisions of the Convention, but the export of arms and munitions by private firms could not be controlled except to certain destinations, e.g. Mexico, Turkey, and Soviet Russia.
>
> This circumstance had rendered it impossible to obtain the enforcement of the provisions of the Convention and Protocol by the other signatory Powers, as their Governments did not feel justified in inflicting severe losses on the manufacturing industries of their country by prohibiting manufacture and export, when the effect of such action would not terminate the trade in arms but would merely divert it into other hands.[29]

In December 1923, the League Council recommended that the Temporary Mixed Commission draft a new convention in "such a form that they might be accepted by the

[27] George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 450-56; Walters, *A History of the League of Nations*, 217, 219-20.
[28] League of Nations, Report of Sub-Committee A of Commission N 6 (Armaments) 1920, Report on the Arms Traffic Convention, R189, Classification 8, Document No 9531, Dossier 9531, LNA.
[29] Report of Sir Cecil Hurst to the Sixth Committee of the Assembly (December 1920) on the Arms Traffic Convention in memorandum by the Legal Section of the Secretariat, Temporary Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, July 27, 1921, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.

Governments of all countries which produce arms or munitions of war."[30] The new treaty needed to avoid "any clause which might render it difficult for the Government of the United States to ratify the Convention," while at the same time still be permissible to the other arms producing countries in case the United States refused to sign.[31] For the first time, the U.S. State Department agreed to assist in the drafting of a new convention and sent observers to meetings held in 1924 in Geneva and Paris.[32] U.S. representatives then went a step further than any other government and stated that they would be "glad to receive an invitation to an international conference if one was called."[33] The TMC immediately moved to hold an International Arms Conference in Geneva in May 1925.

The State Department oversaw American preparations for the impending conference. Attempting to avoid Woodrow Wilson's mistake of not ensuring congressional support for the Versailles Treaty, President Calvin Coolidge instructed U.S. officials to reach out to private arms manufactures, influential congressmen, and military personnel to build consensus at home for the arms trafficking treaty. Senator William Borah received invitations from the president and secretary of state to preside over the American Delegation. He declined to attend the conference, however, telling Secretary of State Frank Kellogg that "I do not feel I can be of any service in that matter. I am perfectly clear in my own mind that no sincere effort is going to be made along

[30] Letter to the Government of the United States of America, December 14, 1923, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, Memorandum, Private Manufacture of Arms and Munitions, January 5, 1924, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[31] Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, International Control of the Traffic in Arms and Munitions, January 21, 1924, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[32] Joseph C. Grew to Eric Drummond, February 2, 1924, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; Hugh Gibson to Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments, June 27, 1924, R229, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[33] Hugh Gibson to secretary of state, April 7, 1925, RG 59, Department of State, Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, NARA.

this line at this time and under present conditions in Europe."[34] He also feared that he would be personally blamed if the conference failed to produce results. In addition to Borah's critiques, the private arms manufactures opposed the convention and the War and Navy Departments remained apathetic to the whole idea of a comprehensive system to control arms traffic. [35] Military officials opposed a licensing system on the grounds that it would introduce government interference with legitimate private trade and hold governments responsible for knowing how arms shipments would be used before exportation. In addition, Army and Navy officials opposed restricting sales to only recognized governments and belligerents, as this might prevent shipments to authorities in self-governing dominions, colonies, etc., or revolutionary nationalists opposing dictatorial rule.[36]

Private munitions and arms manufactures also opposed American adherence to an international arms treaty. In April 1925, the secretary of commerce, Herbert Hoover, convened a number of conferences for representatives from private munitions and arms manufacturers to present their objections to a new multilateral arms trafficking treaty. Allen Dulles, chief of the State Department's Division of Near Eastern Affairs, attended these meetings as well and held individual talks with representatives from the Winchester Arms Company, DuPont Company, and the Colt Company. The private arms manufactures aired their grievances that the U.S. government hindered efforts among American businesses to secure foreign arms contracts. Mr. Simons of the DuPont Company remarked that he felt that "the State Department regarded them as possibly a little better than white slavers, but certainly with more suspicion than rum

[34] Frank Kellogg, secretary of state to William Borah, United States Senate, 27 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA; William Borah to secretary of state, 28 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[35] Frank Kellogg to American Legation, Berne, Switzerland, 8 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[36] Frank Kellogg to Hugh Gibson, April 4, 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

runners."[37] Simons, who maintained close relations with officials in the War Department's Military Intelligence Division, believed that in the case of a new treaty only the United States would "conscientiously" observe its provisions. He remained skeptical that the other powers would do the same.[38] Dulles responded that the policy of the U.S. government, as articulated by President Harding, prohibited the sale of government war material abroad. Harding did not favor providing diplomatic assistance to help private American companies sell military material overseas. While stating that the U.S. delegation would certainly bear the concerns of private manufactures in mind, Dulles emphasized that the longstanding policy of the U.S. government to deny contracts for the sale of war material to countries in "troubled areas of the world" would remain in force.[39]

Secretary of State Kellogg worked with the secretaries of the War, Navy, and Commerce departments to prepare for the Geneva arms conference and to select the members of the American delegation.[40] In April 1925, Kellogg appointed a committee that consisted of representatives from Congress, the military, and State Department: Senator Theodore Burton, chairman; Hugh Gibson, chairman; Rear Admiral Andrew Long; Allen Dulles; and Brigadier General Colden Ruggles. In particular, Kellogg desired Hugh Gibson, the American ambassador in Berne, Switzerland, to chair the delegation. Gibson hesitated at first because American officials had recently walked out of an opium conference at Geneva, incurring much

[37] Allen Dulles, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, 15 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/314-500.A14/356, Box 5195, RG 59, NARA; Vice President, Colt's Patent Fire Arms Manufacturing Co.to A.W. Dulles, Near Eastern Division, Department of State, 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/357 to 500.A14/402, Box 5196, RG 59, NARA.
[38] Allen Dulles, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, Conversation with Mr. Aitken Simons, DuPont Company, June 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/357-500.A14/402, Box 5196, RG 59, NARA.
[39] Allen Dulles, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, 15 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/314-500.A14/356, Box 5195, RG 59, NARA.
[40] "Kellogg in Conference on arms sales policy," *The Washington Post*, 31 March 1925.

international criticism.[41] Gibson worried that his participation at the conference "might prejudice my position in future dealings with League matters which constitute an important part of the Legation's work."[42] Kellogg assured him that the department's instructions would not "endanger the successful conclusion of the conference" and that Gibson's participation in the conference, which the department considered most important, would not embarrass him in future work.[43] In this vein, the department withdrew its criticisms of the "prohibited zones," acknowledging that League officials had made every effort to meet American objections and had only called a conference once it was known that the U.S. government would participate.[44]

The Department of State prepared a confidential print for the representatives that included a historical briefing on past disarmament initiatives and the current position of the U.S. government. In his memorandum, Kellogg stressed two key points to the representatives. First, domestic security precluded the United States from acquiescing in "any measure which would be directed against private munitions factories while leaving government-owned or controlled factories in other countries free to continue their trade or production." Unlike other nations, the United States did not maintain large government arsenals for the supply of weapons in the event of war or a national emergency. As a result, the U.S. government depended on private industry to manufacture and supply war material. Second, representatives needed to bear in mind that subsequent congressional action would be necessary to control the arms trade. It would be

[41] William McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 76; Hugh Gibson to secretary of state, April 7, 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

[42] Hugh Gibson to secretary of state, 7 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

[43] Frank Kellogg to American Legation, Berne, Switzerland, 8 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

[44] The State Department believed that the draft convention should be divided into two sections (1) dealing with publicity and the licensing of shipments to certain specified areas and (2) dealing with the measure of control in prohibited zones. The latter did not directly concern the United States and American adherence would probably be undesirable. See Hugh Gibson to secretary of state, 7 April 1925, RG 59, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

useless, Kellogg wrote, for "this Government to conclude a convention unless there were reasonable grounds to believe that it was of a character to command itself to Congress and that the necessary legislation to make it effective could be obtained."[45]

Global Arms Trade

In February 1925, the State Department launched an extensive effort to gather information on the global arms trade from its diplomatic missions. An intelligence-coordinating subunit of the Office of the Under-Secretary of State, referred to as U-1 by the historian Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, oversaw the operation. Information was also routed to Allen Dulles in the Division of Near Eastern Affairs. The Department of State's foreign intelligence section dated to the First World War and the Office of the Counselor, which became the Office of the Under-Secretary of State after the war. Leland Harrison, the assistant secretary of state, who had worked as a "diplomatic secretary" in the Office of the Counselor during the war, continued to centralize and synthesize information gathered from the Department of Justice, Army, and Navy. Harrison and the State Department received foreign intelligence from diplomats posted abroad and from naval and military attachés in the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and the Army's Military Information Division (MID).[46] The Department of State instructed its agents to retrieve information about arms exports and imports through informal conversations and inquiries, and to promise their sources that the information would not be shared with other governments or delegations. The information collected by the State Department from a few diplomats and attachés in spring 1925 revealed a world awash in guns and the undeterred movement of arms

[45] Frank Kellogg to Theodore E. Burton, Chairman; Hugh S. Gibson, Chairman; Rear Admiral Andrew T. Long; Allen W. Dulles, Brigadier General Colden L'H Ruggles, April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

[46] Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage: From Secret Service to CIA (*New York: The Free Press, 1977), 136-145; Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Cloak and Dollar: a History of American Secret Intelligence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 60-61.

and military equipment across nations and continents.[47] In the 1920s, the weapons did not fuel interstate conflict, but aided ultranationalist and irredentist terrorist organizations, ethnic and political violence, and clashes between communist and anti-communist factions.

Information from American missions abroad alerted the State Department about Russia's military rearmament, aided by German firms and expertise, and the powerful effects this had in east-central Europe. According to an American military attaché stationed in London, the Soviet government operated aircraft factories, artillery works, and chemical warfare plants in numerous cities, all of which were "under the direction" of Germans. The attaché determined that Russia was "actively preparing in a military way more than any other country in Europe," and that Germans were supporting military activities in Russia by contributing to the direction and production of chemical warfare. He reported that some fifty tons of war materials were shipped from Germany to Russia during 1924.[48] In April 1922, Soviet Russia and Weimar Germany had restored diplomatic relations with the Treaty of Rapallo. Rumors of a secret military agreement soon followed. The German government officially denied the allegations, and Western governments with the exception of France, generally accepted the denials.[49] The State Department's records, however, suggest that American and likely British intelligence knew about the military cooperation between the Germans and Russians.

In addition to the actions undertaken by the Soviet government, the Communist International also supplied arms and military supplies to communist allies. The Department of State received information that Russia continued to supply a "steady stream" of munitions and

[47] Embassy of the United States of America, Paris to secretary of state, Washington, 9 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[48] Memorandum for the Ambassador from the Military Attaché, American embassy, London to secretary of state, 2 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[49] "Says Pact with Reds Military: German-Russian Treaty has Secret Agreement, charges Briton in House," *Los Angeles Times*, 21 May 1922; Gordon Mueller, "Rapallo Reexamined: A New Look at Germany's Secret Military Collaboration with Russia in 1922," *Military Affairs* 40, no. 3 (1976): 109.

machine guns to Feng Yu Hsiang in China. Despite the arms embargo in place, the Soviet government made no attempts to conceal its weapons shipments to China.[50] Peter Jay at the American Legation in Bucharest reported that Soviet agencies clandestinely supplied arms to subversive terrorist groups in Romania, and that his French colleague had informed him that the Soviet Central Agency in Vienna was running guns to their communist adherents in the various Balkan States, especially Bulgaria.[51] The military buildup in Russia had severe implications for European countries. Reports from abroad indicated that governments in east-central Europe feared Russia and were "arming or planning to arm against her, and, incidentally, against one another." Military experts in Europe predicted that many of these counties would conclude munition contracts if they had the money to finance them.[52]

F.W.B. Coleman from the Riga Legation reported that the Latvian and Estonian governments viewed the proposal to impose limitations on the trade in munitions of war with suspicion. He believed that the reasons were obvious. The political and economic existence of Latvia and Estonia depended upon "preventing a successful invasion on the part of Soviet Russia, whether organized from within or without." Because the "principal characteristic" of Soviet foreign policy was its "utter untrustworthiness," the border states needed to be adequately prepared for the worst, regardless of "whatever verbal promises or paper provisions Soviet Russia might make for disarmament."[53] In addition, Coleman surmised that Romania was

[50] Mayer, Peking, China to secretary of state, 2 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-1929, 500.A14/226 – 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.
[51] Peter A. Jay, American legation, Bucharest, to secretary of state, Washington, 13 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[52] Memorandum for the ambassador from the military attaché, American embassy, London to secretary of state, 2 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[53] F.W.B. Coleman, American Legation, Latvia to secretary of state, Washington, 19 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

moving closer to the Baltic States and Poland for defensive purposes, as the Little Entente appeared defenseless against an aggressive and armed Russia.[54]

Yet, other information showed that the governments of the Little Entente hid weapons with their weaker neighbors, particularly Austria. American legation officials in Vienna reported that the Austrian government connived with firms and private individuals engaged in arms trafficking and granted export licenses without adequate assurances. In addition, the number of potential munition plants in Austria were unusually large and their "running to capacity would go far to ensure industrial prosperity." The American minister indicated that Austrian firms manufactured and transported war material across the border to Czechoslovakia and most of the material made its way to Poland, Romania, Greece, and Turkey. He reported that none of these powers had "made public loans to Austria but reason to believe some of them, especially Romania, have made large advances to private factories."[55] Already by the mid-1920s, the Austrian government was violating the terms of its peace treaty, as inspections of various military depots revealed a vast quantity of war material that far exceeded the amount allotted for an Austrian army of 30,000 men.

State Department inquiries also revealed that former allies supplied military material to embargoed states for economic and political reasons. William Philips in Brussels indicated that the Belgian government exercised no control over munitions traffic and allowed shipments of weapons to leave her ports and reach Canton. Belgium's actions violated the Chinese arms embargo, an agreement which the Belgian government had signed. Philips reported that he had followed the Department's instructions and reminded the Foreign Office of their duty to prevent

[54] F.W.B. Coleman to secretary of state, 2 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[55] Albert Washburn, Vienna, to secretary of state, Washington, 4 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

the shipment of arms and ammunition to China. The United States took a particular interest in this case because of the possibility that Belgian firms would ship military arms to El Salvador or another Central American state. [56]

Other European nations, such as France and Italy, also appeared to be supplying weapons in Africa and the Middle East. In March 1925, Leland Harrison reached out to the American consuls in Jerusalem, Aden, Algiers, Bagdad, Beirut, and Tangier and asked them to provide State Department officials with any available information, statistical or otherwise, with regard to the traffic in arms and munitions of war in Palestine, Transjordan, and Arabia. He indicated that consul officials should describe the controls in place to regulate arms imports, the extent of the illicit trade, and any subsidies, sales, or gifts of arms which may have been made to authorities. Leland also advised that consular reports include the nationality of the principal importers and the ultimate destination and use of imported arms.[57]

The American Consulate in Beirut, Syria reported that the French supplied large quantities of arms and munitions to Turkey in 1922 during the Turkey-Greece war, and that recently France had sold several airplanes to Turkey. Additionally, he relayed allegations that in 1923 the French had supplied a fairly large quantity of arms and munitions to Ibn Saud, the Sultan of Nejd. In Syria and Lebanon, French authorities had made a very serious effort to disarm the population and confiscated a large number of rifles. However, reliable information now indicated that arms smugglers had moved weapons back into Syria and Lebanon, relying on transit routes along the coast and frontiers.[58] French manufactured hand grenades and bombs

[56] William Phillips, Brussels, to secretary of state, 24 March 1925, Department of State, Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[57] Leland Harrison, Division of Near Eastern Affairs to American consuls at Jerusalem, Aden, Algiers, Bagdad, Beirut and Tangier, March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[58] P. Knabenshue, Consul in Charge, American Consulate, Beirut, Syria, 16 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.

also circulated widely in Morocco, as the Algerian border served as the main corridor for the illicit trade in arms and munitions with the Riff. [59]

In turn, the American Consul in Jerusalem, Palestine reported that Italian firms supplied arms to the Yemen District, and that arms circulated widely in Palestine and Transjordan. Weapons were generally smuggled into Palestine by way of the sea, especially on ships traveling between Beirut and Egypt. American consular officers believed that a "greater part of the boatmen of Haifa and Jaffa" engaged in this traffic and that "all of them do not confine themselves to the traffic in arms, but undertake other articles of contraband, such as cocaine, tobacco, etc." The Director of Customs of the Government of Palestine had recently appointed a special body of punitive police under the supervision of the District Commandant of Police to deter the smuggling of arms, hashish, tobacco, etc.[60]

The Office of the Under-Secretary of State and the Division of Near Eastern Affairs had initiated a large-scale intelligence operation to better understand the illegal arms trade and to anticipate the position of other countries attending the arms traffic conference. The information indicated a major division between Britain and France. Conversations with British Foreign Office officials demonstrated that Britain prioritized preventing "the distribution of arms in unsettled areas."[61] Disarming Europe came in second place to making sure that insurgencies and anti-colonial terrorist groups did not threaten the empire. In addition, Britain's "gun-running troubles" in Northwest India and North Africa meant that British policymakers would demand that Iran stay within the prohibited zones, a requirement that caused much outrage at the arms

[59] J. Lee Murphy, American Consul in Charge, American Agency and Consulate General, Tangier, Morocco to secretary of state, Washington, 13 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.
[60] Oscar S. Heizer, American Consulate, Jerusalem, Palestine to secretary of state, 30 April 1925, General Records of the Department of State, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.
[61] F.A. Sterling, American embassy, London to secretary of state, 17 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

traffic conference.[62] In contrast, France required the disarmament of Germany and a continuation of the European status quo. For commercial and political reasons, however, French officials and firms had no qualms about selling military material to countries in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

In 1919, the British had convinced the Americans and French to sign an arms trafficking treaty. Six years later, the League of Nations convinced the former allies to reconvene in Geneva. However, attaché reports from American missions abroad revealed a severe situation in which an active military buildup in Europe was already underway. The arms trafficking conference scheduled for May 1925 offered an opportunity for the major arms manufactures to reach a consensus about the arms trade and to better regulate and publicize arms exports. Yet, American intelligence also suggested how difficult securing international cooperation would be when profit, politics, and security all incentivized governments to continue supplying allies, including terrorist organizations, with weapons.

Arms Traffic Conference of 1925

The Arms Traffic Conference convened in Geneva from May 4 to June 17, 1925. Of the forty-four nations in attendance, the "pride of place" went to the American delegation. Senator Thomas E. Burton of the House Foreign Affairs Committee led the delegation and was assisted by Hugh S. Gibson, the American Minister to Switzerland. Burton, a physically large man with a quick intelligence and vast amount of energy, dominated the conference. Gibson played the foil

[62] Peter A. Jay, American legation, Bucharest, to secretary of state, Washington, 13 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.

to his gregarious personality, employing his urbane manner when the delegation needed to gracefully concede or win opinion to the American point of view.[63]

The State Department in Washington carefully monitored press coverage of the conference. The secretary of state directed all American consular officers to cooperate in this endeavor and to forward daily clippings with translations from newspapers in their respective districts. The clippings needed to include "all shades of political opinion in the country to which you are accredited, avoiding duplication, commencing with your receipt of this instruction and continuing until the termination of the conference." The State Department indicated that the consuls should send the translated articles and editorial comments on the day of publication, so that the delegation in Geneva could make timely use of the information.[64]

American involvement led eighteen delegations to sign the Arms Traffic Convention on the spot with other representatives promising quick adherence. All of the principle arms-producing countries, with the exception of Czechoslovakia and Belgium, signed the convention. In addition, the conference produced a second treaty on poison gas following a proposal by the U.S. delegation.[65] American representatives had initially suggested that the arms trafficking convention should prohibit the export of materials and implements intended for chemical warfare. However, the conference decided that this was impractical and suggested an absolute

[63] League of Nations, Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War, Geneva, 17 June 1925, Report of the Delegates for India – Major-General Sir P.Z. Cox and Colonel W.E. Wilson-Johnston to the Earl of Birkenhead, secretary of state for India, IOR/R/15/1/748, British Library (BL), London, England; Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 221.

[64] Secretary of state to diplomatic missions in Europe, Morocco, Turkey, Egypt and Persia, [April1925], RG 59, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193; J. Arett, American Legation, Panama City to secretary of state, Washington, May 8, 1925, RG 59, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194; Willis C. Cook, American Legation, Caracas, Venezuela to secretary of state, 16 May 1926, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.

[65] League of Nations, Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War, Geneva, 17 June 1925, Report of the Delegates for India – Major-General Sir P.Z. Cox and Colonel W.E. Wilson-Johnston To the Earl of Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, IOR/R/15/1/748, BL; Thomas Burton to secretary of state, Washington, 20 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59; Frank Kellogg to American Mission, Geneva, 21 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.

ban on the use of poison gas. Consequently, Burton suggested a separate protocol, which the Polish delegation expanded to include bacteriological warfare. The Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, also known as the Geneva Protocol, was signed by thirty states at the conference's conclusion on June 17, 1925.[66]

The Geneva Protocol entered into force after France and Venezuela submitted ratifications in May 1926 and February 1928. Thirty-six states, including Italy, Germany, the Soviet Union, and Britain, ratified the protocol by the end of 1932. In the United States, Congress strongly opposed the treaty, despite its recommendation by Senator William Borah and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Borah withdrew the protocol from consideration in December 1926. The United States did not ratify until 1975, but the ban remains in force today.[67]

Press coverage of the arms traffic conference was skeptical at first. The *Washington Post* reported that "the preliminary activities of the Geneva delegates lend color, however, to the prevailing belief that the whole traffic in arms conference is a sham, that no real results are desired or expected by the majority of the delegates, and that the chief concern at Geneva is to pave the way for some excuse for not obtaining real results."[68] As the conference got underway, the *New York Times* questioned if "there was any nation which positively wanted to control the commerce in arms."[69] The media's doubts proved true. National and colonial interests, along with debates over state sovereignty and security, hindered unanimity and left key questions unanswered in the final arms treaty.

[66] Webster, "Making Disarmament Work," 562.
[67] Ibid., 563-64.
[68] Albert Fox, "Attacks on Borah held to discredit arms conference," *The Washington Post*, 7 May 1925.
[69] "Arms Conference Weakens Protocol," *The New York Times*, 25 May 1925.

The great powers protected their national and colonial interests at the expense of an effective treaty. The Americans prioritized their freedom of action in shipping arms to the Western Hemisphere.[70] As a result, the treaty allowed for the shipment of arms to unrecognized foreign governments in peacetime.[71] The French ensured that the treaty did not touch upon the arms provisions of the treaties of Versailles, St. Germaine, Trianon, and Neuilly, which prohibited the importation of war material by Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria.[72] British policymakers adhered to requests by the Board to Trade to protect chemical exports and to ensure that the government could continue to move arms, ammunition, and implements of war within the empire. Britain further safeguarded her imperial interests by winning an exemption to supply arms to troops stationed abroad, despite vigorous Turkish and Chinese objections.[73]

The Belgian delegate, Léon Dupriez, a member of the TMC and professor of comparative constitutional government at Louvain, was the most vocal opponent of limiting the small arms trade, as he argued this would disproportionately affect Belgium. A leading Belgium firearms manufacturer, FN Herstal (Fabrique Nationale d'Herstal), had begun producing exact replicas of the Imperial Germany's Mauser in 1922. By 1924, FN Herstal's modified version of the Mauser was a major success in exports markets. Dupriez used his position as rapporteur of the conference to argue that small arms were not implements of war, but were used for sporting purposes or personal defense. Britain's objections kept rifles, carbines, revolvers, automatic pistols, and submachine guns within the category of prohibited weapons, but Dupriez succeeded

[70] Department of State to American Mission, Geneva, 14 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.
[71] "U.S. carries point in arms sales to New Government," *The Washington Post*, 15 May 1925.
[72] Thomas Burton to secretary of state, 13 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.
[73] Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 222; Cabinet, Proceedings and Memoranda of Cabinet Committee on Arms Traffic Convention 1925, April 30, 1925, TNA, CAB 27/274.

in removing mandatory export licenses for small arms and ammunition that could be used for both military and "other purposes."[74]

Despite these differences, the great powers agreed that arms imports and exports should be licensed and publicized, although American representatives prevented the creation of a Central Office of Information under League control. Instead, signatories of the convention promised to publish statistical information regarding arms imports and exports, a compromise that suited U.S. policy but undercut the entire enterprise.[75] The smaller states at Geneva opposed publicizing export licenses, leading to a major division between producer and non-producer states. Non-producer states argued that the publication of arms imports would reveal secrets of national defense, while armament figures in manufacturing states would remain secret. Licensing would further leave small states at the mercy of exporting governments, hindering their ability to purchase arms from private manufactures and violating state sovereignty.[76]

In particular, states bordering the Soviet Union opposed publicizing their munitions trade. Although it was actively importing and exporting arms, the Soviet Politburo had declined to attend the arms traffic conference.[77] By unilaterally publishing their armament figures, border states would reveal their military strength to the Soviet Union. In order to avoid what military strategists regarded as an "unmitigated intelligence disaster," the convention contained an article that reserved the right of Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Poland, and Romania to opt out of the treaty's publicity clauses.[78] Other governments requested the same right, but Burton and the American

[74] Ball, "Britain and the Decline of the International Control of Small Arms in the Twentieth Century," 825-26.
[75] "The Arms Traffic Conference: A Difficulty Solved," *The Times* [London, England], 19 May 1925.
[76] David Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 222; Webster, "The Transnational Dream," 503-04; Webster, "Making Disarmament Work," 556-57; Thomas Burton to secretary of state, 13 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA; Thomas Burton to secretary of state, 21 May 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/226 to 500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.
[77] Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 223.
[78] Ibid., 228.

delegation rallied against this, arguing that too many exceptions would make the treaty ineffective.[79]

The continuation of prohibited land and sea zones, renamed "special zones," for arms transfers in Africa and the Middle East caused further disagreement. Iran eventually walked out of the conference in protest. The governments of Ethiopia and Iran attacked the application of "special zones," arguing that their governments had the right to import weapons and to regulate the arms trade within their territory and maritime ports. Prince Arfa' ed-Dowleh of Persia declared that designated special zones went against the "inauguration of a fresh era of justice and equality among the members of the League of Nations," while Tafari Makonnen of Ethiopia argued that his country's need to procure arms and munitions "cannot differ from that of the other sovereign States Members of the League."[80] In the end, Ethiopia was excluded from the prohibited zone, but Makonnen had to sign a declaration stating that Ethiopia would not export or re-export arms to other African countries within the prohibited zone.[81]

British representatives, however, refused to remove the Persian Gulf from the treaty's maritime zone. British intelligence indicated that Persia was a principle transit route in the movement of arms from Russia to India. As Russia would not be a party to the convention, the British wanted to patrol the Persian Gulf and South Persia. British military and diplomatic elites did not trust the Iranian government to stop the arms trade to Indian revolutionary terrorists.[82] Sir Percy Cox, the delegate for the British Government of India, declared that the Indian government had been forced to wage an eleven-year war at a cost of half a million pounds against small

[79] Thomas Burton to secretary of state, 4 June 1925, Central Decimal File, 1910-29, 500.A14/226-500.A14/313, Box 5194, RG 59, NARA.
[80] Tafari Makonnen to secretary-general, April 22, 1925, Document No 43334, Dossier No 4407, R 186, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA; Prince Arfa'ed-Dowleh to the President of the Commission, Geneva, July 7, 1924, R230, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[81] "Zone Ban Arguments Stir Arms Conference," *The New York Times*, 12 June 1925.
[82] Foreign Office to Sir P. Loraine, April 7, 1925, TNA, ADM 1/8699/113.

distributers on the Persian Gulf because they "had not the right to search ships which were suspected of carrying illicit cargoes of arms destined to hill tribes of the Indian frontier."[83] As a result of the massive illicit arms trade in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, Cox and the British delegate, Lord Onslow, could not agree to the Iranian request that vessels flying the Persian flag in the maritime zone be exempted from supervision.

The Iranian government sought allies in its protests against the special zones and reached out to the U.S. State Department for support.[84] In April 1925, American embassy officials in Teheran informed the State Department that Iran's prime minister desired that the American delegates in Geneva support Persia's demand not to be included in the prohibited zone. The Iranian prime minister intimated that a refusal of Persia's demand would necessitate an agreement with Soviet Russia for the supply of arms and munitions.[85] In response, the Division of Near Eastern Affairs sent a telegram to Teheran, informing embassy officials that the State Department had instructed its representatives to support Iran's position at the arms traffic conference. Officials in the Division of Near Eastern Affairs believed that the Department of State "might just as well take credit for this work with the Persian Government."[86] When the Iranian government forced a vote on whether to include the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman in the maritime zone, however, the United States abstained from voting, causing much controversy and judgment about the alleged anti-imperial stance of the American government.[87] The vote backed the British position and the Iranian government withdrew from the conference.[88] While

[83] "Arms Sale Parley hits a League Snag," *The New York Times*, 15 May 1925.
[84] Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation with Mr. Kazemi, Persian Charge, 19 March 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[85] W. Smith Murray, Teheran to secretary of state, 11 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[86] Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, 24 April 1925, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[87] "Zone Ban Arguments Stir Arms Conference," *The New York Times*, 12 June 1925.
[88] "Arms Traffic Conference: Persian Delegate Withdraws," *The Times* [London, England], 16 June 1925.

British representatives succeeded in keeping the "special zones" in Africa and the Middle East, they failed to convince the other delegates to support searching ships suspected of carrying illicit arms. The United States led the fight against the right of search during transit and the article was dropped from the treaty.[89]

Questions of security and sovereignty remained unresolved in the final Arms Traffic Convention of June 17, 1925. The treaty threatened to publicize the military strength of non-producing states, while tightly restricting arms exports to certain "special zones" in Africa and the Middle East. Licensing requirements further empowered exporting governments at the expense of smaller states that depended on buying weapons from private manufactures and government firms. In a telling sign, the conference left the enforcement of the treaty up to publicity rather than sanctions. The futility of this decision was already known, as journals such as the *Journal de Genève* had previously reported on the gross difference between publicized arms exports and imports.[90] The conference, therefore, played to public opinion by appearing to institute a regime that controlled the arms trade, but in reality, did not bind governments to following the treaty's provisions. As a result of these obstacles, the Arms Traffic Convention of 1925 never entered into force. The League's Assembly also deterred ratification by pushing to immediately control the private manufacture of arms. After a few failed attempts to assemble a conference on private manufacture, the League's focus shifted to general disarmament and the mammoth World Disarmament Conference of 1932-34.[91]

The year 1925 seemed ripe for international cooperation. European governments concluded the Locarno Agreements, and officials in the League of Nations persuaded the United

[89] "America Wins Point on Arms in Transit," *The New York Times*, 20 May 1925.
[90] William Martin, "General attitude toward International Problems," *Journal de Genève*, 17 February 1925, American Foreign Service Report, Berne, Switzerland, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[91] Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 229-30; Webster, "Making Disarmament Work," 556-57.

States to attend a conference in Geneva and sign a treaty regulating the arms trade. Yet, the multilateralism of the period obscures the portentous role that national and colonial interests had in shaping the arms traffic conference and convention of 1925. The British perceived the "non-white" world in ferment and wanted the arms trafficking treaty to keep small arms from reaching insurgencies and anti-colonial terrorists. The French in turn desired to arm their allies in Europe, while keeping Germany disarmed. The American State Department sought to prohibit arms shipments to "troubled areas of the world," but faced difficulty in enforcing this standpoint as private arms manufactures argued that the government's policy hurt American businesses and Congress eschewed the League of Nations. In the end, these factors hindered the treaty's power as governments refused to jeopardize their liberty of commerce, expose secrets of national defense, or cede power to an inter-governmental body.[92]

Finally, it was not only concerns about commerce, sovereignty, and security that doomed the arms traffic conference, but also a pervasive lack of trust. Governments did not trust one another or the international system. The British minister of labor rhetorically asked his colleagues whether they would be willing to risk Britain's national safety on the presumption that other foreign powers would loyally abide by an international treaty. The answer in 1925 was no.[93] Too much private and public intelligence indicated that the illicit trade in arms and munitions continued to flourish, supplied just as much by allies as by enemies. As a result, the two multilateral efforts to control conventional arms transfers during the interwar years – the Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition (1919) and the League of

[92] William Martin, "General Attitude toward International Problems," *Journal de Genève*, 17 February 1925, American Foreign Service Report, Berne, Switzerland, Central Decimal File 1910-29, 500.A14/67 – 500.A14/225, Box 5193, RG 59, NARA.
[93] A. S-M, Memorandum by the Minister of Labor, Control of the Private Manufacture of Arms, Munitions and Implements of War, [February 1925] TNA, CAB 16/59.

Nations Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War (1925) – never entered into force.

Conclusion

The implementation of an international arms trafficking convention derived from British imperial security policy after the First World War. British policymakers had negotiated the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 to set up a common policy for the destruction of surplus stocks of munitions produced during the war, and most importantly, to keep small arms from reaching revolutionary nationalists in the colonial world. Immediately after the war, the Allied governments had destroyed the munitions abandoned by retreating armies in occupied territories and established commissions of control in former ex-enemy nations to oversee disarmament. The former wartime coalition and the League succeeded in liquidating some surplus stocks after the war, but international efforts largely failed to regulate the illegal market for small arms and guns continued to reach terrorist organizations.[94] The failure of the 1919 convention was a lost opportunity. All of the major arms-producers at the time – the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Italy, Japan, and Czechoslovakia – signed the treaty.[95] Its enforcement coupled with the disarmament clauses of the peace treaties would have helped to deter the buildup and dissemination of conventional weapons in the twentieth century.

By the mid-1920s, both French and American policymakers supported international arms controls and the drafting of a new arms trafficking treaty. For the French, disarmament negotiations served to legally bind the British and Americans to upholding the European status quo and provided a type of security guarantee against German remilitarization. The U.S.

[94] Alex Flint, principal assistant secretary to the Admiralty, Admiralty to War Office and Air Ministry, 1 January 1923, TNA, CAB 16/59; Permanent Advisory Commission on Armaments, Assembly of the League of Nations, 12 June 1922, R217, Document No 21283, Dossier 16267, R217, 1919-1927, Classification 8, LNA.
[95] Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty," 219.

government supported international arms limitations after the Washington Conference of 1921-22 as a way of promoting political stability that would enable the global economy to revive and flourish. Great power consensus for a new arms treaty resulted in the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War in Geneva, Switzerland in May 1925. The conference produced a revised Arms Traffic Convention signed by eighteen states, including the United States, Britain, France, Italy, and Japan. The diplomacy of Geneva, however, failed to halt arms transfers or the military buildup in central and eastern Europe.

The information collected by the U.S. State Department in the spring of 1925 alerted the U.S. government and American delegation in Geneva to the flourishing global arms trade. Two years later, however, the U.S. government shut down the intelligence subunits of the Office of the Under-Secretary of State. Secretary of State Kellogg, who had authorized the State Department to gather information on gun-running in 1925, oversaw the intelligence reforms of June 1927. Kellogg closed the offices so that information regarding international problems like communism would reach the secretary of state more quickly and to disempower the "Harvard clique" that staffed the Office of the Under-Secretary of State.[96] A decade later the Franklin Roosevelt administration abolished the other foreign intelligence section of the State Department, the Division of Eastern European Affairs. These closures ended the centralization of secret intelligence within the State Department, a responsibility that emerged in the First World War, but that eroded over the interwar years.

Before its foreign intelligence sections were shut down, the Office of the Under-Secretary of State undertook an extensive intelligence-gathering operation to better understand the global arms trade. The underutilized records reveal a vast divide between rhetoric and practice at the

[96] Jeffreys-Jones, *Cloak and Dollar*, 79-80.

Geneva arms conference. The carnage of the First World War, the continuation of postwar violence in Europe and the colonies, and the growing demands from domestic electorates that the arms trade be regulated for moral and humanitarian reasons persuaded diplomats to voice their allegiance to an arms control regime. Yet, delegations in Geneva also had to consider national security, economic, and diplomatic imperatives in which the export of arms remained an important foreign policy tool. Importing governments, furthermore, challenged global regulations that undermined their right as a sovereign nation to secure weapons necessary for self-defense. These questions were not in the abstract, as revanchist governments, revolutionary nationalists, communists, anticommunists, and ethnic separatist groups all struggled to acquire small arms and governments and private manufactures (legally and illegally) met that demand. The unregulated small arms trade of the 1920s fueled terrorism in the 1930s, as terrorist groups found an increasing number of state sponsors and the League of Nations struggled to secure the international cooperation necessary for stopping gun-running or suppressing terrorism.

Chapter 5: The India Crisis, 1930-1934

On the night of April 18, 1930, nearly 100 armed revolutionaries calling themselves the "Indian Republican Army" mobilized in Chittagong, a seaport city in East Bengal near the Burmese border, to carry out multiple raids on colonial sites. Led by Surja Sen, the armed revolutionaries cut telephone and telegraph lines, attacked the Assam-Bengal Railway headquarters, and stormed the police and Auxiliary Force armories. The attack killed seven and wounded others. Both armories were burnt down and the rifles removed. The last raid, an attack on the European club had little effect, as the raiders found the club empty for the Easter holiday.[1] By midnight, the revolutionaries had routed the local police, destroyed telephonic communication, and emptied the armories of rifles and small arms. The deputy general of police and another member of the Auxiliary Force, however, located a Lewis gun in a subsidiary armory and opened fire on the group. Following an exchange of gunfire, the raiders retreated into hills north of town.[2]

The next day authorities in Chittagong located a wireless telegraph on a ship docked in the harbor. British officials reported that a "terrorist gang" had raided the armories and killed sentries, and urgently called for reinforcements.[3] Reinforcements arrived on April 20 and the police set out to find the fighters. Another armed engagement occurred between the police and revolutionaries on Jalalabad Hill before sunset allowed the fighters to disappear into the hills and villages around Chittagong. The skirmish left twelve of the raiders dead. Local villagers hid and

[1] Indian Political Intelligence, Revolutionary activities in Bengal, January 1930, L/PJ/12/396, British Library (hereinafter BL), London, England.
[2] H.W. Hale, *Political Trouble in India, 1917-1937* (Allahabad: Chugh Publications, 1974 [Simla, 1937]), 17-21. The Home Department's Intelligence Bureau commissioned Hale of the Indian Police to write this study of political trouble in India from the years 1917 to 1937, expanding an earlier study by James Ker, *Political Trouble in India, 1907-1917*. Ker served in the Indian Civil Service and as a personal assistant to the Director of Criminal Intelligence.
[3] Wedgwood Benn, The Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance (Secret), 28 July 1930, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereinafter TNA), London, United Kingdom, CAB 24/214/23.

safeguarded the remaining revolutionaries, including Surja Sen, until the government sent in the military and re-imposed anti-terrorism legislation. Sen was not found and arrested for almost a year. Other leaders of the Indian Republican Army fled to the French settlement of Chandernagore. An internal disagreement between the revolutionaries exposed their position, and the police led by Charles Tegart stormed their hideout in late August, arresting three and killing one. By October 1930, the police had arrested 162 persons connected to the Chittagong raids.[4]

The Chittagong Armory Raid of 1930 marked a renewed period of terrorist activity in Bengal. Anti-colonial terrorism revived in the 1930s after the expiration of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925, an emergency law that had empowered the government to arrest and imprison revolutionary leaders. The terrorist movement found its greatest support among the *bhadralok* (upper caste, educated elite) classes, and especially with young men at schools and universities.[5] Bengali terrorism in the 1930s differed from earlier campaigns because of the active involvement of female assassins and liaisons, communism's simultaneous expansion, and the emergence of an interconnected "violence movement" capable of carrying out coordinated bombing attacks in various provinces. While Bengal remained the center of revolutionary activity, local chapters connected to the militant Anusilan and Jugantar parties and the Hindustan

[4] Indian Political Intelligence, Revolutionary activities in Bengal, January 1930, L/PJ/12/396, BL; Secretary of state for India, Confidential Appreciation of the Political Situation in India, 19 December 1931, TNA, CAB 24/225/29; Charles Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars: Counterinsurgency in the Twentieth Century* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 146-149; Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 17-23; Michael Silvestri, "'The Sinn Fein of India': Irish Nationalism and the Policing of Revolutionary Terrorism in Bengal," *Journal of British Studies* 39, no. 4 (2000): 479-482.

[5] Marcus Franda, *Radical Politics in West Bengal* (Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1971), 7-8; Durba Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal: Political Violence in the Interwar Years," in *Decentring Empire: Britain, India and the Transcolonial World*, ed. Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2006), 273-74.

Socialist Republican Association also established terrorist cells in Punjab, the United Provinces, and Assam.[6]

In this chapter, I argue that the British government responded with a multipronged approach to counter-terrorism. First, the Government of India empowered local governments with preventive and precautionary "legislative weapons" to suppress the terrorist movement. Local governments relied on special powers enacted in temporary legislative ordinances and criminal law acts. The emergency laws first conferred in Bengal served as a model for anti-terrorism legislation in other provinces during the late 1920s and early 1930s. As the British learned, reliance on temporary ordinances to suppress terrorism had its limits. While the laws kept attacks from occurring by enabling the police to intern hundreds of alleged terrorists in detention camps without trials, terrorist groups continued to recruit, rearm, and strategize. The expiration of the special powers undermined police morale, disrupted intelligence gathering, and set the stage for a recrudescence of terrorism.

Second, the Government of India and India Office pursued imperial and international arms controls to keep small arms from reaching revolutionary terrorists. In 1932, the Government of India and India Office held arms conferences in Simla and London to coordinate anti-smuggling efforts among law enforcement, intelligence services, customs officials, and policymakers. The conferences aimed to (1) check the supply of weapons at their source in Europe and (2) prevent their dissemination at Indian ports. After these conferences, British officials made diplomatic overtures to foreign governments where arms smuggling occurred most frequently and requested that shipping companies increase their surveillance and searches

[6] Franda, *Radical Politics in West Bengal*, 16; Secretary of state for India, Terrorism in India, Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, 1933, L/P&J/12/397, BL; Director of Intelligence Bureau (DIB), Revolutionary and Terrorist Activities, April 1929 – December 1930, L/P&J/12/389, BL.

of "native" Indian crew members. Additionally, the Government of India took steps to increase border security at local Indian ports by enlarging customs and police staff.

These initiatives, however, failed to curb the shipment of arms and bombs to revolutionary terrorists. Consequently, British India officials began advocating an international treaty that would ensure governmental cooperation in licensing weapons and stopping illegal export. This approach found little support among London officials who continued to believe that international cooperation was not likely, and in 1933, refused to support the Government of India's suggestion that the British should propose a new arms trafficking treaty under the auspices of the League of Nations. A year later, European terrorism would enable the Government of India to insert arms control protocols into an international anti-terrorism treaty and circumvent London's control over its security strategy.

Anti-Terrorism Legislation

Since the First World War and the Defense of India Act of 1915, the Government of India had relied on special legislative powers to combat domestic terrorism. In 1924-25, the Government of India had sanctioned the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment (Supplementary) Act, an emergency ordinance that empowered British officials to try alleged terrorists in special tribunals and sanctioned imprisonment without trial of individuals involved in terroristic conspiracy. Unprecedented in terms of peacetime powers, the law divided the British government and fractured imperial cooperation over combatting Indian terrorism.

In the early 1920s, the terrorist movement had regrouped in Bengal under the cover of legal political groups connected to the non-cooperation movement. Lord Lytton, governor of Bengal, petitioned the Government of India and the viceroy, Lord Reading, for special powers to arrest revolutionaries and check the terrorist movement. Lord Reading first authorized the arrest

of certain leaders under the provisions of Regulation III of 1818, a statute from the days of the East India Company that had been revived in Bengal during the anti-partition violence of 1905.[7] While Regulation III of 1818 allowed the police in Bengal to arrest high-ranking members of the terrorist movement, new leaders quickly replaced them.

Lord Lytton protested again for broader powers in the form of an ordinance that would allow the police to target and intern the rank and file of the terrorist movement.[8] Lord Reading granted the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance (1924), which faced considerable opposition at the India Office in London and in India where the Swarajist party organized public meetings and strikes to protest its promulgation. Lord Oliver, the Liberal secretary of state for India, criticized the ordinance on the grounds that it stifled political freedom broadly and would be used against the Swaraj political party and its leader C. R. Das. He reprimanded British officials in India for their "constant tendency to identify not only the Swarajist political party, but the whole progressive movement in India with the Bengal terrorist organizations and their conspiracies."[9] The India Office agreed that the "Bengal murder societies are anarchist, terrorist organizations, aiming at destroying the executive machinery of Government, primarily by killing police officers and Government servants." However, Lord Oliver believed that the powers asked for by the Bengal government and the Government of India expanded into a demand for "suppressing, not an anarchist outrage movement, but political 'movements.'" This derived, Oliver believed, from the "habitual sub-conscious propensity of the Indian public service to

[7] Wedgwood Benn, secretary of state for India, The Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance, 28 July 1930, TNA, CAB 24/214/23; Marquess Reading, *Rufus Isaacs: First Marquess of Reading* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1945), 283; Aruna Sinha, *Lord Reading: Viceroy of India* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1985), 151; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 279, 288.
[8] Reading, *Rufus Isaacs*, 283; W.D.R. Prentice, chief secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, Home Department, Bill to provide for the continuance of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925, 16 January 1930, TNA, CAB 24/210/50.
[9] Lord Olivier, India: Special Powers to deal with conspiracies for violence, September 1924, TNA, CAB 24/168/50.

regard all political reforming activity as a source of public danger…" and as a result the law did more than "suppress crimes of violence."[10]

Lord Reading immediately moved to assuage Lord Oliver's concerns. He emphasized the importance of the special legislation for intelligence-gathering and policing, which he believed were vital in suppressing secret conspiracies.[11] In addition, Lord Reading argued that the ordinance would protect not only government officials, but "equally private citizens, who have frequently been the innocent suffers from such outrages and the misguided youths who are its tools and often themselves its victims." In no way, he promised, would the ordinance "touch or affect the interests or liberties of any citizens, whether engaged in private or public affairs, so long as they do not connect themselves with violent criminal methods." [12]

Reading's biographers, including his son, have argued that the former lord chief justice of England granted the emergency powers cautiously and reluctantly.[13] However, when the Bengal Legislative Council refused to codify the ordinance as permanent legislation, Reading used his position as governor-general to unilaterally implement the special powers as the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment (Supplementary) Act, 1925.[14] He, however, limited the powers of the emergency legislation to five years. In addition, Lord Oliver ensured that section 11 of the act, which allowed for preventive arrest and detention, would only be used against active terrorists and not members of the Swaraj party or terrorist recruiters and organizations. The police in Bengal arrested 187 persons under the law, including Subhas Chandra Bose. The government arrested him on the grounds that he had hired terrorists in the Calcutta Corporation.[15] Bose's

[10] Ibid.; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 279-80.
[11] Reading to secretary of state for India, 2 April 1925, TNA, CAB 24/210/50.
[12] Reading to secretary of state for India, Enclosure 5, 22 January 1925, TNA, CAB 24/210/50.
[13] Reading, *Rufus Isaacs*, 283-84; Sinha, *Lord Reading*, 155-56.
[14] Reading to the secretary of state for India, 2 April 1935, TNA, CAB 24/210/50.
[15] Bose was originally arrested under Regulation III of 1818 and later charged under the Ordinance of 1925 but never tried in a court. His biographer, Sugata Bose, writes that Bose "did not support acts of individual terrorism and

biographers note that his imprisonment for two-and-a-half-years in Burmese jails hardened the young activist into a national leader, brimming with political ideas and plans.[16]

With most revolutionary leaders in jail or exile, terrorism decreased significantly under the Bengal Criminal Law Act of 1925. Between its issuance and the end of 1928, only one murder by terrorists occurred. By September 1928 all those arrested under the legislation had been set free or put under house arrest. While the law contained political violence in Bengal, authorities ascertained that terrorist cells were emerging in other provinces.[17] Many terrorists went underground in the 1920s or fled to Burma where the terrorist movement regrouped. Revolutionary terrorists were able to escape police surveillance in Burma and to offer outside support to militant Bengal groups. In Burma, the Rangoon Jugantar Party oversaw the smuggling of arms from Singapore, Japan, and China and recruited new members for the armed struggle. In addition, the group publicized the nationalist movement and provided shelter to absconders. High-level Bengali terrorists, including Surja Sen, found refuge in Burma and helped to connect the Burma organization with revolutionary branches in Chittagong, Dakhineswar, and Bhowanipore. [18]

Even with violence declining, authorities in Bengal remained concerned about revolutionaries in Bengal and their "fellow-conspirators" in the Punjab and the United Provinces. In April 1929, the Intelligence Bureau reported that in Bengal "the revolutionary leaders are known to be recruiting, and to be collecting arms and bombs, with a view to a campaign of

---

did not believe *swaraj* could be won by terrorist methods…Bose may not have been averse in principle to an organized armed struggle, but he realized it was not an option for a subject population lacking any weaponry." See Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India's Struggle against Empire* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 55.

[16] Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent*, 57-74; Mihir Bose, *The Lost Hero: A Biography of Subhas Bose* (London: Quartet Books, 1982), 51.

[17] Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 10-11; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 281; Government of Bengal to the Home Department, Government of India, 16 January 1930, TNA, CAB 24/210/50.

[18] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 282.

violence in the future." While they seemed to be waiting until the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925 expired in 1930, "recent information shows that the younger revolutionaries in Bengal do not like the limelight being switched off them, and directed, as it is at present, on to revolutionaries elsewhere."[19] In January 1930, the Government of Bengal again warned the Government of India that the expiration of the emergency ordinance would increase the likelihood of a terrorist outrage and shake the morale of the police. In addition, officials cautioned that the government's intelligence apparatus would be shattered, while the terrorist organizations would immediately gain a large number of recruits from "the discontented intelligentsia among the student community, whose minds have been consistently poisoned by propaganda in the Press and on public platforms."[20] The same month authorities began arresting revolutionaries if they had information linking them to the "New Violence Party," an association of revolutionaries in the United Provinces, Punjab, and Bengal. The Bengal Intelligence Bureau believed that the New Violence party was actively planning a campaign of terror to occur in several districts and that these attacks would target government officials, police officers, and European civilians.[21]

Under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925, the police arrested all of the future male organizers of the Chittagong Armory Raid: Ananta Singh, Ganesh Ghosh, and Surja Sen. While in prison for nearly three years, Singh, Ghosh, and Sen contemplated the failure of earlier terrorist campaigns in Bengal and the success of the Irish nationalist movement. Increasingly younger members of the two major Bengali terrorist groups, the Anushilan Samity

[19] Weekly report of Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, 25 April 1929, L/P&J/12/389, BL.
[20] W.D.R. Prentice, chief secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, Home Department, 16 January 1930, Bill to provide for the continuance of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925, TNA, CAB 24/210/50.
[21] Weekly report of Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, 2 January 1930, L/P&J/12/389, BL.

and Jugantar, embraced the militantly anti-British writings of Patrick Pearse and Dan Breen and studied the methods of the Irish Republican Army. By 1928, the British had released all of the terrorists arrested under the Bengal Ordinance and Regulation III of 1818.[22]

On March 25, 1930, the Bengal Legislative Council amended the Criminal Act, as it was set to expire on April 23, 1930, and revoked the government's ability to intern terrorists without trial. The Bengal government lost its anti-terrorism powers at the same time that police were engaged in controlling mass protests connected to the civil disobedience movement. It was at this opportune moment that revolutionaries stormed the armories in Chittagong.[23] Inspired by the martyrdom advocated by Pearse and the IRA, the young revolutionaries that carried out the Chittagong Armory Raid intended the attack to instigate open armed conflict across India. The raids occurred on the Good Friday before Easter Sunday to commemorate the Easter Week Rebellion of April 1916 in Ireland. The raiders desired to show that Indians could achieve freedom for India without the aid of a strong outside power. Consequently, before and after the attack, the group distributed printed leaflets at schools in Chittagong, Rangoon, Barisal, and Calcutta, announcing that the Indian Republican Army was fighting to free India and urging students and youths to join the fight. Other leaflets called on the people of Chittagong to show their allegiance and support.[24]

After the Chittagong Armory Raid, the emergency powers of arrest and detention were immediately conferred by a new ordinance. In July, the Bengal government asked for the

[22] Kalpana Dutt, *Chittagong Armory Raiders: Reminiscences* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1945, 1979), 1-6; Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars,* 146-47; Silvestri, "'The Sinn Fein of India,'" 467.
[23] Secretary of state for India, The Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance, TNA, CAB 24/214/23; Secretary of state for India, The Question of the Renewal of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925, TNA, CAB 24/210/50; Hale, *Political Trouble in India,* 24.
[24] I. Mallikarjuna Sharma, *Easter Rebellion in India: The Chittagong Uprising* (Hyderabad: Marxist Study Forum, 1993), 1; Dutt, *Chittagong Armory Raiders*, ii-xiii, 1-9; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 285.

replacement of the ordinance by permanent legislation. The Legislative Council deferred, however, and the Bengal Act VI of 1930 was again limited to five years.

The Chittagong Armory Raid electrified the terrorist movement in India and recruits poured into the various terrorist groups, including women and young girls. Women assisted the terrorists by serving as housekeepers, messengers, custodians of arms and increasingly as assassins. In 1931, two female students assassinated the District Magistrate of Tippera. A year later, Bina Das, a female student at the University of Calcutta, attempted to murder the highest-ranking member of the British government in Bengal, the Governor Stanley Jackson.[25] The "sinister" emergence of female assassins created new policing problems for the British. Almost all of the intelligence and surveillance work had focused on young men, while officials and police were loath to raid the houses of prominent Bengalis for their daughters and wives. Furthermore, the involvement of elite women in the revolutionary cause provided a powerful propaganda tool for revolutionary leaders and inspired other women to take action.[26]

The uptick in terrorism among women and youths occurred at the same time that police morale was declining. In March 1931, Lord Irwin, the viceroy of India, and M.K. Gandhi reached a settlement that decreased the activities of the civil disobedience movement. However, the agreement also suggested that the British government was relinquishing its authority. Indian police officers faced a difficult decision of whether to stay loyal to a weakening colonial power or to join the revolution and perhaps future leaders of India. Terrorist groups, furthermore, began to target the police for infiltration. The Intelligence Bureau believed that revolutionaries were

[25] Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 23-24; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 286.
[26] Secretary of state for India, Confidential appreciation of the Political Situation in India, 19 December 1931, TNA, CAB 24/225/29; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 286-87.

actively forming cells within police units in order to topple the organization from within.[27] As the government had cut the intelligence service's staff and budget when the terrorist movement seemed quiescent, intelligence agents had to reestablish new contacts and sources of information.[28] It took a few years before the intelligence services had once again infiltrated revolutionary groups.

As a result, terrorist crime surged in the early 1930s. A month after the Chittagong Armory Raid, revolutionaries launched bombs at police officers in various provinces, including Howrah (Calcutta), Madras, and Multan (Punjab). In June, the Intelligence Branch reported that "A powerful bomb was thrown into the compound of the Chenab Club, Lyallpur, on the night of the 6th June. The attack was undoubtedly directed against the lives of Europeans." The director of the Home Department's Intelligence Bureau believed that the attacks indicated that "The party of violence – the real revolutionary element – has never bowed the knee to Mr. Gandhi."[29] Revolutionary propaganda uncovered by the Intelligence Bureau and circulated widely in Bombay and Bengal declared that:

> Government rules with bayonets and under these circumstances it is mockery to talk of constitutional agitation when no constitution exists at all. Only because Government denies us a gun that we pick up a pistol. Only because Government denies us light that we gather in darkness to compass means to knock out the fetters that hold our mother down. Government denies us liberty, country and humanity, so we have to fight as long as life lasts, fight always, fight every weapon, face all from death to ridicule, face hatred and contempt, work on because it is our duty, for no other reason.[30]

[27] Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 31-32; Director of Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, Revolutionary activities in India, 10 July 1930, L/P&J/12/389, BL.
[28] Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India to Indian Political Intelligence, 4 May 1933, Report by C. E. Fairweather, DIG of Police, 10 March 1933, on the work of the Central and District Intelligence Branches in Bengal from 1930-32, L/PJ/12/466, BL; Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 146-149.
[29] Weekly report of Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, 22 May 1930 and 12 June 1930, L/P&J/12/389, BL.
[30] "In Sacred and Inspiring Memory of Jatindra Nath Das" Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India to Indian Political Intelligence, 7 October 1930, *L/P&J/12/389, BL.*

By the summer of 1931, the Government of India viewed public security as endangered and under siege. That year sixty-seven terrorist outrages, including nine murders, occurred. The next year terrorist attacks increased, reaching a total of seventy-five. The Chittagong uprising also encouraged bolder initiatives, such as the Jagantar Party's detailed program of terrorism, which included killing Europeans in hotels, clubs, and cinemas. British officials in Bengal now believed that revolutionaries considered political violence a viable means of ending British rule in India. [31]

By the early 1930s, the Government of India considered existing legislation, including the renewed Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, as "insufficient to cope with the menace."[32] The Government of India conferred new emergency powers to the Bengal government, including a Press Act which prohibited incitement to murder or violence in the public press, and another Bengal Emergency Powers Ordinance, which extended the powers of commandeering property, imposing collective fines, and regulating traffic and transport to the District Magistrate of Chittagong. This law also expanded the definition of "absconders" to include anyone who evaded internment or refused to give information to authorities. In 1932, the Legislative Council passed two more pieces of emergency legislation: the Bengal Suppression of Terrorist Outrages Act, 1932 and the Bengal Criminal Law (Arms and Explosives) Act, 1932.[33]

In addition to using instruments of law to combat terrorism, the Government of Bengal deployed its police and military. Immediately after the Chittagong attacks, authorities posted punitive police in fifty-two villages in the Chittagong district and assembled a mobile police

[31] Government of India to secretary of state for India, The Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance, 25 July 1930, TNA, CAB 24/214/23; Secretary of state for India, The Situation in India, 3 February 1934, TNA, CAB 24/247/28; Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 25, 31-32.
[32] Secretary of state for India, The Situation in India, 3 February 1934, TNA, CAB 24/247/28.
[33] Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 34-35; Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 146-149; Secretary of state for India, The Situation in India, 3 February 1934, TNA, CAB 24/247/28.

striking force of ninety-six men. Assisted by the military, police conducted a hundred house-to-house searches each month.[34] The fear of full-blown insurrection led the provincial government to appoint Sir John Anderson as Governor of Bengal in 1932. Anderson had served as under-secretary of state in Ireland and had trained and supervised the Royal Irish Constabulary during the Irish War of Independence. Drawing upon his experience in Ireland during the early 1920s, Anderson implemented strategic policies to counter terrorism in Bengal, including the development of Military Intelligence Officers (MIOs), who served as plainclothes inspectors in the Intelligence Branch, and coordinated the use of military forces in search operations for alleged terrorists. The police also applied curfews and collective fines, and the military was deployed to aid the police in search and seizure operations. [35]

Terrorism gradually declined in Bengal because of the large-scale military assistance provided to the police and the refinement of intelligence and search efforts in "disaffected villages." From 1932 to 1933, terrorist attacks in Bengal declined by over 30 percent, and by over 60 percent from 1933 to 1934. In 1933, an average of eight crimes had occurred each month; by September 1934 the average for the year had dropped to 1.5 a month.[36] This improvement led to a withdrawal of punitive police and collective fines. In a speech for a police parade held in July 1935, however, Governor Anderson reminded his audience that even though the situation had improved the "terrorist menace" remained a threat to "whole future welfare of the Province," and advocated the hardening of attitudes "into a practical determination to show definitely, by deed as well as by word, that the terrorist is regarded as a public enemy."[37]

[34] Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 146-149.
[35] Silvestri, "'The Sinn Fein of India,'" 479-482; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 289.
[36] Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 148; Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 47-49.
[37] Government of India, Appreciation of the Political Situation, 16 August 1935, TNA, CAB 24/256/25.

By 1936, terrorist incidents in Bengal fell to a mere four and the government pronounced the insurgency defeated.[38] The Bengal police, however, warned that Bengal terrorist groups had "not abandoned terrorism" and were awaiting the release of their leaders from internment while continuing to recruit members. The police maintained that District Intelligence Officers should "keep in touch with reliable agents and obtain accurate information regarding the progress made by the Anushilan Samiti and the Jugantar Party in their districts."[39] The lasting legacy of the Chittagong Armory Raid was to convince police and intelligence officials that the terrorist groups would carry out attacks as soon as the emergency anti-terrorism legislation expired and that the government needed to remain vigilant even during periods of calm.

The Government of India extended the same policy of law and order to Assam after many Bengal terrorists fled there. In March 1934, the Government of India declared that the "principal Bengal terrorist organizations now have branches in the districts of Assam adjacent to Bengal and there is reason to believe that other outrages have been and are being planned." Government officials surmised that terrorist cells from Bengal were likely to move into neighboring provinces, and warned that if steps were not taken to "to deal with terrorists who cross the border into Assam" all of the police work in Bengal would prove futile.[40] British officials in Assam implemented the same emergency legislation as in Bengal. In March 1934, Assam's legislative assembly enacted a Criminal Law Amendment Bill that bestowed the police with powers to arrest terrorist suspects without trials and to try terrorist offenders in special courts. Similar legislation was also enacted in Punjab where the Criminal Investigation Department had a list of over 3,000 persons considered terrorists or terrorist sympathizers and organizers. In July 1932,

[38] Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 148.
[39] Extract from Bengal Police Weekly Review, 9 December 1937, L/P&J/12/395, BL.
[40] Secretary of state for India, Proposals of the Government of India for the Extension of Special Powers for dealing with Terrorists to Assam (Secret), 3 March 1934, TNA, CAB 24/247/51.

the Punjab government enacted the Special Powers Ordinance, which was followed by the Punjab Criminal Law (Amendment) Act in November 1932. As in Bengal, terrorism decreased with the introduction of special powers and emergency law.[41]

The Bengal counter-terrorism model, however, also generated a number of profound problems, particularly in the huge detention camp system it created. By 1934, the police had arrested 3,110 persons for terrorist crimes. The majority of these were detained in camps and prisons within Bengal at Buxa, Hijli, and Deoli.[42] Prisoners frequently staged hunger strikes. In 1931, British guards opened fire on unarmed detainees during an uprising at the Hijli detention camp, killing two prisoners and wounding three. The riots at Hijli drew national and international attention to prison conditions in India and the mass imprisonment of individuals without trial. The illegality of such methods increased sympathy for the terrorists and made the prison system a focus of anti-government sentiment.[43] The director of the Intelligence Bureau complained that "terrorist prisoners managed…to keep themselves very much in the public eye." By 1937, the release of "terrorist convicts" emerged as a major political issue.[44] Massive hunger strikes by political prisoners at the Andaman jail and the promulgation of the new Government of India Act led British officials to accede to demands that detainees slowly be released.[45]

Protests against the camps led John Anderson to realize that detaining large numbers of men and women was an untenable solution. Even as terrorism decreased in Bengal, Anderson recognized that "preventive police pressure" based on force and coercion would not end anti-colonial sentiment. Consequently, he began to advocate social and economic reform that would

[41] Hale, *Political Trouble in India*, 77.
[42] Ibid., 31-32, 47-49.
[43] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 288-89; Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, Confidential Review of the Terrorist Situation in India during the year, 1937, February 1938, L/P&J/12/395, BL; Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars,* 146-149.
[44] Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, Confidential Review of the Terrorist Situation in India during the year, 1937, February 1938, L/P&J/12/395, BL.
[45] Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 290.

alleviate unemployment among youths most susceptible to joining the terrorist movement. In 1933, he appointed an Economic Commission to develop a long term economic strategy that would create jobs and provide young Bengalis with an "outlet" other than terrorist crime. [46]

The Government of Bengal was also motivated to advocate social and economic reform because of the inroads of communism in the region. The communist movement in Bengal dated to 1921 when a number of Bengalis established working relations with the Communist International (Comintern). The Government of India believed that the Comintern and Russian and British communist parties supplied Indian revolutionaries with money and logical support. As many communist agents were also British subjects, the government continued to request an immigration act that would allow the Government of India to deport British subjects convicted of organizing subversive activities. In 1927, Lord Birkenhead, the secretary of state for India, drew the attention of the Home and Foreign Offices to the "number of British subjects, agents or emissaries of the Communist International," who had entered India in recent months for the purpose of communist propaganda. Lord Birkenhead's requested that the secretary of state for foreign affairs, Austen Chamberlain, help to strengthen the passport system and keep "British subjects, well known to be Communists," from obtaining passports for journeys to foreign and particularly continental destinations.[47] London, however, never reformed the passport system.

During the 1930s, the Communist Party of India (CPI) launched a recruitment drive in the jails of Bengal, successfully recruiting a large number of *bhadralok* terrorists. The British Communist Party's call for open revolution in India, coupled with mass strikes in the textile

[46] Secretary of state for India, Review of the Indian Situation, 3 February 1934, TNA, CAB 24/247/28.
[47] Secretary of state for India to under-secretary of state, Foreign Office and under-secretary of state, Home Office, 10 June 1927, L/P&J/12/312, BL.

industry sponsored by the CPI, led the Government of India to ban the CPI in 1934.[48] Nonetheless, the CPI grew from 37 members in 1934 to more than 1000 members in 1942 and to almost 20,000 members in 1947.[49] In 1938, the deputy director of the Home Department's Intelligence Bureau reported that

> At the present time allegiance to a program of mass violence seems to be the only common factor to terrorism throughout India. Whether this program is to be worked in conjunction with Communists or Socialists, or whether Congress must be converted to it, are problems now exercising the terrorist mind. While terrorists everywhere seem to be intrigued with the Communist program of mass violence, those who have suffered on account of their past activities, have hitherto shown no inclination to resort again to individual terrorism.[50]

Communist doctrine advocated mass revolution over individual acts of terrorism, leading British officials to worry about the infusion of Indian nationalism with socialist thought and practices. The detention camp system unintentionally expanded communism's reach by allowing the CPI to recruit members and introducing many terrorists to the writings of Marx and Lenin. As many as a thousand imprisoned terrorists joined the CPI during the "communist consolidation movement" in the jails of Bengal during the 1930s.[51] The merger of communism with Bengali nationalism led the Home Department to conclude that "the aim of the new school of Bengal revolutionaries is mass revolution; it is an economic as well as a political movement and is of course inspired by the ideas of communism."[52] The persistency of political assassination,

[48] Secretary of state for India, proposed legislation to deal with communism in India (Secret), April 1934, TNA, CAB 24/248/34; Peter Heehs, *India's Freedom Struggle, 1857-1947* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 131; John Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India: M.N. Roy and Comintern Policy, 1920-1939* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 209.
[49] Franda, *Radical Politics in West Bengal*, 13.The partition of Bengal in 1947 created West Bengal in India and East Bengal (now Bangladesh). West Bengal is one of two states in the Indian Union where communist parties have been elected to form coalition governments.
[50] Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, Confidential Review of the Terrorist Situation in India during the year, 1937, February 1938, L/P&J/12/395, BL.
[51] Franda, *Radical Politics in West Bengal*, 19-27.
[52] Home Department to A. Dibbin, India Office, 19 May 1939, L/P&J/12/395, BL.

coupled with the fear that individual terrorism would evolve into mass revolution, led the Government of India to prioritize disarming the Indian public.

Arms Controls

Along with enacting domestic anti-terrorism legislation, British officials in India pursued international arms controls that would keep small arms from reaching Indian terrorist groups. While Germany had tried to land cargos of arms in India during the First World War, post-war conditions made it "far easier than before to obtain firearms and there are adventures in most countries who are willing to provide firearms to any one who can pay the price and arrange for the receipt."[53] As a result, the British moved to control the arms traffic in Afghanistan and in Persia and the Persian Gulf where "[i]n view of the character of the population beyond the frontiers of India, it is clear that grave danger to public tranquility would be caused if these large quantities of weapons and ammunition were to reach its borders."[54] Although British officials feared that large caches of firearms "sufficient to encourage the madness of open revolution and anarchy" would be smuggled into India, intelligence collected in the mid-1920s indicated that arms did not reach India in bulk shipments. Instead, lascars and sailors on ships sailing from European ports smuggled small arms into India in ones and twos.[55]

In the mid-1920s, the Government of India had invested heavily in determining the origins of the illicit arms trade. Studies by the government's intelligence services, Indian Political Intelligence (IPI) and the Home Department's Intelligence Bureau, revealed that the majority of weapons smuggled into India derived from the European ports of Hamburg,

[53] Extract from council proceedings official report Bengal legislative council, 7 January 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[54] Letter from the Government of Bengal, 4 February 1925 and 6 April 1925, Home Department, Government of India to under-secretary of state for India, India Office, 16 April 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL; J.G. Laithwaite, India Office to Major N.G. Hind, Committee of Imperial Defense, 21 May 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[55] Extract from Council Proceedings Official Report Bengal Legislative Council, 7 January 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.

Antwerp, and Marseilles.[56] In addition, the agency of Rash Behari Bose in Japan supplied a small amount of weapons to revolutionary groups.[57] Most of the arms found in the possession of Bengal terrorists were of German make and derived from the port of Hamburg. The Home Department concluded that at least "one well-known agency for the export of arms illicitly [exists] in Hamburg and that port is the largest market for the trade and some of its police are credibly reported to be in the pay of the arms traffickers."[58] Anti-smuggling and intelligence operations decreased in the late 1920s, as domestic anti-terrorism legislation kept the revolutionary movement quiescent.

When terrorism revived in India after the Chittagong Armory Raid in April 1930, the Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India's Home Department and IPI returned to the "old question of arms smuggling into India." In May 1932, the Intelligence Bureau concluded that at the "present time one of the most important factors in the terrorist situation in Bengal is the number of firearms in the hands of terrorists, and naturally the Bengal Government as well as the police, are very anxious that it should be made as difficult as possible for terrorists to acquire arms."[59] The government created a special police staff to combat the smuggling of firearms through the port of Calcutta and in May 1932 held an arms smuggling conference in Simla.

The next month the India Office held an arms conference in London and organized a special committee to ascertain how to (1) stop arms getting onboard ships bound for India and (2) prevent any arms that were on board from being landed in India. The committee consisted of

[56] Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, Memorandum on the Situation in Bengal and the arms traffic, 29 October 1924, L/PJ/12/91, BL; J.A. Wallinger, Indian Political Intelligence to David Petrie, Intelligence Bureau, 4 March 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[57] Deputy Inspector General of Police for Railways and Criminal Investigation, Burma, 30 August 1935, L/P&J/12/93, BL.
[58] Government of Bengal, 4 February 1925 and 6 April 1925, Home Department, Government of India to under-secretary of state for India, India Office, 16 April 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[59] Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India to Indian Political Intelligence, 3 May 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.

officials from the India Office; Board of Trade, Mercantile Marine; H.M. Customs; Commissioner of Police, Port of London Authority; Home Intelligence; SIS (Secret Intelligence Service); Passport Control; and IPI.[60] Malcom Seton of the India Office and Stewart Menzies of SIS in the War Office briefed the attendees about the problem of arms traffic to India and the steps the government took in 1924-25 to curb the traffic. Menzies stated that large shipments of arms were "practically all destined for China," while arms traffic to India was on a "small scale" and not conducted through "big international smuggling organizations." The committee first considered how to "prevent lascars from purchasing arms while on shore in Continental ports," deciding that the India Office should approach British lines and the Hansa Line (German Steamship Company), demi-officially on the subject, "pointing out the dangers and asking for co-operation."

Next, the committee reviewed police cooperation at continental ports. Major Valentine Vivian reported that while certain restrictions on the sale of arms at Hamburg existed the police were "very slack" at present in enforcing the law, and that in practice "it was easy for foreign, and particularly colored, seamen to purchase arms." A preventive system existed, however, and the local police assisted in individual cases when asked to do so.[61] Rotterdam, he stated, did not "present a serious problem." As Dutch authorities desired to stop the illicit export of arms to the Dutch East Indies, they carefully controlled the sale of arms and the local authorities eagerly cooperated with the British.

[60] The following were present at the 12 July 1932 meeting at the India Office: Malcom Seton, India Office (Chairman); E.J. Foley, Board of Trade, Mercantile Marine; J.S. Sutton, H.M. Customs; W.H. Webster, Commissioner of Police, Port of London Authority; G.M. Liddell, Home Intelligence; Stewart Menzies, SIS (Secret Intelligence Service) (MI1c), War Office; Valentine Vivian, Director of Passport Control; Sir Charles Tegart, India Office; R.T. Peel, India Office; M.J. Clauson, India Office; J. Nott-Bower, India Office; and Indian Political Intelligence (IPI).
[61] Arms Conference, India Office, 12 July 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.

Belgian ports, particularly Antwerp, facilitated arms smuggling on a large scale. Menzies, Vivian, and IPI all discussed the situation in Belgium, noting that at present no restrictions existed to control the sale or export of arms, and that a large proportion of the inhabitants depended on the trade for their livelihood. The Belgian authorities evinced "no desire to cooperate in any attempt to stop the export of arms to India," though the police were "were willing to assist in procuring information in particular instances of purchases by colored seamen when asked to do so, though they could take no action against the vendor." Vivian informed the committee that recent internal trouble caused by the existence of "vast numbers of arms in Belgium" had recently prompted Belgian authorities to draft a bill to impose restrictions on the sale and possession of arms. The committee decided that this offered a "favorable opportunity of bringing to the notice of the Belgian Government the question of the traffic to India and the recovery of a number of pistols of Belgian origin from Indian terrorists."[62]

Lastly, Charles Tegart drew upon his police experience in India to argue that "more should be done in India" to bring other Indian ports in line with the "intensive arrangements already adopted in Calcutta for detecting smugglers on arrival." For example, Burma lacked "the stimulus provided by assassinations in Bengal" to check the smuggling of firearms in Rangoon and other Burmese ports. Weapons from these ports made their way to Bengal terrorist groups.[63] Tegart disagreed with the Home Department's director of the Intelligence Bureau who had recently reported that financial difficulties "stood in the way of inducing other provinces to provide funds at such a time as the present for combatting an evil which does not affect them to anything like the extent to which it affects Bengal." Tegart argued that the additional expenses

[62] Ibid.
[63] Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India to Indian Political Intelligence, 3 May 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL; Deputy Inspector General of Police for Railways and Criminal Investigation, Burma, 30 August 1935, L/P&J/12/93, BL; Government of Burma to the Home Department, Government of India, 9 May 1935, L/P&J/12/93, BL.

for expanding local Criminal Investigation Departments were negligible and mostly involved the payment of rewards for information and seizures.

The committee decided that the India Office should address the Government of India asking for information as to the "the actual position at present in the ports of Bombay and Karachi as compared with Calcutta, and then if necessary to suggest to them the desirability of strengthening the existing arrangements in those ports." In addition, Tegart suggested that the Goonda Act in Calcutta should be extended to all of India. This legislation would empower local governments to expel persons known to be involved in the arms trade from the area of their operations. The committee agreed to also bring this suggestion to the attention of the Government of India.[64]

After the meeting, the India Office reached out to the Foreign Office to address arms smuggling with foreign governments. The secretary of state for India, Samuel Hoare, reported to Foreign Secretary John Simon that "firearms and ammunition of foreign manufacture have figured in several recent terrorist outrages. These arms are not imported in large consignments, which could be dealt with without any great difficulty, but are for the most part smuggled in by seamen landing from ships touching at Indian ports." Hoare intended to make "certain suggestions to the Government of India in regard to possible action in India," but he also believed that "an effort should be made to enlist the cooperation of the authorities in the European countries from which the arms are being imported into India." A large portion of the arms were of Belgian origin, and, as Hoare understood, the Belgian government had under consideration a bill for the restriction of the sale of arms in order to deal with domestic arms cases. This offered "a favorable opportunity for placing before the Belgian Government the question of the traffic in arms to India." Hoare requested that the British ambassador in Brussels

[64] Arms conference, India Office, 12 July 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.

address the question with the Belgian government and seek their support in preventing the "purchase of firearms by foreign seamen, and particularly colored seamen, in Belgian ports."[65]

Over the summer of 1932, British officials in Belgium worked to secure Belgian cooperation in prohibiting the sale of revolvers to crew members of ships plying between Antwerp and Indian ports.[66] Lord Granville at the British embassy in Brussels oversaw the appeal to Paul Hymans, the Belgian minister for foreign affairs. He first had to address a miscommunication with the Belgian minister, clarifying that he "was not referring to the ordinary traffic in arms and ammunition," but to the "infiltration of arms and ammunition of Belgian origin into India."[67]

> It is an entirely different kind of traffic which, in the interests of the safety of British officials in India, it is most desirable to check. The seamen who come ashore at Antwerp, and other Belgian ports and who are often themselves of Indian or colored origin, find it extremely easy to purchase in the Belgian ports, and subsequently to smuggle on board ships sailing for India, pistols and similar weapons and ammunition for them. I understand that the seamen usually purchase these weapons in shops and cafes where they can be sold without any license whatever. The weapons are then resold by the seamen in Indian ports and thus pass into the hands of terrorists who use them for political assassination.[68]

Lord Granville requested that the Belgian government promulgate the arms legislation under consideration as it would help to "check such promiscuous sales of weapons" by making it "impossible for a Lascar seamen to purchase an arm except from a registered shop where he would have to give his name and address and produce a permit." British diplomats in Belgium

[65] R.T. Peel to the under-secretary of state, Foreign Office, 19 July 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[66] Nevile Bland, British embassy, Brussels to Sir John Simon, 6 July 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[67] Lord Granville, British embassy, Brussels to Monsieur Paul Hymans, minister for foreign affairs, 17 August 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[68] Ibid.

emphasized that it was of "the highest possible interest" to the Government of India that the arms legislation be enacted and strictly enforced.[69]

The arms conference of July 1932 also reinvigorated efforts to strengthen cooperation with shipping companies and customs officials. Authorities in India alerted shipping companies that "the prevalence at the present time of terrorist crime in India [made] it particularly desirable to use every endeavor to prevent potential terrorists from acquiring weapons." Police searches at Indian ports and the markings of weapons found on "the persons of terrorist assailants when arrested" indicated that arms were still frequently conveyed from continental ports.[70] Secretary Hoare and the India Office, consequently, requested that shipping companies plying to India exercise "rigorous control" over the "entry of hawkers and peddlers on board your vessel." In view of the "anarchist activities prevalent in Bengal," the India Office requested that shipping companies advise the masters of their vessels trading to the East and India to "carry out systematic searches of their ships, and possibly also of their crews…"[71] Shipping companies like Bibby Bros. & Co and the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company focused on the Indian members of their crew even though past arrests for arms smuggling into Rangoon had implicated Europeans.[72] The companies responded that they had instructed their agents to "see that every native member of the crew on returning from [Marseilles and other European ports] to the ship is searched for arms and ammunition, and this is being done in every case."[73]

The Government of India also followed through on the suggestions of the London arms conference to enhance coordination among local governments. Government officials advocated

[69] Ibid.
[70] R.T. Peel for the secretary of state for India to shipping companies, 12 September 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[71] India Office to British India Steam Navigation Co., London, 1 July 1932, L/PJ/12/91, BL.
[72] Bibby Bros. & Co, Liverpool to India Office, 30 January 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[73] Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O), London to India Office, 31 January 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.

better intelligence and border controls in ports close to Bengal and the improvement of information sharing among police officials in Bengal, Burma, Madras, and Bombay. In particular, the Government of India requested that the courts of local governments impose harsh penalties for convicted smugglers of arms. The government believed that harsh sentences would discourage smugglers and reduce the volume of the traffic.[74]

British officials in India also focused on French possessions in India because they operated as propaganda centers and safe havens for terrorists. During the First World War, French colonial administers had allowed British police officers to operate in French settlements. After terrorism revived in the 1930s, Bengal officials requested the reinstitution of this practice. In March 1933, government officials in Bengal requested that the Government of India negotiate a new treaty with French authorities in the French possession of Chandernagore that would end asylum for Indian terrorists and mandate extradition for British subjects facing terrorism charges.[75]

The police in Bengal desired this arrangement because revolutionaries routinely absconded to Chandernagore in order to escape British police surveillance and French authorities did not assist in the arrest of suspected or wanted persons.[76] The next month, in April 1933, the viceroy, Lord Willingdon, informed French authorities that the British government had recently conducted a study of how persons engaged in revolutionary and terrorist activities acquired fire-arms, particularly revolvers and automatic pistols. British officials had concluded that besides theft of licensed weapons and smuggling through sea-ports, a considerable traffic in such

[74] Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to the secretaries to the Governments of Madras and Bombay, Home Department, and the Chief Secretaries to the Governments of Bengal and Burma, 13 July 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL.
[75] Government of Bengal to the Home Department, Government of India, 21 March 1933, L/PJ/12/6, BL.
[76] Ibid.

weapons moved through the French settlements in India, especially those areas bordering Madras.[77]

French officials, however, did not respond to British requests for cooperation until a Bengali terrorist assassinated a French official in Chandernagore in June 1933. This was the first political murder perpetrated by a Bengali terrorist in the French settlement. The British responded to the assassination by declaring that such events were likely as long as Chandernagore remained a center for revolutionary conspiracy and safe haven for terrorists.[78] The next month the Government of India began working with local French authorities to improve arrangements in Chandernagore. However, local French authorities had to be careful in their efforts, as a strong contingent of public opinion in France opposed helping the British on the grounds that such assistance infringed upon the rights of political refugees and French sovereignty in Indian Settlements.[79] In July 1933, French authorities in Chandernagore enacted a law to regulate the introduction, possession, and use of fire-arms in French territory in India. British policymakers and police officials like Charles Tegart, however, believed that the French regulations were not strict enough and that weapons continued to move through the French postal service into British India.[80] The French governor refrained from taking additional steps, and

[77] Lord Willingdon, Viceroy to the Governor of the French Settlements in India, Pondicherry, 10 April 1933, L/PJ/12/6, BL.
[78] Hugh Molson, India Office to R.A. Butler, India Office, 2 June 1933, L/PJ/12/6, BL.
[79] R.A. Butler, India Office to Hugh Molson, India Office, 1 July 1933, L/PJ/12/6, BL.
[80] Government of India, Home Department (Police) to R. T. Peel, secretary, Public and Judicial Department, India Office, 10 April 1934, L/P&J/12/93, BL; Governor of French Settlements in India to Viceroy, 11 January 1934, L/PJ/12/6, BL.

declined negotiating a new extradition treaty for the French settlements.[81] Indian States and French settlements, consequently, continued to provide arms for terrorists in various provinces.[82]

A year after the arms conference in London, Indian revolutionaries and terrorists still continued to receive small arms from lascars and sailors on ships sailing from European ports. The Government of India once again requested that the India Office help secure the cooperation of foreign governments in enacting restrictive measures over the arms trade.[83] This time, however, Government of India officials also suggested using the League of Nations. Colonial administrators argued that without "some sort of international co-operation" steps taken in India to curb the arms traffic would fail.[84]

Indian officials like C.M. Trivedi proposed a number of possibilities for bringing the question of arms smuggling to the League, including raising the subject at the Disarmament Conference, amending the 1925 Arms Traffic Convention, or proposing a new treaty. Colonial officials argued that since "[t]he League of Nations have tackled subjects such as illicit traffic in drugs and traffic in women and children…they may well take up the question of illicit traffic in arms, which affects many countries..."[85] The Government of India argued that the "ease at which revolvers and pistols, essentially weapons for taking life, can be obtained and concealed" and their increasing use raised a problem "not peculiar to India though its solution is of special importance here." The government, however, was "gravely handicapped by the absence of

[81] Government of India, Home Department (Police) to R. T. Peel, secretary, Public and Judicial Department, India Office, 10 April 1934, L/P&J/12/93, BL; Governor of French Settlements in India to Viceroy, 11 January 1934, L/PJ/12/6, BL. Foreign Office to R.T. Peel, Secretary, Public and Judicial Department, 11 September 1934, L/PJ/12/6, BL; Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense*, 114-16.
[82] Government of Madras to the Home Department, Government of India, 27 October 1933, L/P&J/12/93, BL.
[83] J.G. Laithwaite, India Office to Major N.G. Hind, Committee of Imperial Defense, 21 May 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[84] C.W. Gwynne, deputy secretary, Home Department, Government of India, 16 January 1933, to R.T. Peel, secretary, Public and Judicial Department, India Office, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[85] C.W. Gwynne, Deputy secretary, Home Department, Government of India, 16 January 1933, to R.T. Peel, secretary, Public and Judicial Department, India Office, L/PJ/12/92, BL.

information as to the history of unlicensed weapons which come into the possession of the police."[86]

Consequently, Indian officials argued that greater government control was required and that governments of countries that manufactured arms needed "some system of licenses, combined with governmental inspection, for (i) manufactures of firearms, (ii) arms dealers and gunsmiths, (iii) members of the public who possess firearms." By not knowing the "full history of every revolver and pistol" in India, the police felt they were hindered in investigating and deterring terrorist crime. At this time, however, the Government of India felt "some diffidence in putting forward any specific proposal as they are not fully conversant with the measures taken in other countries to regulate the possession of arms by the public nor are they familiar with the procedure which should be adopted in a case such as this." The government requested the help of the India Office in drafting a proposal to place before the League of Nations.[87]

The India Office and Foreign Office, however, opposed all three recommendations. Most of the arms smuggled into India involved small arms, revolvers, and automatic pistols, and derived from the European ports of Antwerp, Hamburg, and Marseilles and traveled along sea routes from Singapore and Japan.[88] Consequently, the India Office contended that bilateral treaties rather than League action would be a better solution. The India Office submitted this proposal to the Foreign Office, which strongly agreed that the Government of India should apply "diplomatic pressure" on the governments of Belgium, Germany, and France to secure cooperation.[89] Like the India Office, the Foreign Office shied away from an international

[86] C.W. Gwynne, deputy secretary, Home Department, Government of India, 16 January 1933, to R.T. Peel, secretary, Public and Judicial Department, India Office, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[87] Ibid.
[88] J.A. Wallinger, Indian Political Intelligence to David Petrie, Intelligence Bureau, 4 March 1925, L/P&J/12/79, BL; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 281-83.
[89] R.T. Peel, India Office to C. Howard Smith, Foreign Office, 9 March 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.

arrangement under the auspices of the League of Nations, favoring direct negotiations instead.[90] London, once the greatest advocate of a multilateral arms trafficking treaty in 1919 and 1925, now viewed the League as a hindrance to protecting the Empire.

As a result, the India Office and Foreign Office approached the French and Belgian governments directly and indicated their "desirability of a system of registration and licensing which would give greater control, at Marseilles and Antwerp, over the sale or disposal of revolvers and pistols." By spring of 1933, the position at Hamburg had improved, and the India Office believed that "no smuggling is likely to be possible from there for some time to come."[91] In May 1933, the British ambassador in Brussels approached the Belgian minister for foreign affairs about the illicit importation of arms into India and the delayed enforcement of domestic arms control legislation. Monsieur Hymans of the Foreign Ministry responded that the Belgian government was waiting to see if the Disarmament Conference would enact any general instrument to deal internationally with arms traffic. The British ambassador, consequently, formed the impression that "in the absence of any such joint action based on international agreement, the Belgian Government would not be anxious to take independent action on their own initiative, and that in any case, no early entry into operation of the relevant law could be expected.[92]

The British government, however, continued to press the Belgian government as the "absence of a registration and licensing system for manufacture, sellers, bearers and exporters of arms in maritime countries makes it easy for lascars and sailors to obtain revolvers and pistols which may be smuggled into India and sold to terrorists." Moreover, without a registration and

[90] C. Howard Smith, Foreign Office to R.T. Peel, India Office, 24 March 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[91] G.R. Shepherd, India Office to C.W. Gwynne, secretary, Home Department, Government of India, 11 May 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[92] D. MacKillop for the Ambassador, British embassy, Brussels to Sir John Simon, 22 May 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.

licensing system the customs authorities and police in India could not trace the origins of smuggled weapons. The British requested to be immediately notified when the Belgian parliament promulgated the new law prohibiting the sale or carrying of revolvers etc. without permits. [93]

The British Foreign Office also requested that its ambassador in Paris, Lord Tyrrell, approach French authorities about arms smuggling in Marseilles. Lord Tyrell noted that after a careful study of many years the Government of India was of the opinion that the "lack of any effective police supervision in continental ports not only makes it easy for Lascars and sailors to obtain revolvers and pistols which can be smuggled into India and sold to terrorists, but also that the absence of a registration and licensing system for manufactures, sellers, bearers and exporters of arms makes it impossible to trace the origin of such smuggled weapons as the vigilance of the customs authorities and police in India enables them to recover." While, formerly, Antwerp was the principal center of this traffic, representations made to the Belgian government by British officials had led to the promulgation of a law on the subject by the Belgian Parliament.[94] Lord Tyrrell requested that French authorities consider "the possibility of instituting regulations, perhaps on the lines of the Belgian law already referred to, with a view to making it illegal for any unregistered arms dealer to sell, or a person without official license to buy, a revolver or pistol." The system inaugurated by the Belgian legislation appeared to be "admirably suited" to limiting the illicit arms traffic into India.[95]

Despite the overtures made to foreign governments, the India Office considered that the primary responsibility for countering arms smuggling lay with the Government of India. India

[93] Aide-Mémoire, Confidential, British embassy, Brussels, 20 May 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[94] Ambassador, British embassy, Paris to secretary of state for foreign affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Paris, 7 July 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[95] Ibid.

Office officials believed that "no practical results could be expected from an appeal to the League of Nations" and that only "slight improvement might be effected by a diplomatic approach to individual foreign Governments…" Requests that shipping companies cooperate with British officials had met with limited success. Shipping companies assisted authorities in order to avoid their ships being rummaged and delayed in sailing. However, it did not seem that captains had accomplished much and that they tended to throw confiscated revolvers overboard in order to avoid being delayed by legal proceedings. In turn, British Customs officials were instructed to pay special attention to vessels docking in Britain on their way to India from continental ports, but they did not always have the time to make thorough searches.[96]

The India Office argued that it would never be possible, "in view of the almost unlimited source of supply, to trace down the channels through which smuggled weapons reach Indian ports, however much efforts are intensified at this end." As a result, the "only real hope of stopping this traffic lies in the narrow end of the funnel, namely the Indian ports." London officials suggested that the police and intelligence services should be strengthened at "all maritime ports of importance" and that the government needed to encourage greater cooperation among the police and customs officials. Customs officers, in turn, should be encouraged to make thorough searches and rummages, while local governments should be "urged to seek and adopt any possible further means for improving their defense." The Government of India should not leave "any moveable stone unturned."[97]

In the fall of 1933, the Government of India initiated the recommendations of the India Office. Delhi requested that local governments remain in close contact with the masters of vessels docking in India, especially those of the Hansa line, and keep themselves informed of the

[96] G.R. Shepherd, India Office to C.W. Gwynne, joint secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, 11 May 1933, L/PJ/12/92, BL.
[97] Ibid.

results of any special steps undertaken by the companies. The government advised that local governments rummage ships in Indian ports if weapons were recovered on them. British officials prioritized improving police counter-measures in Chittagong, Bombay, Karachi, Madras, and Calcutta. Special measures needed to be undertaken at these cities so that local police and intelligence officers could "combat the evil" of gun-running and terrorism.[98] The Government of India, however, continued to believe that international cooperation was necessary to end arms smuggling to terrorist groups in India. While Indian Political Intelligence maintained a vigilant eye on arms trafficking in Europe, colonial administers waited for an opportune moment to advocate a global arms treaty and licensing system.

Conclusion

After the Chittagong Armory Raid, the Government of India responded to nationalist terrorism with the same approach from the mid-1920s: arms controls, passport restrictions, and domestic anti-terrorism legislation. The third wave of political violence, however, convinced colonial administers that they needed the help of foreign governments to keep small arms from reaching Indian terrorists. By the mid-1930s, the police and government in Bengal had combatted terrorism for almost thirty years. In the words of Samuel Hoare, secretary of state for India, colonial administrators believed that "in the case of the terrorists, nothing can be hoped from a policy of conciliation."[99]

[98] Government of India to the Maritime Local Governments, 15 September 1933, L/P&J/12/93, BL.
[99] Secretary of state for India, memorandum, A Note on Terrorism in India, Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, 1933, L/P&J/12/397, BL.

This belief stemmed from histories of the Indian terrorist movement written by members of the Bengal police and the Home Department's Intelligence Bureau.[100] The Rowlatt Commission of 1917-1918 produced the first study, which was followed by numerous inquiries commissioned by the Political Department of the Government of Bengal and the Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India. In contrast to historians after 1947, British colonial officials were deeply interested in understanding the causes of revolutionary violence in India and using this information to guide counter-terrorism policy. After three waves of revolutionary violence, British colonial officials believed that political terrorism was cyclical and would revive as soon as domestic anti-terrorism laws expired:

> The terrorists who had been interned under the Defense of India Act were all included in the general amnesty of 1920. They merely utilized their freedom to reorganize their forces, and on the failure of Mr. Gandhi's non-cooperation movement of 1920-22 they launched a fresh terrorist outbreak, which by 1925 was so serious that special powers to deal with it had to be taken in the form of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act and Ordinance.
>
> Again, by September 1928 all the *détenus* who had been interned under the Bengal Act had once more been released in view of the lull then existing in terrorist activities. The lull continued until April 1930, and the powers of detention and arrest without trial contained in the Bengal Act were allowed to lapse at the end of the five-year period provided in that Act. Barely a fortnight later occurred the Chittagong Armoury Raid – the first manifestation of a renewed campaign of violent crime. With these experiences as a warning, it is clear that any change in our present policy towards terrorism would be fraught with disaster.[101]

In 1935, the Government of India created a committee of enquiry under the authority of H. J. Twynam and R.E.A. Ray to "review the main features of the revolutionary movement in Bengal and also the measures taken by Government to cope with it." The study was to inform a decision about whether the government should maintain temporary forces employed for anti-

[100] See also H. W. Hale, *Political Trouble in India, 1917-1937* (Allahabad: Chugh Publications, 1974 [Simla, 1937]); James Campbell Ker, *Political Trouble in India, 1907-1917* (Calcutta, India: Superintendent Government Printing, 1917).

[101] Secretary of state for India, memorandum, A Note on Terrorism in India, Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, 1933, L/P&J/12/397, BL.

terrorism work in the Central and District Intelligence Branches.[102] Twynam and Ray's final report was published in 1936 and emphasized that terrorism was more than a police problem; it was "an economic problem, social problem, and a political problem of grave magnitude." The committee attributed *bhadralok* terrorism to depressing economic conditions and limited employment opportunities, along with the growth of Indian nationalism and "prolonged" anti-British propaganda. The committee stressed that "a lull in terrorist outrages is by no means the same thing as a cessation of terrorist activities." After interviewing seventeen district superintendents of police, Twynam and Ray concluded that the terrorist conspiracy had not been suppressed and that recruitment efforts to secure arms, ammunition, and money continued.[103] Even with terrorist crime decreasing, the committee called for vigilance and advised that the Government of India maintain the existing staff for both the District Intelligence Branches and the Central Intelligence Branch. The Government of India also continued to search for a way to control the small arms trade, as law enforcement suggested that Bengal terrorism would reemerge in the future and that each campaign of terrorism had been more violent and dangerous than the one before.

In the mid-1930s, the lessons learned from combatting terrorism in India seemed especially applicable as anti-colonial violence escalated in the British Empire, especially in Egypt and Mandatory Palestine with the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood, Zionist terrorist groups, and the (Palestine) Arab Revolt of 1936-1939.[104] Terrorism was also intensifying in Europe. In October 1934, a double political assassination carried out by Croatian and

[102] H.J. Twynam and R.E.A. Ray, *Enquiry into Temporary Establishments of the Central and District Intelligence Branches of the Bengal Police* (Alipore, Bengal: Bengal Government Press, 1936), 1.
[103] Ibid., 12, 77.
[104] Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 14-21; Donald Bloxham, Martin Conway, Robert Gerwarth, A. Dirk Moses, and Klaus Weinhauer, "Europe in the world: systems and cultures of violence," in *Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe*, eds. David Bloxham and Robert Gerwarth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 23-24.

Macedonian separatists brought almost all the states battling terrorist campaigns to Geneva. While viewing Indian terrorism as distinct from European terrorism, the Government of India was an active participant in the terrorism conferences of the League of Nations.[105] With the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism, which the League finally completed in November 1937, the Indian government found a new way of instituting international arms control and bypassing London's earlier rejection of such an accord in 1933. In a reversal from its position in the early 1920s, the British government in London no longer supported a multilateral arms trafficking treaty or League – viewed as European – solutions to international terrorism.

[105] Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism, Draft Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism, Draft Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court, V.Legal.1936.V.6, Series 1, A.24.1936.V., Observations by Governments, India, League of Nations Archives, United Nations Office at Geneva Library, Switzerland.

Chapter 6: The League of Nations and International Terrorism, 1934-1937

In the early afternoon of October 9, 1934, the Croatian Revolutionary Organization (Ustaša), a separatist terrorist organization receiving safe haven and assistance from the Italian and Hungarian governments, assassinated King Alexander I of Yugoslavia in the streets of Marseilles, France. The attack also killed the French minister for foreign affairs, Jean Louis Barthou, who was riding in the car beside the king. The political murders caused a panic in Europe because of the regional blocs dividing Europe. On one side stood the revisionist powers of Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria backed by Italy. Opposed to this group was the Little Entente consisting of Yugoslavia, Romania, and Czechoslovakia backed by France.[1]

In November 1934, the Yugoslav foreign minister announced that his country would bring formal charges in the League of Nations against those states that had assisted the international terrorists responsible for the murder of King Alexander. Statesmen in France and Great Britain responded immediately. The new French foreign minister, Pierre Laval, and Great Britain's Anthony Eden, undersecretary of state for foreign affairs and lord privy seal, feared what would happen if Yugoslavia accused Italy of complicity in the assassinations of King Alexander and Barthou. Eden later wrote in his memoirs that "the dangers were clear enough, all the ingredients of the fatal weeks before the first world war were there again," and to many "it seemed that events were developing after the fashion of 1914 and there was an obvious parallel with the murders at Sarajevo."[2] Laval and Eden relied on personal diplomacy and private conversations, especially with Italy's Pompeo Aloisi, to persuade Yugoslavia to indict only Hungary.

[1] Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919-1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 494-523; Anthony Eden, *Facing the Dictators: the Memoirs of Anthony Eden, earl of Avon* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), 119.
[2] Eden, *Facing the Dictators,* 120, 124.

The League of Nations convened an extraordinary session in December 1934 to address the Yugoslav case. Eden and Laval secured two diplomatic victories in Geneva. First, the Yugoslav memorandum pointed a finger only at Hungary, omitting Italy's role in arming and harboring the terrorists. Second, the politicians successfully steered the League council debates toward a universal condemnation of international terrorism. In its final resolution, the League council pushed aside the specifics of the Marseilles assassinations and applied international law as a panacea for the growing recurrence of political murder in Europe. On December 10, 1934, the council declared that "the rules of international law concerning the repression of terrorist activity are not at present sufficiently precise to guarantee efficiently international cooperation." League officials then appointed a committee of experts to draft an international convention to assure "the repression of conspiracies or crimes committed with a political and terrorist purpose."[3]

Three years later, in November 1937, the League of Nations adopted two anti-terrorism treaties: a Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism and a Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court. The former designated international terrorism as an international crime, while the latter instituted an international penal court to try alleged terrorists. By 1938, twenty-three governments had signed the terrorism convention and twelve had signed the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court.[4] Neither of the treaties entered into force before or during World War II. After the war, the leading European scholars and jurists on the

[3] Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism, Registry Files 1934–1939, Boxes R3758 and R3759, League of Nations Doc C.546(I).M.383 (I).1937, V (1938), League of Nations Archives (hereinafter LNA), United Nations Office at Geneva Library, Geneva, Switzerland.

[4] Charles Townshend, "'Methods Which All Civilized Opinion Must Condemn': the League of Nations and International Action against Terrorism," in *An International History of Terrorism: Western and Non-Western Experiences*, eds. Jussi M. Hanhimäki and Bernhard Blumenau (New York: Routledge, 2013), 46.

subject of terrorism turned their attention to ratifying the 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Historians and international relations scholars also shifted their gaze away from the League of Nations, viewing the legalistic approach of Geneva as dangerously naïve to the power politics that shaped world affairs. Historians continued to overlook the 1937 conventions because their negotiations occurred in the mid-1930s when the League was weak and the international system was enduring other great stresses due to the global depression, German rearmament, and the militant, expansionist policies of Italy in Ethiopia and Japan in China. The great debates occurred outside the League, as the major powers secretly negotiated security agreements to deal with crises, such as the Stresa Conference in 1935.[5]

Consequently, scholarship on the League's attempt to criminalize international terrorism is noticeably thin. Immediately after the Second World War, a few scholars commented on the resolution of the Hungarian-Yugoslav crisis. While former League officials believed that the League provided a "safety valve" for peacefully diffusing hostilities, other historians criticized British and French policymakers for prioritizing great power interests, particularly rapprochement with Italy, and engaging in "secret diplomacy" to appease Benito Mussolini.[6] In the 1970s, with terrorist attacks on the rise, scholars began to examine the League's efforts to criminalize international terrorism. The historian Bennett Kovrig and political scientist Martin

[5] Susan Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations," *American Historical Review* 112, no 4 (2007): 1091-1117; Mark Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice: The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 133, 147.

[6] See F.P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations*, vol. 2 (London: Oxford University Press, 1952) and Anthony Eden, *Facing the Dictators: the Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962) for stories of League success. A more critical appraisal may be found in Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe Between the Wars, 1918-1941* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1945), 377-78.

David Dubin dismissed the conventions as "political theater," pandering to the politics of appeasement, and not a "serious effort to outlaw international terrorism."[7]

In contrast, legal scholars have been more generous, finding that the League's "core definition" of terrorism has been highly resilient, and influenced later efforts to legally define the term.[8] Merging political and legal history, the historian Mark Lewis recently suggested that the conventions derived from the efforts of international criminal jurists in the *Association Internationale de Droit Pénal* and the International Bureau for the Unification of Criminal Law to outlaw terrorism. Lewis argues in *The Birth of the New Justice* that diplomats and international criminal jurists turned to international criminal law after the Marseilles assassinations to construct a cooperative anti-terrorism system that would serve state security and jointly protect governments against enemies who fled abroad.[9]

The succinct secondary literature on the League's anti-terrorism conventions highlights the statism of the treaties and the influence of interwar European politics on their content and creation. Moreover, as Lewis acknowledges, League officials and European jurists designed the treaties to be "politically flexible," so that "Balkan states with minority problems, the Stalinist USSR (which was trying to eliminate Trotskyites), fascist Italy (which wanted to continue repressing leftists), and Latin American states (which also wanted to repress social

[7] Bennett Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation: The Resolution of the Marseilles Crisis, October 1934 to May 1935," *The Historical Journal* 19, no. 1 (1976): 191-221; Martin David Dubin, "Great Britain and the Anti-Terrorist Conventions of 1937," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5, no. 1 (1993): 1-29.

[8] Ben Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism" *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 4, no 1 (2006): 78-102; Reuven Young, "Defining Terrorism: The Evolution of Terrorism as a Legal Concept in International Law and Its Influence on Definitions in Domestic Legislation," *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review* 20, no 1 (2006): 23-102.

[9] Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 122-133. Lewis argues that in the late 1920s, jurists in the *Association Internationale de Droit Pénal* and the International Bureau for the Unification of Criminal Law such as Vespasien Pella, Carton de Wiart, Raphael Lemkin, Yugoslav law professor Thomas Givanovitch, and French Supreme Court counselor J.A. Roux were already developing anti-terrorism legal concepts and court statutes. By applying the concept of "crimes constituting a common danger" as the legal basis for defining international terrorism, the jurists made the motive and political ideology of the perpetrator irrelevant, which helped the League treaties appeal to a variety of states combatting terrorist campaigns.

revolutionaries and communists)" would sign the treaties. The League's anti-terrorism conventions, however, were weak international instruments because of the involvement of state-sponsors of terrorism in the drafting process, the complete exclusion of Nazi terrorism from consideration, and strong British and American opposition to the treaties on political and legal grounds.[10]

Since the end of the First World War, European jurists had attempted to use international law to preserve peace among nations.[11] By the mid-1930s, state-sponsored terrorism, first initiated by the Communist International and then carried to new extremes by fascist and authoritarian regimes in central, eastern, and southeastern Europe, seriously damaged international relations. Jurists and diplomats turned to the League to fulfill its mission of ensuring collective security. Yet, governments did not always agree that it suited their foreign or domestic policies to oppose terrorist groups, and the League's terrorism conventions remained a dead letter. This chapter argues that the League of Nations failed to adequately address state-sponsored terrorism until it threatened war on the European continent. However, conflicting national, colonial, and ideological interests hindered the employment of a unified approach under League auspices to disrupt and dismantle interwar terrorist organizations.

The Yugoslav-Hungarian Crisis

On January 6, 1929, King Alexander seized power, suspended the constitution, and transformed the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.[12] As Alexander's royal dictatorship moved in a pro-Serbian direction, separatists fled the country,

[10] Dubin, "The Anti-Terrorist Conventions of 1937," 23; Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 124, 136.
[11] Hans Köchler, *Global Justice or Global Revenge? International Criminal Justice at the Crossroad* (Vienna, Austria: Springer-Verlag Wien, 2003), 1.
[12] Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers 1804-1999* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 412.

including the Croat lawyer and leader, Ante Pavelić. Pavelić found refuge in Italy where he began to build a terrorist organization known as the UHRO, the Croatian Revolutionary Organization, or Ustaša (Insurgents/Rebels) for short. Organized as a paramilitary unit and modelled after the older Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), Pavelić intended the UHRO to carry out terrorist operations against the Yugoslav regime and to eventually lead a Croatian army that would liberate Croatia from Serbian rule.[13]

The assistance provided to the anti-Yugoslav IMRO and Ustaša by the governments of Italy, Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria reflected regional dynamics. By the early thirties, two competing blocs divided the Balkans. The "revisionist" powers of Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria opposed the postwar settlements that ended the First World War and desired to expand their territory. Mussolini's Italy served as the great power backer of the revisionist bloc, as he advanced expansionist aims in southeast Europe and the Mediterranean. Mussolini also opposed France and her alliance system with the governments of the Little Entente: Yugoslavia, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. The countries of the Little Entente and France, victors in the Great War, desired to maintain the Versailles system and to safeguard their territorial boundaries as established by the peace treaties that ended the war. The Rome protocols and Balkan pact of 1934 solidified the divisions among the revisionist and *status quo* powers in the region.[14]

In April 1929, Pavelić and another leader of the Ustaša, Gustav Perčec, traveled to Sofia, Bulgaria and concluded a pact of mutual assistance with representatives of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization. The pact provided that the IMRO would supply the

[13] Glenny, *The Balkans*, 185, 438; Walter Laqueur, *A History of Terrorism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 13. The IMRO dated from to the 1890s when young Macedonian nationalists formed a revolutionary committee to oppose Ottoman rule. By the 1920s, the IMRO served the interests of the Bulgarian state from its headquarters and shadow state in Petrich in south-western Bulgaria. Its operatives carried out assassinations and terrorist attacks in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, which had received the bulk of Macedonia at the Paris Peace Conference. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, IMRO violence reached its peak in Sofia, as competing revolutionary factions attacked one another in deadly internecine struggles.

[14] Steiner, *The Lights that Failed*, 494-523.

Ustaša with instructors in "terrorist methods," and soon after members of the IMRO traveled to the Ustaša's terrorist training camps in Hungary and Italy. In 1931, Pavelic and Perčec acquired a farm near the Yugoslav frontier, Janka Puszta, where they instigated paramilitary training for Ustaša operatives. Other training camps were also established in Hungary, all within 20 kilometers of the Yugoslav border.[15] In addition to offering asylum to Croatian émigés, Hungarian officials worked with Italian authorities to coordinate support for the terrorists in their agitation against Alexander's regime.[16]

The Ustaša conducted raids from their outposts in Italy and Hungary. The group carried out a number of railway bombings. Perčec and his men targeted passenger trains, particularly the Paris-Belgrade Express. Terrorists would board in Austria, plant bombs under the seats, and get off at Rosenbach, the last stop before the train left Austria.[17] Ustaša bomb squads blew up public buildings, Greek Orthodox churches, and military barracks in Zagreb. Terrorists carried out assassinations or attempted murders of police officers, newspaper editors, and politicians. Ustaša agents also smuggled arms, ammunition, explosives, and hand grenades into Yugoslavia. Many guns, bombs, and other weapons were transported in flat-bottomed boats on the Drave River and evaded the attempts of Yugoslav border and river patrols to stop this traffic in arms.[18]

The Yugoslav government responded to the terrorist attacks in a variety of ways. Diplomatic requests that Hungary and Austria control the émigrés and stop assisting their endeavors yielded few results. As Yugoslav officials could not force foreign authorities to take action against the Croats, the regime turned to counter-intelligence and violent press polemics.

[15] Yugoslav Government to Council of the League of Nations, "Organization of the Terrorist Movement in Hungarian Territory with the Assistance of Yugoslav Emigres," *League of Nations Official Journal*, December 1934, 1772-1774.
[16] Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation," 195.
[17] Allen Roberts, *The Turning Point: The Assassination of Louis Barthou and King Alexander I of Yugoslavia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970), 42.
[18] Roberts, *The Turning Point*, 44; Yugoslav Government to Council of the League of Nations "Results of the Terrorist Action Before the Marseilles Crime," *League of Nations Official Journal*, December 1934, 1787-88.

Yugoslav intelligence officers infiltrated Ustaša bases along the Adriatic coast in Zara, Fiume and Trieste. Vienna became a hotbed of espionage and intrigue, and in 1931 Yugoslav agents unsuccessfully tried to assassinate Perčec. Austrian authorities expelled would-be assassins and Yugoslav intelligence agents. [19]

Internal Yugoslav measures to prevent terrorist attacks resulted in brutal police tactics in areas populated by Macedonians, Bulgarians, Croatians, and other non-Serbian groups. Government brutality only generated more distrust and refugees and turned Yugoslavia into a police state in certain areas. Diaspora and nationalist groups appealed to the League of Nations and submitted numerous minority petitions. The Central Committee of the Macedonian Political Organization of the United States and Canada wrote the League of Nations that the Yugoslav government desired to turn Yugoslavia into one Serbian nation with Serbian religion, language, customs and traditions. Yugoslavia was now a "huge military camp," and the prisons were "filled beyond capacity with Bulgarians, Croatians, Slovenes and other nationalities."[20] Supporters of the IMRO and Ustaša justified the groups' revolutionary activities and appeal to European powers for assistance as merited by the harsh conditions inside Yugoslavia. They believed that the Ustaša and IMRO turned to full scale terrorism only after trying to interest the west and the League of Nations in their cause.[21]

[19] James Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism, 1927-1937* (New York: Garland, 1987), 163-64, 180-81.

[20] Central Committee of the Macedonian Political Organization of the United States and Canada, New York, USA to Aristide Briand, The League of Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, 8 May 1930, SDN 537; League of Nations, Petition by Dr. Leon de Deak, Protection of Minorities in Yugoslavia, 4 September 1933, SDN 536, The Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères] (hereinafter MAE), La Courneuve, Paris, France.

[21] Central Committee of the Macedonian Political Organization of the United States and Canada, New York, USA to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, France, 27 September 1930, Declaration of the Ninth Annual Convention of the Macedonian Political Organization of the United States of America and Canada, held at Youngstown, Ohio, from August 31 to September 4, 1930, SDN 537, MAE; Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, 157.

The clandestine war between Yugoslavia and Italy continued to escalate. In March 1933, the "Hirtenberg affair" exposed that Italy was illegally smuggling arms into Hungary.[22] The governments of the Little Entente desired to bring the case to the League of Nations, arguing that the Italian government's shipment of rifles and machine-guns to a cartridge factory at Hirtenberg (Lower Austria) violated the treaty of Saint Germain, and that the League of Nations should exercise its right of investigation provided for in article 159 of the treaty. The United Kingdom and French governments, however, offered to use their good offices to settle the matter through diplomatic channels. [23] The Little Entente accepted the offer, and the matter was resolved after Austria agreed to return the arms to Italy.[24] A similar scandal had occurred in 1928 when an Italian firm had tried to send a large consignment of machine guns through Austria to Hungary in violation of the Versailles peace treaties. The governments of the Little Entente invoked the League's right to investigate despite British and French pressure not to bring the issue to the League of Nations. The case, however, proved inconclusive.[25]

Then in December 1933, Ustaša operatives bungled an attempt on Alexander's life in Zagreb. The Yugoslav government possessed evidence that the assassination plot had been planned with Italian connivance and the assistance of the Italian Military Information Service (SIM). French pressure prevented Alexander from protesting to Italy, as the French government was actively pursuing a rapprochement with Mussolini in order to contain the Nazi menace.[26] While the Western powers limited Yugoslavia's options regarding Italy, Alexander moved to

[22] Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars,* 376.
[23] Secretariat of the Permanent Council of the Little Entente to Eric Drummond, secretary-general, League of Nations, March 1, 1933, R4199, Section 7A, LNA.
[24] Paul-Boncour, Political Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Bogolioub Jevtitch, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia, February 26, 1933, R4199, Section 7A, LNA.
[25] British embassy, Paris to minister for foreign affairs, January 14, 1928, SDN 1054, MAE; Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions, Request by the Governments of Romania, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Czechoslovakia, February 2, 1928, C.P.C. 249.1928.IX, SDN 1054, MAE.
[26] Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation," 193-94; Gaetano Salvemini, *Prelude to World War II* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1954), 150.

internationalize the question of Hungarian support for Croatian terrorism. In March 1934, the Yugoslav government sent a formal note to Hungary protesting the presence of the Janka Puszta terrorist training camp and the frequent forays of terrorists across the border. Yugoslav authorities demanded that the Hungarian government break up the camps and take measures to end the criminal activities of the Ustaša. [27] A month later the Hungarian government made a partial admission of the existence of terrorists on Hungarian territory. Officials transferred certain terrorists from Junka Puszta, but did not limit their activities or close the training camps.[28]

On May 12, 1934, Hungary brought her own case to the council of the League of Nations. Authorities accused Yugoslav frontier guards of killing no fewer than 15 Hungarian subjects. Hungary requested that the League council insist on normal conditions on the frontier and set up a joint commission to inquire into the incidents. The council reconvened in June 1934 and the Yugoslav delegate produced a counter-attack. He argued that Yugoslavia's frontier controls were severe because Hungarian authorities allowed Croat terrorists to settle a few miles from the border, which enabled militants to make illegal entries into Yugoslavia, commit crimes, and escape back to Hungary. Yugoslav diplomats once again brought up the Janka Puszta camp, which they argued was used as a center for recruitment and training by the terrorist leaders. During the debate, M. de Eckhardt, the Hungarian representative, promised that the Hungarian government would punish atrocities committed in Yugoslavia by refugees settled in Hungary.

[27] Yugoslav Government to Council of the League of Nations, "Responsibility Incurred for the Marseilles Crime," *League of Nations Official Journal*, December 1934, 1791; Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, 120-21.
[28] Yugoslav Government to Council of the League of Nations, "Responsibility Incurred for the Marseilles Crime," *League of Nations Official Journal*, December 1934, 1791.

Relations between the two countries temporally improved and a *modus vivendi* was negotiated on the border question in July 1934.[29]

Despite the increase in terrorist attacks directed against Yugoslavia between 1930 and 1934, most League members dismissed Yugoslav protests. Officials believed that both Yugoslavia and Hungary were trying to discredit one another internationally. Yet, the rise in political violence in Yugoslavia and the Balkans reflected larger trends as a spate of political murders gripped Europe in 1933-34. Most of these attacks were carried out by authoritarian and right-wing groups, including the murder of the Romanian prime minister Ion Duca in December 1933 by members of the fascist Iron Guard and the assassination of the Austrian chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss in July 1934 by Nazi accomplices and agents.[30]

In the fall of 1934, Pavelić put into action a plan to assassinate King Alexander during his official state visit to France. He selected his assassins from the men trained at the Janka Puszta terrorist camp in Hungary. Pavelić designated his bodyguard, nicknamed Vlada the chauffeur, a native of Macedonia, member of the IMRO, and terrorist instructor at Janka Puszta to lead the group of Croatian political émigrés and assassinate the king. The assassins traveled first to Switzerland, where they traded their authentic Hungarian passports for forged Czechoslovak ones before continuing onto France.[31] In France, the group separated. Some of the men stayed in Paris, while others journeyed to the port of Marseilles.

In the early afternoon of October 9, 1934, King Alexander disembarked from the light cruiser *Dubrovnik* at Marseilles. He was greeted by the French minister for foreign affairs, Jean Louis Barthou, and the two proceeded to a waiting motor car. As the car carrying the King and

[29] Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, 120-21; Walters, *A History of the League of Nations*, 601-02; Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation," 195.
[30] Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars*, 378.
[31] "Evidence as to Passports: An Anti-Terrorism Proposal," *The Times* [London, England], 25 November 1934; Roberts, *The Turning Point*, 129-135.

foreign minister turned onto the Place de la Bourse, Vlada the chauffeur, dodged his way through the French security forces, and, positioning himself on the running-board, fired some twenty shots from an automatic pistol before being cut down by the sword of a French policeman. As the assassin fell into the crowd, his pistol continued to fire, killing two bystanders and wounding others. King Alexander died almost immediately, but Barthou, left unattended in the confusion of the attack, bled to death. The crowd turned on Vlada, fatally injuring him.[32]

Despite the well-known connections between the Ustaša and the Italian government, the French and British pressured the Yugoslavs to indict only the government of Hungary in their appeal to the League of Nations for justice. Edvard Beneš, then Czechoslovakia's minister of foreign affairs and later its president, claimed later that "the real author of that double assassination was Mussolini," but that the "political situation" led the French and British to omit his role.[33] In fact, by the mid-1930s Hungarian policy had evolved away from directly supporting the Ustaša and IMRO, leaving Italy the burden of financing and counselling the terrorist organizations.[34]

On November 22, 1934, the Yugoslav government submitted to the secretary-general of the League of Nations a formal request to examine Hungarian complicity in the assassinations of King Alexander and Jean Louis Barthou. Yugoslav authorities charged the Hungarian government under article II of the Covenant, arguing that the assassinations seriously compromised neighborly relations between states. The Yugoslav representative declared that

[32] George Clerk to John Simon, 11 October 1934 in *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part II, From the First to the Second World War, Series F, Europe, 1919-1939* (hereinafter *BDFA*), ed. Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt, vol. 10, *1934*, ed. Christopher Seton-Watson, 197-198; George Clerk to Anthony Eden, 18 February 1936 in *BDFA*, vol. 12, ed. Christopher Seton-Watson, *1936*, 291-92.
[33] Compton MacKenzie, *Dr. Beneš* (London: George G. Harrap, 1946), 332; Eduard Beneš, *Memoirs of Dr. Eduard Beneš: From Munich to New War and New Victory*, trans. Godfrey Lias (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1954), 11.
[34] Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation," 195.

> This is not a case of a political murder which is the work of an isolated individual, nor of shelter given to political emigrants, the question involved is that of the drilling and training on the territory of a foreign State of professional criminals intending to commit a series of outrages and assassinations for a specific political purpose.[35]

In early December the League council held an extraordinary session to address the Yugoslav complaint. The only other item on the agenda was the Saar plebiscite. American observers in Switzerland were quick to comment on the politics involved in the debate. Prentiss Gilbert, head of the American consulate in Geneva, wrote the U.S. State Department that the Yugoslav case would be "undoubtedly determined by European political considerations." [36]

The Yugoslav government presented an official memorandum to the League council. The memorandum included photographs of the Hungarian passports used by the men to cross into Switzerland, and portrayed the Marseilles assassinations as the culmination of a "long series of outrages" inspired and directed from Hungary. The Yugoslav foreign minister argued that Croatian separatists received "systematic terrorist training in special camps in Hungary." [37] The Hungarian foreign minister in Geneva, Tibor Eckhardt, responded by blaming the assassinations on the domestic situation in Yugoslavia and the "revolutionary bitterness" among political refugees toward the royal dictatorship. He reminded the League council that the terrorists were not Hungarians, but Croatian and Macedonian émigrés. Eckhardt, however, did not miss an opportunity to criticize the peace treaties and territorial settlements of World War I. The foreign

[35] "Request by the Yugoslav Government under Article II, Paragraph 2, of the Covenant," Doc. C.506.M.225.1934.VII, 22 November 1934, in *League of Nations Official Journal* (1934): Annex 1523, 1766.
[36] Prentiss B. Gilbert to Department of State, "Contemplated Yugoslav Demarche re Terrorist Activities – Question of League Action," 17 November 1934, Record Group (RG) 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, American Consulate Geneva, Switzerland, Political Section, Strictly Confidential, 1934, Volume VI, League of Nations Political (International Terrorism), U.S. National Archives (hereinafter NARA), College Park, MD.
[37] "Yugoslav Case at Geneva," *The Times* [London, England], 8 December 1934.

ministers of the Little Entente remarked that terrorism in the Balkans derived largely from this revisionist attitude.[38]

While public meetings were the centerpiece of the Geneva system, the most important debates of the Yugoslav-Hungarian crisis occurred behind closed doors. Anthony Eden was appointed rapporteur and used his position to meet with the Hungarian and Yugoslav representatives individually, and then reported back to the "major partners:" France and Italy. Eden believed that the "less public discussion we had the better" because the presence of a large Geneva press corps meant that "many politicians treated League events as a chance to play the international statesman before a domestic audience."[39]

Tensions ran high in Geneva. Days prior to the extraordinary session, Mussolini had denied the extradition of the two masterminds of the Marseilles assassinations, Ante Pavelić, head of the Ustaša, and his young accomplice Eugen Kvaternik because the treaty of 1870 between France and Italy excluded political crimes from extradition. In 1935, a court in Aix-en-Provence tried three of the Croatian accomplices arrested in France and eventually sentenced the men to life imprisonment. Allegations later emerged that the French government had suppressed evidence indicating Mussolini's role in the assassinations. The men were released from prison when the Vichy regime came to power. Pavelić continued to reside in Italy until he established his Croatian puppet state (1941-45) under Axis protection.[40]

During the extraordinary session Yugoslavia instigated mass deportations of ethnic Hungarians and mobilized troops on the Yugoslav-Hungarian border. Hungarian authorities followed suit.[41] The British government strongly opposed the Yugoslav expulsions. The British

[38] Ibid.; Walters, *A History of the League of Nations*, 604.
[39] Eden, Facing the Dictators, 125, 129; Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations," 1096.
[40] Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism," 79; Roberts, *The Turning Point*, 159-71.
[41] "The Yugoslav Charges," *The Times* [London, England], 10 December 1934.

minister in Belgrade worried that Eden's public condemnation of the expulsions would damage the negotiations and hastily dispatched a note to the United Kingdom delegation in Geneva, declaring that the deportations of Hungarians from Yugoslavia may be "stupid, uncivilized, inhuman or almost any other adjective one may select for the purpose. But they cannot be really linked up on the same footing with the encouragement of terrorist organizations."[42]

British government officials, however, had little sympathy for Yugoslavia and the state-terror practiced against Croatians and Macedonians by Yugoslav gendarmes. John Simon even recommended establishing an international police bureau to verify Yugoslav reports that another terrorist attack was imminent and that it received Italian assistance. International outcry and British diplomatic pressure eventually persuaded the Yugoslav government to halt the Hungarian deportations, but the threat remained that Yugoslav would withdraw its case from the League and take independent action against either Hungary or Italy.[43]

Gilbert watched these developments from the American consulate and wrote the U.S. State Department that the "efforts of the Continental States to make political capital in Geneva out of the present situation is . . . a moral strain on the League system." He believed that Moscow remained an "unknown factor" and that London and Paris were attempting to "hold the situation within careful bounds." [44] In the early days of December, a solution began to materialize. The great powers had decided that the best way to limit political repercussions was to divert the whole affair into judicial channels and a generalized consideration of international terrorism.[45]

---

[42] Nevile Henderson to John Simon, Belgrade, 18 December 1934 in *BDFA*, vol. 10, *1934*, 409-10.
[43] "Yugoslav Threat To 'Act on Own' Agitates Geneva," *The Washington Post*, 10 December 1934; Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation," 209-11; Foreign Office to secretary of state for the Home Department, 13 February 1935, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereinafter TNA), London, United Kingdom, HO 45/18080.
[44] Prentiss B. Gilbert to Department of State, "International Terrorism – Council Meeting," 7 December 1934, RG 84, American Consulate Geneva, Switzerland, Political Section, Strictly Confidential, 1934, Volume VI, League of Nations Political (International Terrorism), NARA.
[45] Prentiss B. Gilbert to Department of State, "Yugoslav Demarche re International Terrorism – Political Implications on the Approach of the Council Sessions" 3 December 1934, RG 84, American Consulate Geneva,

The council meeting of December 8 marked a turning point. Laval and Eden organized a coordinated performance. States compelled to take partisan positions for political reasons spoke first. Delegates then gradually turned from the specific questions of the conflict to the general problem of terrorism. The Chilean representative closed the meeting by recommending that the League appoint a commission to draft an anti-terrorism treaty.[46] Privately assured that all interested parties would support his resolution, Eden assembled the League council for a midnight vote on December 10, 1934. He presented a four point solution, which stated that the League of Nations:

1. Condemns the Marseilles crime and insists that all responsible should be punished.

2. Recalls the duty of every state not to tolerate on its territory terrorist activity with a political purpose, to repress such activity, and for this purpose lend its assistance to governments which request it.

3. Takes note of the discussion and documents before it and formulates the opinion "that certain Hungarian authorities may have assumed, at any rate through negligence, certain responsibilities relative to acts having a connection with the preparation of the crime of Marseilles." States it is incumbent on the Hungarian Government to take appropriate punitive action in the case of any of its authorities whose culpability may be established and requests it to communicate to the Council the measures it takes to this effect.

4. Provides for a committee of experts to be appointed by the Governments of Belgium, United Kingdom, France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Russia, and Chile to draw up and report to the Council a preliminary draft international convention to assure the repression of conspiracies or of crimes committed with a political or terrorist purpose.[47]

Switzerland, Political Section, Strictly Confidential, 1934, Volume VI, League of Nations Political (International Terrorism), NARA.

[46] Prentiss B. Gilbert to Department of State, "Yugoslav-Hungarian Controversy – Council Meeting of December 8 – Positions of France, Italy, Russia, England, Poland, Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Chile," 8 December 1934, RG 84, American Consulate Geneva, Switzerland, Political Section, Strictly Confidential, 1934, Volume VI, League of Nations Political (International Terrorism), NARA.

[47] Prentiss B. Gilbert to Department of State, "International Terrorism – Report and Resolution Presented by Rapporteur Adopted by the Council," 11 December 1934, RG 84, American Consulate Geneva, Switzerland, Political Section, Strictly Confidential, 1934, Volume VI, League of Nations Political (International Terrorism), NARA.

The council unanimously adopted the resolution. A month later the Hungarian government reported that it had disciplined authorities that had not properly supervised certain Croatian refugees. The Yugoslav government and other Entente representatives found the actions inadequate, but Eden's final report to the League council in May 1935 indicated that the original agreement remained in force. The League did not address the issue again.[48]

"Things were on a knife edge all the time," remarked Ferdinand Mayer at the end of the extraordinary session. Mayer, an advisor to the U.S. delegation at the Disarmament Conference, reflected that "The settlement was obtained in circumstances of the greatest delicacy. Italy was probably more guilty than Hungary with respect to terrorist activities against Yugoslavia." Moreover, "French negligence at Marseilles in regard to the protection of King Alexander was the proximate cause of the tragedy. Both France and Italy knowing these facts had to act accordingly at the Council and with greatest circumspection." He believed that the Little Entente "knew this and took due advantage," while the "Russians had just resumed their own international terrorist methods." Therefore, he reported to the U.S. State Department that, "the only principal participant at the Council with really clean hands was England, who made a magnificent use of this position."[49]

Eden in particular received high accolades for his role in diffusing the crisis. The British Section of the Women's International League and members of the League of Nations Union wrote to thank him for the "magnificent way in which [he] handled the dispute between Yugoslavia and Hungary at Geneva."[50] Charles Wilson, head of the U.S. mission in Yugoslavia,

[48] Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, 131; Kovrig, "Mediation by Obfuscation," 217-18.
[49] Ferdinand Mayer to secretary of state, 13 December 1934, U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States diplomatic papers, 1934. General, the British Commonwealth,* vol. 1 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934), 204.
[50] League of Nations Union, Hampstead Branch, 20 December 1934 to Anthony Eden; Women's International League, British Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 12 December 1934 to

declared that "without the attitude adopted at Geneva by England, and the cleverness of Mr. Eden in discovering a formula which both parties to the dispute could accept, the situation would have become extremely grave."[51] In his memoirs, Eden concluded that the prestige of the National Government and the League had never been higher. Unlike after the Sarajevo assassinations that had sparked the First World War, Britain had intervened quickly and decisively and exercised her "restraining influence from the start." The result was mediation and a legal solution for a political crisis.[52]

The Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism

The League resolution of 10 December 1934 created an expert Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism (CIRT) with delegates from eleven states.[53] The CIRT met in April-May 1935, January 1936, and April 1937. A number of the leading European jurists participated in the work of the CIRT, including Vespasien Pella from Romania, Henri Carton de Wiart from Belgium, Jules Basdevant from France, and John Fischer Williams from the United Kingdom. Carton de Wiart chaired the committee of experts, while Pella served as rapporteur and was the primary architect of the anti-terrorism conventions.[54]

European criminal jurists considered terrorism a serious problem and began to advocate international anti-terrorism laws in response to ultra-nationalist bombings and assassinations, communist attacks, and the appearance of armed groups, with either separatist or irredentist

---

Anthony Eden, The Avon Papers, Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom.

[51] Charles Stetson Wilson, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary (Yugoslavia) to Department of State, "The Hungarian-Yugoslav Dispute and the League of Nations," 18 December 1934, RG 84, Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Political Section, Strictly Confidential, 1934, Volume VI, League of Nations Political (International Terrorism), NARA.

[52] Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, 132, 125.

[53] The CIRT consisted of representatives from Belgium, Britain, Chile, France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, and the Soviet Union. Italy and Chile had withdrawn from the CIRT by mid-1936.

[54] See Dubin, "The Anti-Terrorist Conventions of 1937," 8.

goals, which were supported by outside states. In 1926, Romania had suggested that the League draft a treaty to punish terrorism, while Pella had advanced an international criminal court since 1919. In addition, a series of international conferences for the unification of Penal Law were held under the auspices of the International Association of Penal Law to study the question of terrorism (Brussels, 1930; Paris, 1931; Madrid, 1933; and Copenhagen, 1935). Leading legal scholars, such as Raphael Lemkin, debated criminalizing international terrorism and contributed to the work of the International Association of Penal Law. [55]

The CIRT began its work with a list of proposals submitted by the French government, which included prohibiting the manufacture of false identity cards and creating an international criminal court that would serve as a penal court for terrorist offenses. In addition, the French foreign minister recommended that the committee use the April 20, 1929, Convention for the Suppression of Counterfeiting Currency as a model for the terrorism treaty. Both the Italian and French jurists also offered their anti-anarchist laws as a model, as the legislation in France allowed the government to prosecute instigation and incitement. French anarchists and socialists derided the laws, which were passed in the 1890s to snuff out anarchist bombings, as *les lois scélérates* (meaning "criminal" or "villainous" laws). [56]

Sixteen governments, including China, Cuba, the United States, and Egypt, responded to the committee's invitation to submit observations on the French proposals and to offer their

[55] See Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism," 80; M.K. Nawaz and Gurdip Singh, "Legal Controls of International Terrorism," *Indian Journal of International Law* 17 (1977): 66; Dubin, "The Anti-Terrorist Conventions of 1937," 8, 15; Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 123.

[56] "France and Terrorism," *The Times* [London, England], 11 December 1934; Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism, 10 April 1935, Registry Files 1934-1939, Box R3758, Section: 3A, Series: 13944, 15085, Files: 38194, 20521, C.R.T. 1, LNA; "Proposed Bases of an International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism. Communication from the French Government," in *League of Nations Official Journal* (1934): 1739, Annex 1524, 1839-40; Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 134.

views on international terrorism.[57] The committee also received memoranda and draft conventions from the Executive Bureau of the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC), based in Vienna, and the International Prison Commission. The ICPC desired to participate in the League's anti-terrorism committee and to serve as an international central office for sharing information about terrorism. Officials in the League Secretariat distrusted the Austrian leadership, as did the French police after the Ustaša assassinations, and the committee of experts declined the ICPC's request. The British Howard League for Penal Reform sent the CIRT and the British government a paper which protested against the weakening of the right of asylum and the need to protect political prisoners from inhumane treatment.[58]

Britain's strong stance against the International Criminal Court led the committee to draft two individual treaties, and to separate the court from the League by placing it at The Hague. The Foreign Office communicated the British position to the Committee of Experts, writing that "the time has not yet arrived for the creation of the proposed Court" and "harm…is done to international institutions generally by the establishment of an institution which is not supported by the general assent of public opinion.[59] The Italian representative also opposed the formation of an international court on the grounds that it would "constitute a derogation of state sovereignty."[60] The committee of experts, therefore, decided that states could sign one or both

[57] Carton de Wiart, Opening Speech for Diplomatic Conference, 1-16 November 1937, Registry Files 1937-1940, Box R3766, Section: No 3A, Series 22707, Files: 22707, 30459, Registry No.: 3A/31355/22707, LNA; The following governments submitted observations: Austria, China, Cuba, Denmark, Estonia, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Latvia, Romania, Turkey, United States of America, Yugoslavia, Argentina, Egypt and the Netherlands.
[58] Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism, 11-13 April 1935, Registry Files 1935-1937, Box R3760, Section: No 3A, Series: 15244, Files: 15244, 22081, Registry No 3A/16786/15244, LNA; Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 142-43.
[59] Foreign Office to the Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism, 13 August 1936, Registry Files 1933-1940, Section: No 3A, Series 18673 to 22660, Files 18673 to 28312, Registry No 3A/25207/22660, LNA.
[60] Prentiss B. Gilbert, American Consul, Geneva, Switzerland, to secretary of state, June 17, 1935, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, U.S. National Archives (hereinafter NARA), College Park, MD.

treaties, but that adherence to the International Criminal Court convention required first signing the terrorism convention.

Following its second meeting, the CIRT circulated copies of the two draft conventions to all members of the League to consider before the question was placed on the agenda of the General League Assembly in October 1936. An exhaustive examination ensued with the First Committee of the Assembly devoting four meetings to discussing the various criticisms and proposals submitted by nineteen governments. The Assembly also adopted a second resolution, reaffirming that it was the "duty of every State to abstain from any intervention in the political life of a foreign State" and to "prohibit any form of preparation or execution of terrorist outrages upon the life or liberty of persons taking part in the work of foreign public authorities or services."[61] In May 1937, the council directed the secretary-general to invite the members of the League and certain non-member states, including Brazil, Germany, Japan, and the United States, to be represented at a diplomatic conference to consider the two draft treaties.

The terrorism convention, however, faced deep opposition from the United Kingdom and United States on legal and political grounds, as the Western democracies disagreed with the treaty's implications for extradition, political asylum, and revolutionary violence. The criticisms raised by Anglo-American policymakers reflected their belief that terrorism was tied to European politics, and long standing debates over the peace treaties that ended the First World War. Officials in the United Kingdom and United States argued that their countries did not face a terrorist threat and that their legal systems precluded them from following the treaty's statutes. In

[61] League of Nations, Conference on the International Repression of Terrorism, Conf.R.T./P.V.I, Provisional Minute, First Meeting (Public), 1 November 1937, Opening of the Conference by President Count Carton de Wiart, LNA; Townshend, "'Methods Which All Civilized Opinion Must Condemn,'" 35; Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism," 80.

the opinions of the Americans and British, terrorism was a European problem and the anti-terrorism treaties drafted by the League of Nations were European solutions.[62]

British officials disagreed with the convention's definition of terrorism, which they believed too broadly included rebellions, insurrections, and coup d'états. In an internal memorandum, Leslie Stuart Brass, the Home Office deputy legal adviser, declared that "If all States were at all times decently governed, presumably anyone who attempted by force to overthrow an existing government should be a *hostis humani generis*: but when the government is itself a terrorist government, I think a person who endeavors to overthrow it by the only means available is not necessarily to be so regarded."[63]

Stiff Home Office opposition, however, did not keep Great Britain from attending the conferences. The Foreign Office worried that noninvolvement would offend the French and would "very likely to bring the whole thing to a ground, [and] would be felt in Yugoslavia and perhaps elsewhere as a running-away from a sort of gentlemen's understanding to make the way of the terrorists, so tragically successful at Marseilles, a little more dangerous and difficult."[64] Consequently, the British representative on the Committee of Experts contributed significantly to the drafting of the treaties, while also keeping Britain free from any commitments.

The absence of domestic terrorism in the United Kingdom led Home Office officials to believe that Parliament would not change British criminal law or enact legislation that threatened cherished traditions, like free speech.[65] The commissioner of Special Branch, the division within the Metropolitan police responsible for domestic surveillance, also opposed the treaties, stating

[62] Instructions for United Kingdom Delegation at Diplomatic Conference, 25 October 1937, TNA, CO 323/1466/11; Attorney general to secretary of state, 21 September 1937, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA.
[63] L.S. Brass, Home Office, 20 March 1935, TNA, MEPO 3/2048.
[64] John Fisher Williams to Alexander Maxwell, Home Office, 15 September 1937, TNA, HO 45/18081.
[65] Instructions for United Kingdom Delegation at Diplomatic Conference, 25 October 1937, TNA, CO 323/1466/11.

that "we shall have to do a great deal more work for other countries than we shall be able to ask them to do for us. It would help us I suppose to get rid of an odd undesirable alien and cause us a great deal of difficulty in cases where political asylum is claimed."[66] In the end, British officials concluded that the "existing system provided all that was necessary for public safety in this country, and we had no evidence of terrorists operating here to justify amendment of the law."[67]

Political and legal concerns kept the United States from attending the League's terrorism conferences, or signing either treaty. By 1934, the State Department took it as "a cardinal principle that the United States should not become involved in European political questions."[68] In contrast to the independent internationalism of the 1920s, an "isolationist mood" descended on American foreign relations in the 1930s, epitomized by the Neutrality Acts enacted by Congress to safeguard American unilateralism and nonintervention in Europe. Isolationism emerged as a response to the Great Depression, the Senate Investigations of the Munitions Industry under Senator Gerald Nye, and the growing militarism of Italy, Germany, and Japan. The congressional safeguards against intervention in war were drawn from the perceived lessons of America's entry into World War I and an attempt to ensure against embroilment in another European war.[69] The

[66] Norman Kendal, Special Branch, Metropolitan Police to L.S. Brass, Home Office, 18 June 1937, TNA, MEPO 3/2048.
[67] Home Office, 11 October 1937, TNA, HO 45/18081.
[68] Norman Davis to Cordell Hull, 9 October 1934, Reel No. 11, *Papers of Cordell Hull* 36-37, U.S. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
[69] Robert A. Divine, *The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1965), 2; Wayne Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932-1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 163-222; Manfred Jonas, *Isolationism in America, 1935-1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966); Melvyn P. Leffler, "Political Isolationism, Economic Expansionism, or Diplomatic Realism: American Policy toward Western Europe 1923-1933," *Perspectives in American History* VII (1974): 413-461; George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 484. The historian Justus Doenecke defines isolationism in more specific terms to the interwar years: "An isolationist is one who opposes intervention in a European war, involvement in binding military alliances, and participation in organizations of collective security. Above all, the isolationist seeks to preserve the nation's freedom of action." See Justus Doenecke, *Anti-Intervention: A Bibliographical Introduction to Isolationism and Pacifism from World War I to the Early Cold War* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987), xv.

strategic orientation of U.S. policy led Attorney General Homer Cummings to indicate to Secretary of State Cordell Hull that

> I believe it would be highly undesirable for the United States to send representatives to this conference. I make this recommendation primarily because the subject matter of the suggested Conventions relates in such a pronounced degree to a matter involving political elements that participation in the conference would appear ultimately to be sure to result in charges and counter-charges of favoritism and political connivance. We are not a haven for terroristic activities, and where crimes are committed the principles of treaties for extradition apply.[70]

The Division of Western European Affairs in the State Department also believed that the Senate would oppose the International Criminal Court on the same grounds as the World Court.[71]

In contrast, officials in the Treaty Division, like Wallace McClure, believed that the United States government should participate in the terrorism conference. Dr. McClure argued that "The suppression of efforts to assassinate high officials, and otherwise to interfere with orderly government, is of concern here no less than in other countries." He further elaborated that the "provision of judicial machinery for trying criminals whose offenses are international in their character and scope would seem to have some elements of merit." His suggestion to send one of the U.S. representatives in Geneva to the conference was not acted upon. Although interest in the matter among certain Justice Department officials led to a request for the League Secretariat to supply information "in an informal way with the pertinent documentation."[72]

Leadership in the Department of Justice, however, opposed attending the terrorism conference. Justice Department officials believed that terrorism in Europe was highly political,

[70] Attorney general to secretary of state, 21 September 1937, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA.
[71] Division of Western European Affairs, State Department, 29 July 1937, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA.
[72] Dr. McClure to Mr. Barnes, Memorandum, Treaty Division, Department of State, 21 July 1937, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA; Prentiss B. Gilbert, American Consul, Geneva, Switzerland to State Department, 17 June 1935, International Terrorism-Settlement of the Political Controversy – Report of the Committee of Experts on its First Session, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA.

and that the convention would have little practical benefit for the United States. Furthermore, the American government would not be able to meet the requirements of the treaty, as the U.S. legal system hindered deporting foreigners charged with crimes in foreign countries.[73]

Despite Anglo-American opposition, the International Conference for the Repression of Terrorism convened from 1 to 16 November 1937 in Geneva. Thirty-five states attended the conference. The Final Act of the conference adopted the two anti-terrorism treaties.[74] By the end of 1938, twenty-four states had signed the Terrorism Convention, including twelve European states, seven Caribbean, Central and South American states, and five other states from various regions, including the Soviet Union and Turkey.[75] Twelve governments had signed the International Criminal Court treaty.[76] Most of the major powers of the day, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, the United States, and Italy, which withdrew from the League in December 1937, did not sign either treaty.

---

[73] W.R.V., Legal Adviser, Department of State, Memorandum, 30 July 1937, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA. The Department of Justice, however, was very active in the area of non-political crime and J. Edgar Hoover promoted the international exchange of information regarding criminal activities, the field of criminology, and "scientific" crime detection. Under Hoover's tenure, the Department of Justice had created an international fingerprints database, which it shared with government partners and participated in international meetings of police officers. Consequently, the Department of Justice sent a representative to the First International Congress of Criminology held in Rome from 3-8 October, 1938, at the invitation of the Italian government and under the auspices of the International Society of Criminology. The Treasury Department declined to send a delegate, remarking that its annual participation in the narcotics meeting at Geneva allowed the department's law enforcement officials to "get a current picture of advances in the science of criminal detection in Europe." See John Edgar Hoover, Address before the meeting of the International World Police at Montreal, Canada, 26 October 1937, Box 192, *Papers of Homer S. Cummings, 1870-1956,* Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA; Assistant secretary of the Treasury to assistant secretary of state, 15 June 1938; Cordell Hull to Franklin D. Roosevelt, 12 August 1938, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA.

[74] The following governments participated in the conference: Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Latvia, Mexico, Monaco, Norway, The Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Romania, San Marino, Soviet Union, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia. Brazil sent an observer. See Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism, Final Act of Conference, 16 November 1937, Registry Files 1937-1940, Box R3766, Section: No 3A, Series 22707, Files: 22707, 30459, Doc C548.M385.1937.V, LNA.

[75] Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, France, Greece, Haiti, India, Mexico, Monaco, The Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Romania, the Soviet Union, Spain, Turkey, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia signed the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism.

[76] Belgium, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Monaco, The Netherlands, Romania, the Soviet Union, Spain, Turkey, and Yugoslavia signed the Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court.

The Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism contained twenty-nine articles and defined "acts of terrorism" as "criminal acts directed against a State and intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons, or a group of persons or the general public." The treaty required states to prevent and punish terrorist acts of an international character and to refrain from encouraging "terrorist activities directed against another State." The treaty addressed the specific intelligence failures that had permitted the Marseilles assassinations by outlawing conspiracy or incitement to commit terrorist acts and the fraudulent manufacture of identity cards or alteration of passports. In addition, the treaty contained a proposal by the Indian government that required arms manufactures to mark fire-arms with serial numbers or other distinctive marks and regulated the carrying, possession, and distribution of fire-arms, ammunition, and explosives. The supplying of arms, explosives, or harmful substances in the commission of a terrorist crime was also considered an act of terrorism.[77]

The Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court established a permanent body at The Hague to try persons accused of an offence dealt with in the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment. The court would sit, however, only when it had cases before it. The court was to consist of five regular judges and five deputy judges chosen from among jurists who were "acknowledged authorities on criminal law" or who had been members of courts of criminal jurisdiction. The treaty directed the court to apply the substantive criminal law that was "least severe" and to consider "the law of the territory on which the offence was

[77] "Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism, Opened for Signature at Geneva on November 16, 1937," in *International Terrorism and Political Crimes*, ed. M. Cherif Bassiouni (Springfield, IL, 1975), 546-556.

committed and the law of the country which committed the accused to it for trial."[78] The Belgian, Spanish, French, and Romanian delegates, and especially the Romanian jurist Vespasian Pella, worked tirelessly for the establishment of an international penal court for terrorist crimes and considered its creation a "bold innovation" in criminal jurisdiction.[79]

The terrorism convention received the greatest support from Eastern European countries, France, the Soviet Union, and India. Again, the reasons were both political and practical, as most of these nations had endured terrorist attacks, and in some cases, extensive domestic terrorist campaigns after the First World War. The terrorism conventions also fit into the larger security strategies of each.

Every member of the Balkan Pact and Little Entente signed the Terrorism Convention, as did Bulgaria which had moved closer to Yugoslavia following the government's suppression of the IMRO after 1934. These governments signed the treaties largely as symbolic measures to show their unity and opposition toward the increasingly militant foreign policies of Germany and Italy. As stated by the Greek delegate, the Balkan Entente viewed the treaties as a "posthumous tribute to the memory of the Martyr King of Yugoslavia and to the victims of an odious crime."[80] All of these countries – Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey – also had minority problems and/or political opponents who were plotting against the government from outside their borders. The anti-terrorism treaties offered new tools to use against restive minorities and political opponents and increased the chances that ultra-nationalist separatists and

[78] Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court, 16 November 1937, Signatures received by 31 May 1938, Registry Files 1937-1940, Section: No 3A, Series 22707, Files: 22707, 30459, Registry No.: 3A/31355/22707, LNA.
[79] Jules Basdevant, French delegation, Draft Conventions for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism and for the Creation of an International Criminal Court: General Discussion, 1 November 1937, Registry Files 1937-1940, Section: No 3A, Series 22707, Files: 22707, 30459, Registry No.: 3A/31355/22707, LNA.
[80] Spiro Polychroniadis, delegate of Greece, Conference on the International Repression of Terrorism, Provisional Minutes, Eighteenth Meeting, 16 November 1937, Conf. R.T./P.V. 18, Speeches and Declarations on the close of the Conference, LNA.

revisionists who operated from abroad or sought a safe haven in a foreign country would be extradited or sentenced.[81]

While French policymakers and jurists viewed the intensification of terrorist activities on the European continent as a pressing security problem, the French government excluded the terrorism treaty from applying to its colonies, protectorates, or mandates.[82] The British Home Office regretted this decision, as it meant that the terrorism treaty would not apply to Pondicherry, Chandernagore, or Syria and therefore India and Palestine would not derive "any direct advantage from French participation."[83] In November 1937, the Colonial Office had opposed bringing Palestine or the colonies into the scope of the convention, although Colonial Office officials conceded that a convention of this kind might be of future value in Palestine.[84]

Soviet involvement in the Terrorism Conferences stemmed from apprehension among policy elites that foreign terrorists posed a threat to the state and because of the willing of Foreign Secretary Maxim Litvinov to work with Western governments. Litvinov's influence led the Soviet Union to join the League of Nations in 1934 and to sign a number of bilateral treaties with members of the Little Entente, which included provisions to suppress terrorism by agreeing not to harbor foreign terrorists or provide assistance to their military or propaganda campaigns.[85] The Soviets hoped that the treaties would enable them to extradite White Russians involved in anti-Soviet conspiracies, passport violations, and weapons distribution. While the terrorism

[81] Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 143-145.
[82] Antoine Sottile, *Le Terrorisme International*, in 65 Recueil des Cours 89, 91 (1938) in Reuven Young, "Defining Terrorism: The Evolution of Terrorism as a Legal Concept in International Law and Its Influence on Definitions in Domestic Legislation," *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review* 29 (2006): 24.
[83] Committee for the International Repression of Terrorism, Final Acts of Conference, 16 November 1937, Registry Files 1937-1940, Box R3766, Section: No 3A, Series 22707, Registry No.: 3A/31355/22707, C.94.M.47.1938.V, LNA; Home Office, Diplomatic Conference for the International Repression of Terrorism, 10 December 1937, The Brass Papers, TNA, HO 189/8.
[84] J.G. Hibbert, Colonial Office to Oscar Dowson, Legal Adviser, Home Office, November 1937, TNA, CO 323/1466/11.
[85] Jonathan Haslam, *The Soviet Union and the Struggle for Collective Security in Europe, 1933-39* (London: MacMillan, 1984); "Recognition of Russia," *The Times* [London, England], 11 June 1934.

conventions were being negotiated, the Soviets were holding show trials against so-called "Trotskyist-Terrorists." In October 1936 and March 1938, Leon Trotsky wrote to the League secretariat and requested that Stalin be tried for the political murders committed by the Soviet secret police and that the international criminal court review Stalin's case against him for the alleged assassination of Leningrad party chief Sergei Kirov.[86] The secretariat declined to respond.

Concerns about domestic security influenced the colonial government of India to sign the Terrorism Convention. In the 1930s, colonial officials faced what they called a "recrudescence" of terrorism, although they worried about two new developments: the infusion of Indian nationalism with communism, especially if supported by the Communist International (Comintern), and the high involvement of female revolutionaries.[87] The terrorist campaign was most active in Bengal, and the government had already enacted a number of "emergency" legislative acts to empower the police and security forces.[88] However, the Governor of Bengal, John Anderson, continued to worry about the ability of arms smugglers to access the sea routes from Singapore and Japan, and the increasing volume of arms and bomb-making material in India.[89] Colonial administrators were also agitated by the recurrent smuggling of arms through the French postal service in French territory in India.[90]

The Government of India used the League's terrorism convention as a *de facto* arms trafficking treaty. Two earlier attempts to regulate the global arms trade through multilateral

[86] Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice*, 144-145.
[87] Proposed Legislation to deal with Communism in India (Secret), April 1934, TNA, CAB 24/248/34.
[88] These included the Bengal Emergency Power Ordinance of 1931, a temporary Suppression of Terrorist Outrages Act (renewed 1932) and the permanent Bengal Criminal Law (Arms and Explosives) Act of 1932.
[89] Durba Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal: Political Violence in the Interwar Years," in *Decentering Empire: Britain, India and the Transcolonial World*, ed. Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy (New Delhi, India: Orient Longman, 2006), 270-292.
[90] Government of India, Home Department to under-secretary of state for India, India Office, March 2, 1935, TNA, HO 45/18080.

treaties had failed. Neither the Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition (1919) nor the League of Nations Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War (1925) had entered into force.[91] Consequently, the Government of India worked with the London-based India Office to ensure that the British representative on the CIRT included a provision that carefully controlled "the manufacture and sale of easily concealed firearms, such as sub-machine guns, revolvers and pistols."[92] In 1938, the Indian government ratified the convention as a "solution of the long-standing problem of arms smuggling."[93] It was the only government to ratify either one of the 1937 treaties.

Conclusion

The Government of India was the only country to sign and ratify the 1937 terrorism treaty even though revolutionary terrorism was declining in India and the province of Bengal. Public opinion in India and the United Kingdom increasingly criticized the detention camps and emergency legislation. Indian politicians and the Howard League for Penal Reform demanded that the Bengal government repeal its anti-terrorism legislation. Consequently, between the end of 1937 and beginning of 1939, the Government of India closed many of the detention centers and released political prisoners if they disavowed violent activity. Intelligence officials continued to monitor the terrorist movement and remained fearful that the campaign would reignite, but

[91] Jozef Goldblat, *Arms Control* (London: Sage, 2002), 22; David R. Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty: The League of Nations' Drive to Control the Global Arms Trade," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35 (2000): 213.
[92] Government of India, Home Department to under-secretary of state for India, India Office, March 2, 1935, PRO, HO 45/18080; India Office to Home Office, April 16, 1935, TNA, HO 45/18080.
[93] Home Office to under-secretary of state, Foreign Office, 26 April 1935, TNA, DO 35/187/6; Government of India, Home Department to under-secretary of state for India, India Office, 2 March 1935, TNA, HO 45/18080.

after 1941, attention shifted to combatting Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army.[94]

While revolutionary terrorism decreased in India after the International Conference for the Repression of Terrorism in November 1937, it increased in Ireland and Palestine. At the end of 1937, the British Colonial Office requested that Charles Tegart, former commissioner of the Calcutta police with extensive anti-terrorism experience in India, relocate to Palestine where terrorism was "intensive and widespread." Tegart brought with him David Petrie, a former director of the Indian Intelligence Bureau, and G.D. Sanderson, a former Indian police officer, to help defeat insurgents and make recommendations for improving the police. Tegart's recommendations included building a frontier fence to prevent raiders from traveling back and forth between Palestine and Syria and updating police barracks and housing accommodation. He returned to England in May 1939.[95]

At the end of the League's terrorism conference, the British foreign secretary, Samuel Hoare, thanked John Fisher Williams for his work as the British delegate: "To steer a successful course between the risk of committing our Government to legislation that would have run contrary to our traditions and the risk of appearing unsympathetic towards measures for the repression of terrorism cannot have been easy and I feel that we are all much indebted to you."[96] Two years later, however, Hoare pushed the Prevention of Violence (Temporary Provisions) Act through Parliament. This law gave the government and police "exceptional powers" to check I.R.A. terrorism, and drew upon many of the same practices of the Bengal ordinances. As in India, the government relied on its intelligence and security forces, particularly Special Branch,

[94] Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism," 82; Ghosh, "Terrorism in Bengal," 290; The Howard League for Penal Reform, League of Nations, IV.Social.1936.IV.4, Penal and Penitentiary Questions, Report by the secretary-general to the assembly, A.25.1936.IV., LNA.
[95] J.C. Curry, *Tegart of the Indian Police*, (Kent, UK: Courier Co., 1960), 7, 32-35.
[96] Samuel Hoare to John Fisher Williams, December 1937, TNA, HO 45/18081.

to monitor alleged terrorists and detain subjects suspected of planning violent acts.[97] Despite the Home Office's earlier rhetoric about the need to protect civil liberties, the home secretary and legal advisers in the Home Office readily called for repressive anti-terrorism laws when terrorists targeted British officials in the United Kingdom.

After the Marseilles assassinations of King Alexander and Louis Barthou, the French government authorized its national police force, the Sûreté Nationale, to undertake a "systematic effort to identify persons suspected of engaging in terrorist activities in France." The investigation resulted in the compilation of a long list of names of potential terrorists, many of them Italian, Yugoslavian, Hungarian, and Romanian in origin. The Sûreté Nationale, then, circulated the list of names to central police authorities in a number of countries, including the United States, with the intent of further identifying the person in question. [98]

J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the Justice Department, stonewalled attempts in the United States for more information, as he believed that most of requests involved persons of Italian origin. As he told the attorney general, the inquiries possessed "some political significance, which, in view of the general existing unrest in European countries, might possibly be based upon political rather than criminal interests." Hoover again made the case that U.S. law enforcement should only supply information for use in criminal proceedings, and not for political purposes.[99]

Originally, the American government had dismissed the anti-terrorism conventions. In January 1935, Jay Moffat in the Department of State had described the terrorism convention as

[97] Our Parliamentary Correspondent. "Check To The I.R.A." *The Times* [London, England], 20 July 1939; Laura K. Donohue, "Britain's Counterterrorism Policy," in *How States Fight Terrorism: Policy Dynamics in the West*, eds. Doran Zimmermann and Andreas Wenger (London, 2007), 17-58.

[98] Edwin C. Wilson, counselor of embassy, for the ambassador, Paris embassy of the United States of America, 21 December 1937, Request for Information from the Sûreté Nationale, RG 59, 1930-39, Central Decimal File 084.83/250-092.1155/6, Box 76, NARA.

[99] John Edgar Hoover, Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, 27 October 1937, Memorandum for the Attorney General, RG 59, 1930-39, CDF, 084.83/250-092.1155/6, Box 76, NARA.

part of the "salve applied to Yugoslavian injuries in the Hungarian-Yugoslav controversy." He believed that no one took "the proposed convention very seriously, probably not even the French."[100] However, the request in July 1937 by Mr. P. Mondanel, controller general of the Sûreté Nationale, for the Federal Bureau of Investigation to supply any available information, including the exact identity and judicial antecedents, of individuals alleged to be involved in "acts of terrorism" reached the upper echelons of government because of the international "political ramifications" involved.[101]

The attorney general and State Department coordinated an informal discussion with Mondanel and a representative of the U.S. embassy in Paris in December 1937. Mondanel assured the embassy that the request for information related only to criminal investigation and was not of a political nature. He stated that France desired to "eliminate from its territory persons engaged in the business of assassination, regardless of all political considerations." Consequently, the request was "simply a police measure designed to track down a dangerous criminal element." He substantiated his claim by pointing out that France was traditionally a country of political refuge. U.S. embassy officials concluded that Mondanel's statements could be trusted, highlighting France's treatment of a large number of Spanish refugees as an example of the nation's commitment to political asylum.[102] It is not clear that Hoover and the Justice Department reached the same conclusion or provided the information requested.

[100] Jay Moffat, Division of Western European Affairs, Department of State, 25 January 1935, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1930-1939, Central Decimal Files, 510.8B1/1-511.1C 1/44, Box No. 2555, NARA.

[101] John Edgar Hoover, Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, 27 October 1937, Memorandum for the Attorney General, RG 59, 1930-39, CDF, 084.83/250-092.1155/6, Box 76, NARA.

[102] Edwin C. Wilson, counselor of embassy, for the Ambassador, Paris embassy of the United States of America, 21 December 1937, Request for Information from the Sûreté Nationale, RG 59, 1930-39, Central Decimal File 084.83/250-092.1155/6, Box 76, NARA.

The anti-terrorism accords had little effect in the Balkans or the rest of Europe. Italy and Hungary continued to harbor terrorist organizations, although authorities imposed greater control and restrictions. The Great Depression and "crisis of democracy" that followed ended parliamentary governance in the region, enabling the authoritarian governments of the Little Entente and revisionist powers to repress internal communist factions and ethnic minorities and embrace foreign policies that included subversion, espionage, and fomenting internal divisions within enemy states. Worse still the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany escalated their support of proxy movements, most devastatingly in Spain, and supplied fighters with arms, funds, and logistical intelligence.[103]

Unlike the anarchist terrorism of the prewar years, terrorist organizations in the 1920s and 1930s received vital state assistance from left-wing and right-wing regimes. Terrorist groups transformed into highly trained paramilitary units, armed with surplus weapons from the Great War or materiel from unregulated factories, and wedded to the belief that militants needed to both assassinate high-ranking officials and occupy territory. Terrorist groups of the interwar years also recognized the power of public opinion, and nationalist and anti-colonial revolutionaries maintained newspapers, disseminated propaganda to sympathetic diaspora groups, and tried to "internationalize" their causes at the League of Nations.

The modern state had also been transformed during and after the First World War. Governments had extensive police, intelligence, and security forces at their disposal, and a well-informed central government because of advances in communications technology and organizational infrastructure. However, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Western governments shuttered their intelligence services, dismissed reports about the buildup of arms in Europe, and

[103] Glenny, *The Balkans*, 427; Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Penguin Group, 1998), x.

disagreed about whether terrorist organizations posed a threat to national or international security. Despite the efforts of international criminal jurists and diplomats, a comprehensive anti-terrorism strategy never materialized in the 1930s, as state-sponsored terrorism reached its zenith at the same time that the League of Nations concluded its two anti-terrorism conventions.

CONCLUSION

Terrorism emerged as a distinct form of political violence in Europe during the late nineteenth century. By the mid-twentieth century, it was a global phenomenon, shifting from international anarchist violence in the 1890s to anti-colonial and state-sponsored terrorism in the 1920s and 1930s. Faced with an evolving security threat, national governments and the international community responded in a variety of ways. The diverse legal, institutional, and diplomatic strategies undertaken by governments at the turn of the twentieth century mark the beginnings of contemporary counter-terrorism. While continental European governments advocated multilateral accords that synchronized police efforts and national laws, the United States and United Kingdom gravitated towards immigration restrictions and domestic-surveillance programs.

By examining government responses to interwar terrorism, this dissertation brings to light the understudied relationships between terrorism, arms trafficking, and state sponsorship. At the end of the First World War, the British government considered the dispersal of small arms to terrorist groups to be a grave danger to both imperial security and European stability. British policymakers at the Paris Peace Conference convinced their American and French counterparts to join in an arms control coalition. During the early 1920s, Western governments established a two-part system to destroy surplus munition stocks left over from the First World War and to prohibit arms trafficking. The peace treaties with the defeated nations of Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria contained provisions that established the first international weapons inspectors, known as Inter-Allied Commissions of Control, and empowered the League of Nations with the right to investigate allegations of rearmament. Additionally, the 1919

Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms regulated international arms transfers and prohibited the trade of conventional arms in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

By 1925, it was clear that national governments were violating the treaties and that the arms control system under the League of Nations was not working. Intelligence reports from Indian Political Intelligence and the British security services indicated that Indian terrorists continued to receive weapons from European ports. The records of the Office of the Under-Secretary of State of the U.S. State Department confirmed a world awash in guns, even in those countries subjected to international weapons inspectors. The League of Nations called for another arms trafficking conference. In June 1925, eighteen governments, including the United States, Britain, France, Italy, and Japan signed the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War.

The second multilateral arms trafficking treaty proved no more effective than the first. In 1932, the Government of India and India Office held arms conferences in Simla and London to find a solution to the longstanding problem of gun-running. As intelligence and police reports indicated, the conventional arms smuggled into India went directly into the hands of terrorists. Government and law enforcement attendees at the arms conferences acknowledged that Europe was the source of the arms traffic, but that counter-terrorism was also impeded by inefficient information sharing among law enforcement, intelligence services, and customs officials in India. The Government of India worked to standardize anti-terrorism procedures among local governments, while also attempting to revive interest in another multilateral arms accord.

In October 1934, Ustaša terrorists clandestinely supported by Italian and Hungarian authorities assassinated King Alexander I of Yugoslavia and Jean Louis Barthou, the French minister for foreign affairs. The political murders prompted the League of Nations Conferences

for the International Repression of Terrorism and two treaties: a Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism and a Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court. The treaties defined terrorism in international law, and included provisions to regulate arms trafficking and fraudulent passports. However, the security system envisioned by jurists and diplomats at the League of Nations never materialized. Instead, state-sponsored terror escalated, contributing to total war in 1939.

The Western world's confrontation with interwar terrorism set important precedents for the American and British governments as well as the League's successor organization, the United Nations (UN). For the American government, the anti-communist orientation of the State Department, particularly among foreign service officers, such as George Kennan, who had served in Riga and Moscow, contributed to the hard line stance against the Soviet Union taken by the Harry Truman administration during the early Cold War.[1] The United States also revitalized its information-sharing relationship with the United Kingdom during and after the Second World War, leading to the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and close collaboration between the two nations' intelligence and surveillance agencies.

In the post-1945 years, Western governments also turned to international law to deter international terrorism, albeit in a slightly different fashion than during the interwar period. While the anti-terrorism treaty of the League of Nations defined terrorism generically, the UN General Assembly criminalized specific components of terrorism, such as hijacking or hostage taking, in twelve international treaties. As noted by the legal scholar, Ben Saul, the UN General Assembly could not agree to a common definition for terrorism because of Cold War politics, questions regarding the legal status of "freedom fighters," and ideological and political disputes

[1] Frederic Propas, "Creating a Hard Line toward Russia: the Training of State Department Soviet Experts, 1927-1937," *Diplomatic History* 8, no. 3 (1984): 209-226.

about the use of revolutionary violence to achieve self-determination. Regional organizations, however, have defined terrorism generically in legal instruments, as demonstrated by the European Union's 2002 Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism.[2]

The League of Nations also addressed state-sponsored terrorism. This is because terrorist groups began to receive massive, systematic assistance from foreign governments in the 1920s. Anti-colonial and communist terrorists received aid from the Communist International headquartered in Moscow, while ethnic separatists in Europe received safe haven, weapons, and logistical help from governments opposing the peace treaties of World War I. The danger that proxy wars in Europe would spill over into another continent-wide conflict led European jurists and League officials to establish an international body of anti-terrorism law in the 1930s. The League's 1937 terrorism convention specified international norms against state-sponsorship. The United Nations, in contrast, has only been able to produce a nonbinding resolution. In October 1970, the UN General Assembly declared that:

> Every State has the duty to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another State or acquiescing in organized activities within its territory directed toward the commission of those acts, when the acts referred to in the present paragraph involve a threat or use of force.[3]

Since 1945, Western governments have employed international law, enhanced intelligence-gathering capabilities, and strategic partnerships, such as that between Great Britain and the United States, to combat terrorism. They avoided arms controls for conventional weapons, however, until very recently. The British experience during the interwar years cautioned against multilateral agreements as being effective tools to deter arms smuggling. As

[2] Ben Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism" *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 4, no 1 (2006): 98-99.
[3] United Nations General Assembly, Declaration of Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970) in Geoffrey Levitt, *Democracies against Terror: The Western Response to State-Supported Terrorism* (New York: Praeger, 1988), 20.

the British learned, foreign governments, including allies, continued to supply revolutionary groups with weapons or did not prohibit arm sales by private and commercial manufactures. Disputes about arms interdiction between Delhi and London weakened the administration of empire, as policymakers in London grew disillusioned with attempts to use multilateral treaties to penalize arms smuggling while officials in Delhi argued that they needed the assistance of foreign governments to prevent weapons from reaching terrorists. After the Second World War, anticolonial terrorist campaigns helped to further unravel the British Empire, as armed uprisings played an essential role in persuading the British to withdrawal from Palestine, Cyrus, and Aden.[4]

The superpower interventions and proxy conflicts of the Cold War generated an enormous illegal arms market, and sowed the seeds for the crises afflicting the world today.[5] The mass availability of weapons also changed terrorism, leading to more financially independent and autonomous terrorist groups.[6] As a result, a multilateral treaty regulating the trade of conventional weapons has once again found favor among Western governments and the United Nations. In April 2013, the United Nations adopted an Arms Trade Treaty, with the world's largest exporter of conventional weapons, the United States, also a signatory. [7] However, the treaty like its interwar antecedents does not contain clear enforcement mechanisms or the automatic imposition of economic sanctions or military force against states that violate its

[4] Paul Wilkinson, "Terrorism: International Dimensions," in *The New Terrorism*, ed. William Gutteridge (London: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1986), 34; Paul Smith, *The Terrorism Ahead: Confronting Transnational Violence in the Twenty-first Century* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2008), 28.
[5] James Adams, *Engines of War: Merchants of Death and the New Arms Race* (New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990), 67-70, 128, 149; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1-3, 396.
[6] Jeanne K. Giraldo and Harold A. Trinkunas, "The Political Economy of Terrorism Financing," in *Terrorism Financing and State Responses*, eds. Jeanne K. Girlado and Harold A. Trinkunas (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 7-8.
[7] Jennifer Erickson, "Saint or Sinner? Human Rights and U.S. Support for the Arms Trade Treaty," *Political Science Quarterly* 130, no. 3 (2015): 449; *Dangerous Trade: Arms Exports, Human Rights, and International Reputation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 5.

statutes. Consequently, the danger remains that states' interests will continue to trump international cooperation and hinder an effective counter-terrorism strategy.