

Public Opinion, the Press, and the Failed Anglo-Franco-Soviet Negotiations of 1939

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Abstract

For nearly eighty years, historians have debated whether the western powers or the USSR should be blamed for the failure of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations in 1939. This rather tired debate features here, but only in the background. Instead, these negotiations provide a case-study for exploring the interface between the press, public opinion, and foreign policy-making, identifying an example of how policymakers' perceptions of popular opinion wielded a tangible impact on diplomacy. The article will show that, from late April through to early June 1939, British and French public opinion, as mediated by the press, demanded a 'Grand Alliance'. The popular pressure needed to facilitate a Soviet alliance was in place, and, combined with broader diplomatic and strategic imperatives, nearly delivered one. Perceptions of public opinion also help explain why this alliance remained elusive. Emboldened by their own readings of western newspapers, the USSR increased their demands, confident that domestic pressures would compel London and Paris to yield. But this was a fatal miscalculation. From mid-June, Western opinion turned against Moscow, and familiar anti-Soviet tropes resurfaced. By charting this evolution in public sentiment, this article provides a fresh perspective on the factors contributing to the failure of these negotiations.

Keywords

Public opinion, Soviet Union, appeasement, triple alliance

Critics of the British and French policy of appeasement in the late-1930s have many weapons at their disposal, including the failure to secure a 'Grand Alliance' with Soviet Russia. The charge levelled at the appeasers is that ideological antipathy to Russian bolshevism – often combined with far-right sympathies – led to a myopic rejection of sincere Soviet overtures, compelling Stalin to seek a temporary accommodation with Nazi Germany.¹ As Churchill put it in *The Gathering Storm*, Britain and France 'payed dearly' for the astonishing 'indifference' and 'disdain' with which they treated the USSR ahead of the Second World War.² Hitler avoided a two-front war (once Poland had been eliminated), the *Wehrmacht* defeated France in a

matter of weeks, and Britain was exposed to invasion by summer 1940. This orthodox narrative has been challenged: Russian culpability has been emphasised in both Stalin's own ideological prejudices and his proclivity for purges that rendered the USSR an unreliable ally by the late 1930s.³ Some scholars blame both sides in equal measure, while others offer justifications for western scepticism, but a strong seam within the historiography accuses the anti-Soviet appeasers of deliberately sabotaging the negotiations.⁴ P.M.H. Bell, however, considers the blame game unhelpful. There was, he suggests, simply no likelihood of success, as Moscow's price for an alliance – a Soviet sphere of influence in eastern Europe – always exceeded what the west (notably London) was willing to pay.⁵ Agreeing with Bell that looking to attribute blame for the failed negotiations is unhelpful, this article differs in not sharing his fatalistic view of the talks as doomed to failure. It will be suggested instead that the west came very close to accepting Moscow's price, and that public opinion – as mediated by the popular press – played a crucial role in pushing the British and French governments towards a position of acceptance.

Across all analyses, irrespective of where blame is apportioned, the impact of western public opinion recurs frequently if peripherally. Numerous historians highlight how British opinion polls and press commentary dovetailed with French pressure and the spectre of a Russo-German accommodation to enhance the allure of a Soviet alliance.⁶ Others, identifying a parallel clamour for an alliance in France, contend that French public opinion hardened against the fascist dictatorships in the months following the Munich settlement.⁷ But the precise influence of public opinion on British and French policy towards the Anglo-Franco-Soviet discussions in 1939 merits closer scrutiny because this was a rare example of it wielding a tangible influence on policymakers.

This article offers a detailed analysis of the British and French press during the spring and summer of 1939, partially recreating the atmosphere in which policymakers contemplated an alliance, and thus the extent to which elite perceptions of popular opinion affected their decisions. Press support for a peace front inclusive of Russia, though never unanimous, peaked from mid-April to early June 1939. In combination with other factors, favourable press coverage afforded London and Paris the necessary latitude to offer Moscow concessions that could potentially facilitate an alliance. However, this enthusiasm was ephemeral and ultimately counter-productive. It emboldened Moscow, encouraging them to raise their demands, which in turn antagonised the British and French governments and reignited latent right-wing opposition. Thereafter, the Soviet and western positions grew further apart, and elite understandings of public opinion would never again be powerful enough to persuade reluctant politicians to change tack.

The press, public opinion, and policymaking

This article will first trace the evolution of public opinion, as perceived and understood by the decision-making elites, during spring and summer 1939. The analysis will use indicators of public opinion relied upon by contemporaries, principally the printed press. French and British newspapers of all political shades are considered, as political and diplomatic elites (notably the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, and his French counterpart, Édouard Daladier) were attentive to newspaper commentary. Although a broad cross-section of newspapers is surveyed, emphasis is focused on those tendencies of press opinion that most concerned the respective Premiers. Daladier was particularly alert to potential discontent on the

political left, especially given his recent efforts to steer France away from the experiment of the Popular Front era.⁸ Chamberlain, by contrast, was unperturbed by leftist critiques but was troubled by indications of dissent in conservative circles.⁹ The following analysis will also prioritise editorials and articles penned by prominent individuals, as these warranted the most attention. The apparent readership habits of the elites will also be echoed here, focusing on the prominent daily newspapers emanating from London and Paris, although prominent provincial papers are not excluded entirely. Finally, the analysis will focus on press commentary from mid-April to early June, when discussion of the negotiations spiked and, crucially, when a degree of unanimity was most apparent.

Although a reading of the press is an imperfect mechanism for gauging genuine public opinion, it is useful when gauging elite *perceptions* of the popular mood. After all, if one is interested in the interface between public opinion and policymaking, public opinion *as it was* matters less than public opinion as it *was understood* in policymaking circles. The surviving archival record in Britain and France suggests that elite perceptions of public opinion relied heavily on the press. Opinion polling was a new phenomenon, arriving in Britain in 1937 and in France the following year. Several early polls conducted by the British Institute of Public Opinion (BIPO) were published in the *News Chronicle* and provided some ammunition for the anti-appeasers, but the majority of the British elite viewed polls with suspicion, often dismissing their practitioners as leftist cranks in the mould of Mass Observation.¹⁰ In France, the early polls commissioned by the *Institut français d'opinion publique* (IFOP) barely featured in the papers and seemingly left no impression in policymaking circles.¹¹ Indeed, other than infrequent allusions to ‘the man in the

street' in official and private correspondence, and beyond opaque references to 'public opinion' in parliamentary debates, historians ascertaining elite conceptions of public opinion have little to work with other than the popular press.

Chamberlain was certainly sensitive to press commentary, and his diary letters reveal a particular attentiveness to comments in conservative papers like *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*. Given his secure parliamentary position, he could afford to be less troubled by critiques in leftist or liberal publications. The official opposition was weak; the Liberals lacked numbers and influence, while the Labour Party suffered from internal division and discord. Being able to shrug off leftist criticism was not a luxury afforded to Daladier. Although one of the architects of the *Front populaire*, he had provoked the ire of the political left since becoming President of the Council for the third time in April 1938. Intent on initiating a French *redressement*, he risked reneging on such sacred policies as the 40-hour week, leading critics to label him the *fossoyeur* of the Popular Front.¹² Indeed, the Socialist and Communist press routinely criticised Daladier during summer 1938, and the sizeable dossier of press cuttings preserved in his personal papers brims with extracts from leftist newspapers, indicating his concerns. Such critiques contributed to Daladier's refusal to celebrate the Munich accords as a triumph, in stark contrast to Chamberlain who reveled in his personal triumph. While Munich encouraged Chamberlain to pursue appeasement further, Daladier steered a different course, and his firm rejection of Italian territorial demands in the winter was approved with near-unanimity in French papers. Indeed, France's gravitation towards a foreign policy of firmness rather than capitulation provided a rare source of cross-party unity, vital as Daladier pressed ahead with domestic reforms that continued to prompt Socialist and Communist ire. Once

Germany occupied Czechoslovakia in March 1939, the French public's appetite for resistance appeared undiminished, and Daladier's resolute response to Hitler's latest coup again met with widespread public approval.

Chamberlain's response to the Prague coup was lacklustre in comparison. His initial refusal to admit the failure of his Munich policy provoked widespread public and parliamentary dissatisfaction, compelling him to adopt more forceful rhetoric and policies thereafter, notably the guarantee of Poland against German aggression.¹³ A key component in an emergent 'dam in the east' was Soviet Russia, so after the Prague coup the creation of an Anglo-Franco-Soviet 'Grand Alliance' was contemplated more seriously. For both Chamberlain and Daladier the stakes were high. Chamberlain was instinctively hostile to the USSR for ideological reasons, but he also feared that a Soviet pact would preclude the further appeasement of Germany or Italy. Daladier was conscious that the troublesome left would demand such an alliance, but he was also mindful that the French political right – on which he relied for parliamentary support – found the prospect inherently troubling.¹⁴ Anti-Soviet sentiment remained a constant if fluctuating factor in both democratic countries, but, where Daladier risked ignoring it in deference to the perceived strategic benefits, Chamberlain saw it as confirmation that his own scepticism was justified.¹⁵

Whether Chamberlain was accurate in his reading of British public attitudes towards the USSR is questionable. After all, given the elusive nature of public opinion it is difficult for any policymaker to gauge accurately what their public wants. In his study of public opinion and Anglo-Soviet relations during the Second World War, P.M.H. Bell notes how policymakers used various mechanisms for gauging the public mood.

On the one hand, the wartime Ministry of Information made use of Gallup opinion polls, Mass Observation data, and BBC audience monitoring reports. On the other, policymakers continued to fall back on existing, pre-war mechanisms, notably Parliamentary discussion, views expressed by pressure groups, and press commentary.¹⁶ When considering public opinion's influence prior to the outbreak of war, the latter are pivotal and represent three of the four categories of public opinion identified by Bell: first, parliament was an echo chamber for 'political opinion'; second, pressure groups, trade unions, and party activists represented a broader 'political nation'; and third, the press – newspapers primarily, but also the radio and cinema – represented the 'mass media' and its ambiguous role as both a reflector and a shaper of public opinion. Bell labeled his fourth category 'public opinion *tout court*, or mass opinion', a more amorphous and all-encompassing entity that is difficult to identify even with the aid of the most rigorous and sophisticated polling techniques.¹⁷

This problematic fourth kind of opinion was recognised by policymakers, but its resistance to definition left it vulnerable to misrepresentation. Simply put, opinion *tout court* could be whatever one wanted - or assumed - it to be. Regarding the Soviet negotiations in 1939, Daladier believed that mass opinion wanted an alliance despite the vocal protestations of the anti-Bolshevik right wing. Chamberlain, however, constantly sought, and received willingly, indications that mass opinion shared his hostility to a pact, even as pro-alliance voices proliferated in the press, in Parliament, and even within the Cabinet. The press demand thus coincided with an intensifying clamour from other indicators of opinion. In London and Paris, fears of a potential Nazi-Soviet *rapprochement* led the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay to advocate a Soviet alliance with more urgency. The broader 'political nation' also appeared

willing to embrace Russian assistance. In France, the Socialists and Communists were predictably vocal in their advocacy of a pact, and even sections of the right allowed pragmatism to override ideological scruples. In Britain, substantial sections of Conservative opinion, not least the troublesome ‘Glamour Boys’, was also inclined to put ideology aside given the urgency of combating the Nazi menace – supportive of a Russian alliance, even on terms more favourable to Moscow than the west.

Press commentary on the negotiations

Press commentary prior to 1939 reflected strains in Anglo-Soviet relations evident since the Russian Revolution of 1917. Beyond the Moscow-funded journals of the extreme-left, the USSR featured rarely in British newspapers, and when it did the coverage was often disparaging.¹⁸ France’s relations with Russia were similarly frosty. The French right routinely bemoaned Moscow’s pernicious influence on domestic politics, whilst fevered debates about the Franco-Soviet Pact of 1935 revealed the persistent ideological schisms induced by any potential association with Moscow.¹⁹ The USSR’s absence from the Munich Conference in September 1938 illustrated further how London and Paris saw little advantage in aligning with Soviet Russia, the western governments convinced that Stalin’s purges had destroyed the Red Army’s ability to intervene effectively on behalf of Czechoslovakia.²⁰ In addition, the right wing press in France warned consistently that Moscow sought a general European conflict to further their revolutionary ends: *Le Temps* argued that the Communists ‘wanted an ideological war’ in Europe and a ‘social war’ in France.²¹ In Britain, where the internal communist threat was negligible, outspoken criticism of Russia was less prominent, and some left-leaning and liberal papers actually

questioned the marginalisation of Russia during the Sudeten crisis.²² Such comments, however, were uncommon, and overall press commentary on Soviet Russia was scarce.

Just as Britain and France harboured longstanding suspicions of the USSR, so too was the Soviet leadership prejudiced against the west. Although Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov had advocated collective security since the mid-1930s, many in Moscow suspected the western powers of trying to embroil Russia into an imperialist war. In an oft-quoted speech of 10 March 1939, Stalin warned that the USSR was unwilling to pull the west's 'chestnuts out of the fire' by fighting Nazi Germany on their behalf.²³ Even after Prague, a sceptical Soviet Union questioned how far the western democracies had substituted firmness for appeasement. Some historians consider this scepticism to be justified given the west's proclivity for ostracizing Russia, Michael Carley equating French and British suspicions of Moscow's integrity to 'Mr. Pot calling Comrade Kettle black.'²⁴ To be sure, London's post-Prague firmness could be interpreted less as a change of policy than an adaptation of strategy. As Geoffrey Hicks suggests, the Poland guarantee was 'the very antithesis' of a Churchillian 'Grand Alliance': a defensive and intentionally unprovocative move designed to facilitate further acts of appeasement. It also had the fortuitous side-effect of avoiding what many Conservatives abhorred – an alignment with Moscow.²⁵

Nevertheless, attitudes had started to shift. Rumours abounded in early 1939 that Hitler might unleash a knock-out blow in the west before turning his attention eastwards, prompting the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, to tell the Cabinet that 'closer relations with Russia' were desirable.²⁶ A formal alliance was

contemplated even more seriously after Germany's seizure of Czechoslovakia, an event that generated an unprecedented level of press interest. Newspaper coverage of the USSR was infrequent before 1939, and Claire Knight has suggested recently that 'sporadic' coverage in the British press remained the norm throughout the triple alliance negotiations.²⁷ However, closer scrutiny of a broad cross-section of newspapers demonstrates that the Soviet Union featured more prominently once formal discussions with Moscow were initiated after the Prague coup.²⁸ Furthermore, impatience was apparent from the outset: France's Ambassador at London, Charles Corbin, noted as early as 24 March that British newspapers bemoaned the lack of 'tangible results' from the negotiations.²⁹ The Soviet discussions also assumed a prominent place in the French press; Socialist and Communist papers condemned the apparent lethargy of their government. The Socialist former Premier, Léon Blum was one of several journalists to observe disapprovingly that Paris took a back seat while the British took the initiative.³⁰ Such criticism was not confined to the more militant left; former Foreign Minister Yvon Delbos wrote in *Paris-Soir* that, unlike Paris, London had overcome its 'ideological hostility,' whilst Pierre Dominique, in the Radical *La République*, argued that the French government must similarly resist the temptation to blur 'domestic and international questions.'³¹ However, the political right retained an instinctive anti-bolshevism. Léon Bailby emphasised the Soviet threat, accusing Moscow of indulging in 'corruption and blackmail' to influence French politicians and revive the Popular Front.³²

The conservative British press was dismissive of a Soviet pact for different reasons. The isolationist *Daily Express* deplored the new policy direction that amounted to 'the encirclement of Germany.'³³ Elsewhere, however, support for an alliance gathered

momentum. The *Manchester Guardian* maintained that ‘Russia, whatever the differences of opinion about her, stands against aggression,’ while the *Sunday Times* warned that it would be ‘the height of folly to disdain the help of Russia because we dislike her domestic policy.’³⁴ Unsurprisingly, an alliance was also advocated on the political left, where suspicion of Chamberlain’s commitment to the negotiations was rife.³⁵ The *Daily Herald* claimed that public opinion was ‘disturbed’ by suggestions that the British Government was deliberately obstructing an arrangement with Moscow.³⁶ A similar note was struck by sections of the French press. Léon Blum insisted that any obstacles must be overcome in pursuit of the ‘immediate and intimate binding of all the powers determined to preserve peace.’³⁷ The necessity of a pact was also acknowledged by some on the political right. The conservative deputy and journalist, Henri de Kérillis, was adamant that the pledges already undertaken could only be upheld with Soviet assistance, while the *Paris-Midi* put matters bluntly: ‘We must look at things squarely. If one considers Hitler as the number one danger for Europe in 1939, use must be made of all means at our disposal.’³⁸ But there was still no unanimity, because right wing support for an alliance was uncommon. Several publications emphasised repeatedly the dangers of domestic communism and warned that the interior menace posed by bolshevism demanded vigilance. Cautioning against a Franco-Soviet alignment, Bailby predicted that Moscow sought ‘by a thousand insidious means to induce us into an ideological war, marked with the most terrible risks.’³⁹

In Britain, meanwhile, the conservative press began to acknowledge a public desire for a pact. The *Daily Telegraph* suggested that it would ‘be approved by an overwhelming mass of British opinion’, and even the more reticent *Daily Mail*

conceded that an alliance should not be rejected ‘without the deepest consideration.’ Nevertheless, where French caution stemmed from the potential impact on domestic politics, British reservations were predicated on the potentially deleterious diplomatic repercussions. As the *Daily Mail*’s editorial continued, a Russian pact would preclude the securing of better relations with Italy, Spain, and Japan, even pushing these powers into Germany’s orbit.⁴⁰ For pro-alliance papers, such concerns were considered insufficient justification for stalling. ‘The task of creating and cementing an alliance with Russia should now be made the first imperative duty of the British Government,’ argued the *News Chronicle*: ‘Delay will be unforgivable.’⁴¹ A further reason to lament the delays came on 4 May when Stalin dismissed the relatively pro-western Litvinov from the Narkomindel, replacing him with the more quiescent Viacheslav Molotov. In France, Blum feared that this change marked a Soviet retreat into isolationism; the *Intransigeant* noted that it did not make ‘Anglo-Soviet conversations any easier,’ and the *Petit Parisien* saw it as a sign of Stalin’s determination to take personal control of Soviet diplomacy.⁴² A more cynical appraisal was provided by Wladimir d’Ormesson in *Le Figaro*, who accused the USSR of pursuing ‘three policies at once,’ creating a labyrinth in which only the Soviets knew where they stood.⁴³ In Britain, the *Evening Standard* evoked the more troubling prospect of a German-Soviet accommodation: ‘We may yet see the German lion and the Russian lamb lie down together’.⁴⁴

Despite the unease, the change at the Narkomindel did not cause any immediate or significant change in Moscow’s approach to the talks. The *Daily Mail* reassured its readers that fears of a Soviet retreat into isolation ‘are proving to be unfounded,’ and the *Daily Telegraph* proclaimed confidently that Litvinov’s dismissal ‘does not

portend any departure by the Russian Government from their general policy of collaboration.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, rumours of a German-Soviet *rapprochement*, combined with the German-Italian Pact of Steel (22 May), made the construction of a peace front more urgent, hence growing unease at the faltering negotiations. Most British newspapers urged the rapid conclusion of an alliance, including the *Daily Express*. 'It is plain,' noted an editorial, 'that the people want a military alliance with Russia, and are disturbed at the delay in getting it.'⁴⁶ Seeking to bend intransigent ministers to their will, several newspapers, notably those owned by the hitherto isolationist Lord Beaverbrook, explicitly evoked public opinion. The *Evening Standard* contended that people favoured 'a firm alliance' with the USSR, and the *Daily Express* claimed that Britain was a country of 'forty-seven million foreign secretaries' whose voices would ultimately prevail.⁴⁷ Such arguments were echoed on the left, the *Daily Herald* stating that no democratic government can 'stand against public opinion' and the *Daily Worker* adamant that the British public 'demanded an Anglo-Soviet Pact.' Advocates of a triple alliance in France struck a similar chord, *Ce Soir* warning that the British public would despair should their government fail to secure an agreement.⁴⁸

While the British press became more sympathetic to a Soviet alliance, French newspapers remained divided. Many on the right continued to indulge in vitriolic anti-Soviet rhetoric, and it was argued repeatedly that French caution was justified by the domestic threat of communism. The *Intransigeant*, whilst acknowledging that a Russian pact was diplomatically 'desirable', warned that it might provoke serious domestic disturbances in France, a side effect that did not trouble Britain where communism has 'no chance' of taking hold.⁴⁹ The suggestion that the marginal communist presence in Britain afforded London greater diplomatic latitude was

articulated freely. The *Journal des débats* noted that the size of the *Parti communiste français* (PCF) rendered the negotiations ‘more delicate’ for Paris than they were for London, an argument echoed by Jean Fabry in *Le Matin* in early June.⁵⁰ As a result, press support for an alliance was less widespread in France, and dissenting voices were certainly vented more frequently. A demand existed nonetheless, and was expressed in predictably raucous terms on the political left.⁵¹ There was considerable unease at the failure to conclude an alliance with anger directed increasingly at the western governments. Residual hostility to Soviet Russia had weakened, and there was a willingness, even a determination, to finalise a pact at almost any price.

By early June, however, the public’s support for a pact began to dissipate. A tendency emerged in British and French newspapers blaming the delays on Moscow rather than London or Paris. As old themes of Soviet duplicity and dishonesty resurfaced, the chances of securing a ‘Grand Alliance’ dwindled rapidly. Even newspapers that had previously embraced a Russian pact now began to stress that Russia’s absence from the ‘peace front’ was more detrimental to the USSR than it was for France and Britain.⁵² To be sure, the British government’s effort to expedite proceedings by sending a plenipotentiary to Moscow was criticised in some quarters, where it was anticipated correctly that the Soviets would resent the decision to send a little-known official, William Strang, rather than a more senior person, such as Halifax or his predecessor as Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden.⁵³ But press patience with the USSR was starting to diminish. The *Daily Telegraph* openly challenged the widespread assumption that the western governments were responsible for the delays, instead pointing towards a ‘lack of mutual confidence’ that afflicted both sides, a position echoed in France by the *Petit Parisien*.⁵⁴

Others went further; the *Daily Express* asserted that the ‘fault is on the side of the Russian Government’; *Le Figaro* castigated the ‘abominable’ manners of Soviet diplomats; and Pierre Bernus warned that the unscrupulous Stalin must be treated with caution.⁵⁵ The two newspapers widely regarded as quasi-official mouthpieces for their respective governments – *The Times* and *Le Temps* – maintained a guarded optimism, although the latter notably ran an editorial seeking to convince its readers that ‘Soviet collaboration’ was by no means indispensable.⁵⁶ Beyond the Soviet-funded publications, the most notable pro-alliance press articles were those penned by prominent politicians. Such articles were more conspicuous in France, suggesting that anti-Soviet sentiment was recognised as being more problematic there than in Britain. Winston Churchill assured readers of *Paris-Soir* that ideological hostility towards the USSR no longer blinded either British or French public opinion to the ‘harmony of interests’ that made an Anglo-Franco-Soviet arrangement essential. In the same newspaper, Yvon Delbos insisted that existing obligations to Poland and Romania rendered an alliance essential.⁵⁷

Despite such arguments, anti-Russian press commentary increased through June and elicited a response from Moscow. Rebutting accusations of Soviet chicanery, an inflammatory article written by the USSR’s propaganda chief, Andrei Zhdanov, appeared in *Pravda* on 29 June, faithfully reproduced by the *Humanité* in France and the *Daily Worker* in Britain. The article accused London and Paris of lacking goodwill, and claimed that the western powers blamed Soviet ‘obstinacy’ for the failure to secure a triple alliance so as to ‘prepare their own public opinion for an eventual deal with the aggressors.’⁵⁸ The *Pravda* article was certainly a rejoinder to

an emergent theme in western papers, but it would be erroneous to suggest that the British and French press were suddenly brimming with overtly anti-Soviet rhetoric. The biggest shift in press commentary in early summer 1939 was a change in focus rather than tone. By July, the press fixated squarely on the tensions surrounding Danzig at the expense of meaningful discussion of the Moscow talks. Instead, most newspapers simply published short and infrequent updates, usually couched in cautious optimism. In France, *La Croix* reported 'favourable' progress, and the *Petit Parisien* stated that the British Cabinet, swayed by public opinion, was now willing to work with the French to deliver a Soviet alliance.⁵⁹ In Britain, an *Evening Standard* editorial of 4 July even claimed prematurely that Britain and the USSR had 'come to terms', the Russians having 'won their case.' There were still glimpses in the right wing press of overt anti-Soviet sentiment, especially in France,⁶⁰ but the dampening enthusiasm for a Soviet alliance was attributable chiefly to this topic's occupying fewer column inches than before.

Even in early August, as Paris and London prepared to send delegations to Moscow to discuss a military pact, most newspapers remained confident that the slow but steady negotiations would bear fruit.⁶¹ Left-leaning papers occasionally chastised the western governments' temporizing, but the overall tone was one of optimism regarding the eventual outcome.⁶² In this context, news of Ribbentrop's imminent trip to Moscow came as a shock. British and French newspaper responses to the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact followed predictable ideological trajectories. The Communist-inspired press adhered faithfully to Moscow's line, presenting the pact as a genuine peace move.⁶³ The moderate left expressed confused bewilderment but offered little justification for Stalin's actions. Similar appraisals were prominent in centrist and liberal newspapers,

especially after the full details of the agreement emerged.⁶⁴ For the French right, the pact was bitter confirmation of what they had always suspected – Soviet Russia was duplicitous, untrustworthy, and looking to foment a worldwide Bolshevik revolution. Stéphane Lauzanne, in *Le Matin*, wrote: ‘It was fate, certain and inevitable. The laws of nature are always thus. As the horse gallops, as the bird flies, as the fish swims, so the Russian Bolshevik betrays. He has duplicity in his blood, and no treatment will ever cure it.’⁶⁵ Elsewhere, Wladimir d’Ormesson viewed recent events as confirmation that Moscow was pursuing ‘three policies at once’; *La Croix* reminded its readers of Brest-Litovsk, and the *Journal des débats* accused the Soviets of acting with their habitual lack of grace.⁶⁶ In Britain, the conservative press focused on the solid Franco-British alliance and a determination to uphold those eastern alliances already undertaken, but a residual tone of anti-Soviet sentiment permeated most analyses.⁶⁷ Anti-Soviet sentiment had never been far from the surface, and the rapid re-emergence of familiar tropes appeared to vindicate the west’s hesitancy throughout the negotiations. This ideological hostility had, nevertheless, been marginalised just weeks earlier, providing a fleeting but very real opportunity to secure a Triple Alliance. This missed opportunity requires a closer examination of how far the press – as a perceived conduit of public opinion – could influence foreign policy during this frenetic period.

Press commentary, public opinion, and their impact on policy

The preceding overview of the evolution of British and French press commentary during the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations provides the backdrop for assessing its impact on foreign policy decision-makers. In the immediate aftermath of the Prague

coup, the Soviet Ambassador at London, Ivan Maisky, noted that ‘the [British] public’s mood is rapidly hardening’ against Germany, a disconnect emerging between a Prime Minister wedded to appeasement and a public fatigued by Nazi bellicosity.⁶⁸ This disconnect was echoed in parliamentary circles, where left wing accusations of governmental procrastination induced Chamberlain to meet Labour leaders on 24 March to explain ‘that *we* weren’t cold-shouldering Russia – it was the misgivings of Poland and others.’⁶⁹ In France, the public’s appetite for a firm response to the dictators had only intensified after Prague. Daladier’s *chef du cabinet*, Roger Genebrier, recalled how French public opinion, having ‘become conscious of the inexorable march towards war’, was now prepared to sanction an alliance hitherto considered unpalatable.⁷⁰ But although widespread, support for a pact was not unanimous. Indeed, the tepid response of French newspapers, especially when compared to the chorus of pro-alliance voices emerging in the British press, helps explain why Paris allowed London to take the early initiative in the formal negotiations.

Growing press interest in a pact was echoed in Parliament, increasing the pressure on the Prime Minister. When interrogated in the Commons, Chamberlain insisted that he was not animated by ideological aversion, and that ‘we welcome the co-operation of any country, whatever may be its internal system of government.’⁷¹ Suspicion of the Prime Minister lingered, and several Conservative dissidents vocally endorsed a Soviet pact, including Churchill who told the Commons that ‘Russia is a ponderous counterpoise in the scale of world peace.’⁷² Similarly, the Home Secretary, Sir John Simon, noted that the absence of an agreement ‘would be regarded in many quarters as a considerable defeat for our policy,’ and even Chamberlain acknowledged that a

‘failure to associate with Soviet Russia would give rise to suspicion and difficulty with the Left Wing both in this country and in France’.⁷³ There were even explicit calls in the press for a Cabinet re-shuffle.⁷⁴ Maisky also noted the fevered press interest in the Soviet negotiations. Having been summoned to Moscow for talks in mid-April, he commented that the British press made ‘a first-class sensation out of my trip’, his embassy being inundated with requests for information. Maisky intimated further that this press interest was mirrored in governmental circles. ‘The British Government seems greatly concerned about my being summoned to Moscow,’ he recorded, ‘and wants to convince me ... of its sincere wish to work together with us on the establishment of a peace front.’⁷⁵

Nevertheless, Cabinet enthusiasm for a Soviet alliance remained lukewarm. When Litvinov forwarded Moscow’s counter-proposals on 18 April, London’s reaction was decidedly cool. The demand for a simultaneous political and military agreement caused longstanding British scepticism regarding Soviet military capabilities to resurface.⁷⁶ But political opponents of a Soviet alliance ran counter to the prevailing direction of popular and press opinion which increasingly demanded an alliance. The French government also vented frustration at the lack of results and demanded an injection of urgency.⁷⁷ As Daladier recalled, France was keen for an agreement to be reached, and accordingly ‘exercised friendly pressure on Britain.’⁷⁸ This pressure did not sit comfortably with French critics of a Soviet pact, especially on the extreme right. For the *Action Française*, the French government must ‘assume a heavy responsibility’ for joining the chorus of voices urging Chamberlain to overcome his reservations.⁷⁹ Paris was, nonetheless, more inclined to accept Moscow’s demands than were the British. Even the pro-appeasement Bonnet toed the government line,

telling the Soviet Ambassador at Paris, Iakov Surits, that France would welcome a tripartite mutual assistance pact.⁸⁰ Bonnet's comments fed Moscow's belief that the democracies would concede to their demands, a conviction nourished by western press commentary. Maisky was persuaded that even the most fervent British appeasers would succumb, press commentary and parliamentary unrest combining to force the Prime Minister's hand.⁸¹ Chamberlain was not impervious to pressure, and in Cabinet discussions on 5 May he acknowledged that public opinion would despair should the Soviet proposals be rejected.⁸² French discontent was also expressed more freely, Bonnet stating plainly that Paris's proposal for a tripartite agreement 'was preferable' to the more complicated arrangement favoured by London.⁸³

British policymakers were in a bind: on the one hand, they feared that robust agreements with Moscow would antagonise Hitler and prevent the detachment of Italy from the Axis; on the other, procrastination alienated not only Paris but also considerable sections of domestic opinion.⁸⁴ A persistent fear also existed that the lack of a Russian pact would leave the door ajar for Berlin to make its own arrangement with Moscow. Stalin's dismissal of Litvinov exacerbated this fear. Despite assurances from Maisky that Moscow's attitude remained unchanged, Halifax's private secretary, Oliver Harvey, suspected that 'it may mean a Russo-German rapprochement.'⁸⁵ London hesitated nonetheless, and finally rejected Moscow's 18 April proposals on 13 May. Committing wholeheartedly to a triple alliance, and thus closing the door on further acts of appeasement, remained a step too far for many in Whitehall. The degree of London's attachment to the Munich policy loomed large in Ambassador Maisky's mind, and on 9 May he commented that *The Times* had raised the possibility of further appeasement.⁸⁶ Soviet confidence in France

was also shaken, Marcel Déat's infamous 'Mourir pour Dantzig' article, published in *l'Œuvre* on 4 May, casting doubt on the French people's determination to uphold their obligations in eastern Europe. Worried that mutual distrust was clouding the negotiations, Bonnet took the initiative by urging London 'to assure, without further delay, a favourable conclusion to the Russian negotiations.'⁸⁷

Despite lingering suspicions, by late May public pressure dovetailed with other factors (fears of a Soviet-German *rapprochement*, the Chiefs of Staff expressing support for a pact, more vocal and insistent French pressure), to persuade the Cabinet to pursue a Soviet alliance with more energy. Although committed supporters of Chamberlain's appeasement policy like the Conservative M.P. Henry 'Chips' Channon resented the apparent change in direction (describing it as the 'pet scheme of the leftist clique in the Foreign Office'⁸⁸), political support for an alliance was becoming widespread. Chamberlain, remarked Halifax, 'was very reluctant to agree to a full tripartite alliance [but] many in the Cabinet favoured it.'⁸⁹ On 21 May, the Prime Minister himself acknowledged that several Cabinet colleagues, who had hitherto opposed an alliance 'now appear to have swung toward the opposite view.'⁹⁰ Litvinov's dismissal did little to dampen pro-alliance sentiment in Britain; the appetite had only intensified. For Maisky, the British government was 'in a tight spot' given that the British press presented Moscow's demands favourably and in a manner that appealed to ordinary people. '[W]ere the Anglo-Soviet argument over the terms and conditions of agreement to be judged by the British public,' he noted, 'Chamberlain would most definitely lose.'⁹¹

If Chamberlain was becoming isolated in Britain, so too were the resolutely anti-Soviet sections of rightist opinion in France.⁹² When Daladier told the Chamber on 11 May that ‘we consider the participation of the USSR as essential and desirable,’ he could be confident that the majority of deputies concurred.⁹³ Unlike Chamberlain, the French Premier encountered little resistance, only the Communists consistently questioning his commitment to an alliance, and even then the pro-appeasement Bonnet usually acted as a lightning rod.⁹⁴ Daladier’s determination to secure a pact was not merely for public consumption, as he began to articulate his frustrations to the British more vigorously. After presenting Halifax with a draft tripartite agreement in Geneva on 21 May, he expressed astonishment at the latter’s reservations, insisting that Moscow would not ‘accept anything less.’⁹⁵ Jean-Baptiste Duroselle contends that the pressure exerted on Halifax had an impact, as the British government would, by the end of May, eventually accept a tripartite formula.⁹⁶ French pressure undoubtedly contributed, but it was only when fused with domestic factors in Britain that Chamberlain softened his resistance. According to Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, Chamberlain’s position regarding a Soviet alliance evolved from adamant opposition on 20 May to reluctant acceptance just four days later, when Moscow learned that the British government was willing to accept a tripartite agreement of mutual assistance.⁹⁷

Crucially, however, Britain’s acceptance contained what Chamberlain considered ‘a most ingenious’ caveat that insisted the alliance be based upon Article 16 of the League Covenant, ultimately giving it ‘a temporary character’ and allowing Britain to revise ‘our relations with the Soviet if we want to.’⁹⁸ Historians offer conflicting interpretations of Chamberlain’s machinations at this juncture. Some, like Louise

Grace Shaw, condemn it as a ‘premeditated and deliberate act of sabotage,’ while Keith Neilson is more sympathetic to the Prime Minister, suggesting that it made a Russian alliance more acceptable to those sections of British opinion hostile to the USSR.⁹⁹ If Chamberlain believed that the League caveat was essential to satisfy the public, he was clearly oblivious to the majority of press commentary that wanted a Soviet alliance with or without reference to Geneva. Of course, Chamberlain’s perceptions of public opinion were not nourished by the press alone, and the frequent letters he received from his two sisters provided ample reassurance of his continued popularity. Indeed, these letters evoked an early example of a ‘Westminster bubble’, intimating that the dissent articulated freely in parliamentary debate and newspaper editorials failed to reflect the prevailing mood in the country. What mattered, Hilda remarked, was not ‘the opinion in the House of Commons [but] the opinion of the mass of the people,’ and the majority of the public - the ‘ordinary dull country people, councillors, gentry ..., the working people’ - all supported the Premier.¹⁰⁰

Chamberlain could seek solace in his sisters’ letters even as dissenting voices became harder to ignore. On 21 May Hilda even congratulated him on his ‘lofty disregard’ of the ‘carping criticism’ that he faced, assuring her brother that his position remained ‘impregnable in the face of public confidence.’ Ida acknowledged that the campaign to secure a Russian alliance was causing Neville ‘a good deal of trouble,’ but felt nonetheless that ‘most people in the country’ had confidence in his diplomatic strategy. On 28 May, Ida noted a ‘curious phenomenon’ whereby the prominent parliamentary critics palpably failed to convey the mood of the country, in which Chamberlain enjoyed ‘the kind of popularity unprecedented since the days of Pitt.’¹⁰¹ That Ida and Hilda felt the need to offer such reassurance suggests that the criticism

was affecting the Prime Minister. On 16 June Hilda even intimated that a Soviet pact *could* have been delivered had someone more committed than Chamberlain been in charge. ‘No doubt [Eden] or Churchill could have returned triumphantly with an alliance in a very short time,’ she wrote in response to the press campaign for a Cabinet reshuffle, ‘but it would have meant exactly what you have tried so hard to avoid.’¹⁰²

What Chamberlain sought to avoid – an alliance on terms dictated by Moscow – was nonetheless becoming more palatable to the British people. Paris certainly felt that public opinion facilitated rather than hindered the conclusion of an alliance, even if press speculation concerning the imminence of an agreement was considered ‘too optimistic’ by some foreign ministry officials.¹⁰³ Bonnet noted ‘a very strong movement of opinion in Britain and France which believes, not unreasonably, that the fate of peace depends upon the current negotiations.’¹⁰⁴ The Quai d’Orsay shared the conviction, gaining ground in the British Foreign Office, that a Soviet pact was both expedient and necessary. The Quai’s Secretary-General, Alexis Léger, considered Soviet inclusion in the peace front to be ‘critical,’ but admitted that initial British and French hesitancy was a prudent negotiating tactic because simple acceptance of Moscow’s opening offer would have precluded further concessions from the Russians.¹⁰⁵ The Soviets, however, were prepared to be patient, waiting until western public opinion compelled its reluctant leaders to accept the USSR’s demands. Moscow might have expected these pressures to induce significant political changes in London and Paris. Daniel Lévi, a French diplomat and a Soviet affairs expert, suggested that, should Eden return as British Foreign Secretary and Bonnet be replaced as French Foreign Minister, ‘the Russians would conclude more quickly.’¹⁰⁶

The French government was anxious to avoid the negotiations' dragging on interminably. Daladier in particular was concerned that such an eventuality would fracture the fragile domestic unity that he had successfully constructed around a *politique de fermeté*.¹⁰⁷ For some historians, particularly French scholars, the greater flexibility shown by Paris was fatally undermined by British procrastination, the latter reinforcing Soviet suspicions of the west and greatly hindering the chances of securing an alliance.¹⁰⁸

Given the stakes, London's attempt to add impetus to the faltering negotiations by sending Strang to Moscow, rather than Halifax or Eden, warrants criticism. The Russians were clearly offended, and Maisky urged Halifax to travel to the USSR in person.¹⁰⁹ Cadogan told Corbin that the British government was anxious to avoid 'running after' the Russians, as this would render an eventual failure all the more humiliating.¹¹⁰ For the Soviets, however, this half-hearted gesture was especially discouraging given the recent tone of British newspapers. Shortly after arriving in the Soviet capital, Strang noted that the Soviet government, doubtless influenced by appraisals of the western press furnished by Maisky and Surits, was convinced that the USSR only needed to 'stand pat [because] our public will force us to give way.'¹¹¹ Indeed, Molotov had earlier told Seeds that he was surprised by the western governments' hesitancy, having been persuaded by press coverage that London and Paris would agree to Moscow's terms.¹¹² The confident conviction that public pressure would compel the British and French governments to yield contributed to Moscow's growing demands, notably their insistence that the Baltic States be included in any security arrangement. But rather than facilitate an agreement, increased Russian demands merely provoked antagonism in London. Governmental

scepticism was reinforced, and many newspapers, whose advocacy of an alliance to that point had done so much to transcend a latent anti-Soviet hostility, began voicing unrest.¹¹³

Both sides were locked in a battle, each seeking to frame the negotiations in a particular way before the court of British and French public opinion. The USSR had been winning this battle comfortably during April and May, but by June it was less clear which side would prevail. Nonetheless, previous representations of a pro-alliance public opinion continued to reverberate. Halifax certainly considered it essential to show *something* for the weeks of talks, even acceptance of a 'simple tripartite Agreement' that the Russians had offered, and the British had rejected, back in April.¹¹⁴ A straightforward tripartite agreement, shorn of any League-based caveats, may have been an option several weeks earlier, but by late June 1939, as negotiations stalled over definitions of 'indirect aggression' and the possible inclusion of the Baltic States, this opportunity appeared lost. Discussions had reached an impasse. Bonnet warned Halifax on 19 July that a failure would be 'disastrous' both for the prospects of peace and on a domestic level given that 'public opinion in all countries attaches the greatest importance' to a triple alliance.¹¹⁵ From Moscow, Strang acknowledged that London was 'being urged by our press and by our public to conclude an agreement quickly.' Moreover, he continued, 'the Russians have good reason to assume that we shall not dare to face a final breakdown of the negotiations.'¹¹⁶

Given that recent British opinion polls indicated overwhelming public support for a pact, the Russian conviction that Britain and France would eventually succumb to

their demands was reasonable.¹¹⁷ But the public mood – at least as it was reflected in the press – had already begun to shift, and this shift would become even more discernible during July. Maisky detected this evolution but accused the British government of orchestrating it. A ‘major campaign’ was underway, he noted: ‘rumours are being spread far and wide in the press, Parliament, and public and political circles’ that the USSR was being unreasonably stubborn, ‘deliberately dragging out the negotiations,’ and even ‘flirting with Hitler.’ This campaign, suggested Maisky, was having a wide impact, even having ‘a demoralizing effect’ on the British political left.¹¹⁸ Although explicit support for an alliance became less prominent, most British newspapers remained cautiously upbeat about the final outcome.¹¹⁹ In France, too, optimism prevailed, Daladier telling the journalist Pierre Lazareff that, certain difficulties notwithstanding, the ‘conversations are soon going to result in an *accord très solide*.’ Shortly afterwards, when meeting members of the French military mission ahead of their mission to Russia, Daladier allegedly told General Joseph Doumenc to secure an agreement ‘at any price.’¹²⁰

The British government showed markedly less urgency, Chamberlain interpreting the diminution of pro-alliance press voices as further endorsement of his diplomacy. His recent visit to South Wales had, according to his sister Hilda, allowed him to see ‘the place you hold in the hearts’ of the people and provided a welcome antidote to the ‘carping criticism’ in London. Ida concurred, assuring her brother that a general election would confirm his popularity with the masses and illustrate ‘to what a very limited group of people criticism is confined.’¹²¹ London’s unhurried approach to the dispatch of their military mission infuriated Paris, Bonnet criticising the British government for introducing ‘excessive’ delays.¹²² London procrastinated further by

sending the military delegation by slow boat, a decision that several historians use to question Chamberlain's commitment to the talks.¹²³ How far such procrastination encouraged or even justified the USSR's pursuit of an alternative arrangement with Berlin is questionable. As this discussion of Soviet assumptions regarding British and French public opinion shows, Moscow's courting of Germany was due not simply to taking offence at British lassitude, but also an overestimation of their relative bargaining position. Gabriel Gorodetsky questions the idea that the USSR only agreed to a German pact 'under duress' and 'at the twelfth hour,' arguing that the ex-post-facto Soviet narrative, 'meticulously constructed and widely disseminated by Maisky' in a bid to justify the Nazi-Soviet arrangement, is not supported by the evidence.¹²⁴ Of course, the ill-fated military missions to Moscow illustrated emphatically the almost insurmountable ideological differences that plagued the negotiations from their inception. The British delegates were instructed to go slowly, and the issue of whether Soviet troops would be permitted access through Poland and Romania was always likely to be an insuperable hurdle.¹²⁵ All the same, news that Berlin and Moscow had signed a non-aggression pact was a devastating blow to the western democracies and denied them Russian assistance in a war that now appeared imminent.

Conclusion

The speed with which Germany and Russia came to terms brought into sharper focus just how drawn-out, protracted, and tempestuous the Anglo-Franco-Soviet discussions had been. The temptation to blame the western governments for these failed negotiation remains potent, and has been revisited energetically by historians like Michael Jabara Carley, Louise Grace Shaw, and Annie Lacroix-Riz. Animated chiefly

by anti-Soviet ideological hostility, so the argument goes, the western governments never sufficiently committed to a pact and compelled Stalin to align with Berlin. Prominent decision-makers, notably Neville Chamberlain, certainly doubted the value of a Soviet alliance, and ideological scruples undoubtedly clouded their judgements. It is also clear that, by pledging support to Poland and Romania before the USSR's accession to the peace front, Britain and France had given a de facto guarantee to Moscow without obtaining a quid pro quo. Nevertheless, the Anglo-Franco-Soviet talks revealed points of shared interest that posed the potential for an alliance. Both parties had a common enemy in Nazi Germany; Litvinov was an apostle of collective security, and even after his dismissal from office there was no immediate realignment of Soviet policy; a military and strategic appreciation indicated that only with Russian support could the guarantees provided to Warsaw and Bucharest be upheld; for many on the political right, pragmatism overcame ideological aversion, allowing them to embrace a Soviet alliance; and, most crucially, public opinion in both Britain and France was ready to accept an alliance even on terms dictated chiefly by Moscow. In combination, these factors persuaded even the most reluctant policymakers to respond. As Carley has remarked, 'Chamberlain did not want an alliance with the Soviet Union [but] public opinion and Parliament pushed him further than he wanted to go.'¹²⁶

The opportunity to develop these points of common interest into a fully-fledged alliance, however, was fleeting. G. Bruce Strang's argument that a 'desperate, over-committed British government' sought speed whilst the Russians 'willingly tolerated delay' is not without merit, especially when applied to the negotiations from June to August.¹²⁷ Speed was absent when it might have yielded a positive outcome during

May and June; thereafter, the fusion of conditions that fleetingly made an alliance possible began to fragment. By this juncture, even making a ‘decisive gesture’ capable of breaking ‘the crust of Soviet incomprehension’ was unlikely to produce positive outcomes.¹²⁸ After all, previous public enthusiasm only encouraged Moscow to increase their price, hindering rather than facilitating agreement. By introducing problematic issues concerning the Baltic States and definitions of ‘indirect aggression’, Moscow encouraged anti-Soviet sentiment to resurface. The Russians had miscalculated, and their inflated expectations of how far western public opinion was prepared to go in pursuit of a ‘Grand Alliance’ led them to demand too much. The negotiations continued regardless, but the chances of success were bleak at best and non-existent at worst. Agreement was only possible if sufficient pressure was applied to recalcitrant policymakers – particularly in London but also in Paris – by press and public opinion. Such pressure existed from mid-April through early June 1939, but this glimmer of opportunity was ephemeral. It was only at this juncture, rather than at the outset of the talks, that an alliance was possible.

¹ See for example A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961), 263; Jonathan Haslam, *The Soviet Union and the Struggle for Collective Security in Europe, 1933-39*, (London: Macmillan, 1984), 228-32. See also Jiri Hochman, *The Soviet Union and the Failure of Collective Security, 1934-1938*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

² Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, v. 1: *The Gathering Storm*, (London: Cassell, 1948), 239-40.

³ See Geoffrey Roberts, *The Unholy Alliance: Stalin's Pact with Hitler*, (London: Tauris, 1989), 226; Silvio Pons, *Stalin and the Inevitable War, 1936-1941*, (London: Tauris, 2002), 179. See also Albert Resis, ‘The Fall of Litvinov: Harbinger of the German-Soviet Non-aggression Pact’, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 52 (2000), 33-56.

⁴ Keith Neilson points to mutual mistrust and suspicion (*Britain, Soviet Russia and the Collapse of the Versailles Order, 1919-1939*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-42), whilst G. Bruce

Strang's 'John Bull in Search of a Suitable Russia: British Foreign Policy and the Failure of the Anglo-French-Soviet Alliance Negotiations, 1939', *Canadian Journal of History*, 41 (2006) defends Britain's approach to the Soviet talks. Notable analyses that blame the western powers include Louise Grace Shaw's *The British Political Elite and the Soviet Union, 1937-1939*, (London: Frank Cass, 2003) which is particularly condemnatory of the British government, and Michael Jabara Carley's *1939: The Alliance that Never Was and the Coming of World War II*, (Chicago: I. R. Dee, 2000) which attributes blame to both London and Paris.

⁵ P. M. H. Bell, *John Bull and the Bear: British Public Opinion, Foreign Policy and the Soviet Union, 1941-1945* (London: Edward Arnold, 1990).

⁶ Shaw, *British Political Elite*, 124; Richard Cockett, *Twilight of Truth: Chamberlain, Appeasement and the Manipulation of the Press* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 116; Bell, *John Bull and the Bear*, 30; Carley, *1939*, 119.

⁷ Carley, *1939*, 151; Elisabeth du Réau, *Édouard Daladier, 1884-1970*, (Paris: Fayard, 1993), 353; Puyaubert, *Georges Bonnet: Les combats d'un pacifiste* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 185; Jean-Louis Crémieux-Brilhac, *Les Français de l'an 40, tome I: La guerre, oui ou non?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 65; Daniel Hucker, *Public Opinion and the End of Appeasement in Britain and France* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 249 .

⁸ This was especially evident at the time of the Munich Agreement: see the dossier of press extracts (September – October 1938) in Daladier's personal papers, A[rchives] N[ationales], Paris: Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/10, 2DA3, Dr.6, and in his papers held at the French foreign ministry archives, Archives du M[inistère] des A[ffaires] É[trangères], Paris: Papiers Daladier, No. 2.

⁹ See for example his frustration at the *Daily Telegraph* which began urging a Cabinet reshuffle to include Winston Churchill: Letter from Neville Chamberlain to his sister Ida, 8 July 1939, in Robert Self (ed.), *The Neville Chamberlain Diary Letters, Vol. 4: The Downing Street Years, 1934-1940* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 426. Chamberlain's particular sensitivity to conservative newspaper commentary is apparent in this edited collection of letters, as well as in his personal papers housed at the N[eville] C[hamberlain] Papers, Birmingham University Library.

¹⁰ Laura Beers, 'Whose Opinion? Changing Attitudes Towards Opinion Polling in British Politics, 1937-1964', *20th Century British History*, 17 (2006), 186.

¹¹ Jon Cowans, 'Fear and Loathing in Paris: The Reception of Opinion Polling in France, 1938-1977', *Social Science History* 26 (2002), 75. See also Loïc Blondiaux, 'Le chiffre et le croyance: L'importation des sondages d'opinion en France ou les infortunes d'une opinion sans public', *Politix*, 7 (1994).

¹² Crémieux-Brilhac, *La guerre, oui ou non?*

¹³ Hucker, *Public Opinion*, 133.

¹⁴ Talbot Imlay, *Facing the Second World War: Strategy, Politics, and Economics in Britain and France 1938-1940*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 164. See also du Réau, *Édouard Daladier*, 354 and Annie Lacroix-Riz, *Le choix de la défaite: Les élites françaises dans les années 1930* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2007), 561-2.

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- ¹⁵ Many scholars contrast British temporizing with French willingness to make concessions. For example, Puyaubert, *Georges Bonnet*, 192-3; Benjamin Franklin Martin, *Years of Plenty, Years of Want: France and the Legacy of the Great War* (De Kalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013), 199.
- ¹⁶ Bell, *John Bull and the Bear*, 18
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 18-20.
- ¹⁸ Paul Corthorn demonstrates that disparaging commentary increased after 1936 when Stalin's purges and show trials prompted previously sympathetic leftist publications to adopt a hostile tone ('Labour, the Left, and the Stalinist Purges of the Late 1930s', *The Historical Journal*, 48 (2005).
- ¹⁹ See Charles Micaud, *The French Right and Nazi Germany: 1933-1939: A Study of Public Opinion*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1943), 67-84. French reluctance to ratify the Pact lingered in Russian minds, contributing to Stalin's suspicions of French trustworthiness during the negotiations in 1939. Julian Jackson, *The Fall of France*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 72.
- ²⁰ For the French view of the purges, see Carley, 1939, 25, and Martin S. Alexander, *The Republic in Danger: General Maurice Gamelin and the Politics of French Defence, 1933-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 292-301. For the negative impact of the purges in British political circles, see Shaw, *British Political Elite*, 51-62.
- ²¹ *Le Temps*, 6 Oct. 1938.
- ²² See for example 'The Plan Examined', *The Daily Herald*, 1 Oct. 1938; 'For Our Time?', *The Manchester Guardian*, 3 Oct. 1938.
- ²³ Cited in Robert Conquest, *Stalin: Breaker of Nations*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991), 220.
- ²⁴ Michael Jabara Carley, 'Who Betrayed Whom? Franco-Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1932-1939', Gab es einen Stalin-Hitler Pakt? – Freie Universität Berlin, Conférence, février 2014: https://www.webdepot.umontreal.ca/Usagers/carleym/MonDepotPublic/Carley's%20Web%20site/Carley_Berlin_2014.pdf (accessed: 4.4.16)
- ²⁵ Geoffrey Hicks, "'Appeasement' or consistent Conservatism? British foreign policy, party politics and the guarantees of 1867 and 1939", *Historical Research* 84 (2011), 531-2.
- ²⁶ Halifax to the Cabinet, T[he] N[ational] A[rchives], Kew: CAB 23/97. For more on the official re-evaluation of British policy towards the USSR at this juncture, see Neilson, *Collapse of the Versailles Order*, 254-71.
- ²⁷ Claire Knight, 'The Making of the Soviet Ally in British Wartime Popular Press', *Journalism Studies* 14 (2013), 478-9.
- ²⁸ Halifax to Seeds, 19 March 1939, and Seeds to Halifax, 22 March 1939, C[hurchill] A[rchives] C[entre], Cambridge, Vansittart Papers, VNST 3/2.
- ²⁹ Corbin to Bonnet, 20 March 1939, A N, Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/13, 2DA6, Dr.2; Corbin to Bonnet, 24 March 1939, Archives du MAE, Série Z, Grande-Bretagne, no. 238.
- ³⁰ Léon Blum, *Le Populaire*, 21 March 1939. See also, Gabriel Péri in *L'Humanité*, 24 March 1939.

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- ³¹ Yvon Delbos, 'La nouvelle organisation de la résistance', *Paris-Soir*, 7 April 1939; Pierre Dominique, *La République*, 22 March 1939. See also the *Paris-Soir* editorial of 5 April, 'L'Angleterre n'abandonnera plus ses positions'.
- ³² Léon Bailby, *Le Jour-Écho de Paris*, 16 March 1939.
- ³³ *The Daily Express*, editorial, 21 March 1939.
- ³⁴ Editorial, *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 March 1939; Scrutator, *The Sunday Times*, 26 March 1939.
- ³⁵ See, for example, the editorial in *The Daily Mirror*, 21 March 1939.
- ³⁶ Editorial, *The Daily Herald*, 15 April 1939.
- ³⁷ Blum, *Le Populaire*, 9 April 1939.
- ³⁸ De Kérillis, *L'Époque*, 20 April 1939; *Paris-Midi*, 25 March 1939, cited in Micaud, *French Right and Nazi Germany*, 215.
- ³⁹ Bailby, *Le Jour-Écho de Paris*, 10 April 1939. See also Pierre Bernus in *Le journal des débats politiques et littéraires*, 23 April 1939.
- ⁴⁰ Editorial, 'Europe in Tension', *The Daily Telegraph*, 12 April 1939; editorial, 'What of Russia?', *The Daily Mail*, 21 March 1939.
- ⁴¹ Editorial, *The News Chronicle*, 10 April 1939.
- ⁴² Blum, *Le Populaire*, 5 May 1939; Gallus, 'L'URSS sans Litvinov', *L'Intransigeant*, 5 May 1939; Lucien Bourguès, 'Le discours de M. Beck, la démission de M. Litvinov', *Le Petit Parisien*, 5 May 1939.
- ⁴³ Wladimir d'Ormesson, 'Hypothèses...', *Le Figaro*, 5 May 1939.
- ⁴⁴ Editorial, *The Evening Standard*, 4 May 1939.
- ⁴⁵ Editorial, 'Rebuff to Hitler', *The Daily Mail*, 10 May 1939; editorial, 'Russia and the Peace Pact', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11 May 1939.
- ⁴⁶ Editorial, *The Daily Express*, 20 May 1939. Further examples include Garvin in *The Observer*, 14 May 1939, and editorials in *The Manchester Guardian*, 9 May 1939, and *The Daily Herald* and *The Daily Mirror* on 8 May 1939.
- ⁴⁷ Editorial, *The Daily Herald*, 22 May 1939; editorial, *The Daily Worker*, 26 May 1939; editorial, *The Evening Standard*, 17 May 1939; editorial, *The Daily Express*, 20 May 1939.
- ⁴⁸ Paul Nizan, *Ce Soir*, 12 May 1939.
- ⁴⁹ Gallus, 'Anglo-Russes ou Germano-Russes?', *L'Intransigeant*, 17 May 1939.
- ⁵⁰ Pierre Bernus, 'Les puissances occidentales, la Russie et l'Allemagne', *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires*, 21 May 1939; Jean Fabry, 'À « pacte d'acier » opposons « front d'acier »', *Le Matin*, 6 June 1939. See also Gallus, 'Nécessité fait loi', *Intransigeant*, 27 May 1939.
- ⁵¹ See for example *L'Humanité*, 26 May 1939 and Blum in *Le Populaire*, 17 May 1939.
- ⁵² For examples within the British press, see Garvin in *The Observer*, 4 June 1939, and editorials in *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph* (both 1 June 1939), and *The Manchester Guardian* (2 June 1939). In the French press, similar sentiments were expressed by Marcel Lucain in *Le Petit Marseillais*, 2 June 1939, Pierre Dominique in *La République*, 5 June 1939, Lucien Bourguès in *Le Petit Parisien*, 1 June 1939, Pierre Bernus in the *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires*, 2 June 1939, and headlines on 1 June 1939 in both the *L'Ouest-Éclair* and *Le Matin*.

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- ⁵³ Within the French press, see Péri in *L'Humanité*, 9 June 1939 and Pertinax, 'La defense des "intérêts vitaux"', *L'Europe nouvelle*, 10 June 1939; within the British press see editorials in *The News Chronicle* (8 June 1939) and *The Daily Mirror* (10 June 1939).
- ⁵⁴ Editorial, 'Moscow and the Peace Front', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 June 1939; Elie-J. Bois, 'Face à l'Axe: Londres et Moscou', *Le Petit Parisien*, 25 June 1939.
- ⁵⁵ Editorial, *The Daily Express*, 26 June 1939; Wladimir d'Ormesson, 'Sincérité', *Le Figaro*, 2 June 1939; Pierre Bernus, 'Les négociations de Moscou', *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires*, 18 June 1939.
- ⁵⁶ *Le Temps*, 24 June 1939; for examples of non-committal, but generally hopeful, editorial comments in *The Times*, see 'M. Molotoff's Speech', 1 June 1939, 'Lord Halifax's Speech', 9 June 1939, and 'The Dual Policy', 13 June 1939.
- ⁵⁷ Winston Churchill, 'Le triple rempart de la paix', *Paris-Soir*, 8 June 1939; Yvon Delbos, 'L'accorde paix Paris-Londres-Moscou et les Etats baltes', *Paris-Soir*, 12 June 1939.
- ⁵⁸ Cited in a telegram from Seeds, 29 June 1939, TNA, FO 371/23079/C9157/3778/18.
- ⁵⁹ 'Les négociations de Moscou progresseraient favorablement', *La Croix*, 5 July 1939; Lucien Bourguès, 'Les négociations avec Moscou', *Le Petit Parisien*, 7 July 1939.
- ⁶⁰ See, for example, Gallus in *L'Intransigeant*, 9 July 1939 and Marcel Lucain in *Le Petit Marseillais*, 1 July 1939.
- ⁶¹ See, for example, the editorial, 'Well Done!', *The News Chronicle*, 9 Aug. 1939, and the editorial, 'Slow but Sure', *The Daily Mail*, 1 Aug. 1939.
- ⁶² Albert Bayet, 'Tenir! L'Œuvre', 3 July 1939; editorial, *The Daily Mirror*, 7 July 1939.
- ⁶³ For example, the official response of the PCF as printed in *L'Humanité*, 23 Aug. 1939; *Ce Soir*, 24 Aug. 1939; in Britain, *The Daily Worker* of both 23 and 25 Aug. 1939.
- ⁶⁴ For the moderate left in Britain, see editorials in *The Daily Worker* on both 23 and 28 Aug.; in France, Blum's articles in *Le Populaire* on 23 and 25 Aug. 1939, the declaration of the Confédération Générale du Travail, published in *Le Populaire*, 25 Aug. 1939, and also the trade unionist paper, *Le Peuple*, 23 Aug. 1939. For examples of centrist papers, see (for France) *Paris-Soir*, 23 Aug. 1939, and *Le Petit Parisien*, 24 Aug. 1939, and (for Britain), editorials in both *The News Chronicle* and *The Manchester Guardian* on 25 Aug. 1939.
- ⁶⁵ Stéphane Lauzanne, 'La « surprise » de Moscou confirme notre attente d'un nouveau Leipzig', *Le Matin*, 23 Aug. 1939.
- ⁶⁶ D'Ormesson, 'Renlements', *Le Figaro*, 23 Aug. 1939; Jean Guiraud, 'La fin d'une équivoque', *La Croix*, 25 Aug. 1939; Pierre Bernus, 'Le Reich et l'U.R.S.S. s'apprêtent à conclure un pacte de non-agression', *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires*, 23 Aug. 1939.
- ⁶⁷ Editorial, *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 Aug. 1939. Similar sentiments were conveyed in editorials in *The Evening Standard* (24 Aug. 1939), and *The Times* (23 Aug. 1939).
- ⁶⁸ Maisky diary entry, 25 March 1939, in Gabriel Gorodetsky (ed.), *The Maisky Diaries: Red Ambassador to the Court of St James's, 1932-1943*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 166 (hereafter *Maisky Diaries*).

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- ⁶⁹ Cadogan diary entry, 24 March 1939, in David Dilks (ed.), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, 1938-45*, (London: Cassell, 1971), 163 [hereafter *Cadogan Diaries*].
- ⁷⁰ Notes (written retrospectively) by Genebrier, 'Sur le Parti communiste, 1938-1941', Paris, Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po, Fonds Roger Genebrier, GE14.
- ⁷¹ Chamberlain speech, 3 April 1939, Hansard, H[ouse] of C[ommons] Deb[ates], series 5, vol. 345, c. 2486.
- ⁷² Churchill speech, 3 April 1939, *ibid.* cc. 2501-2502.
- ⁷³ Cabinet Committee for Foreign Policy, 27 March 1939, TNA, CAB 27/624.
- ⁷⁴ For example, an editorial, 'Where do we Stand?' in *The Manchester Guardian*, 12 April 1939.
- ⁷⁵ Diary entry, 17 April 1939, *Maisky Diaries*, 175-6.
- ⁷⁶ Cabinet Committee on Foreign Policy, 43rd Meeting, 19 April 1939, TNA, CAB 27/623
- ⁷⁷ See, for example, Bonnet's note to Daladier, 6 April 1939, Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Paris, 5N 579, dossier 2.
- ⁷⁸ Notes manuscrites d'Édouard Daladier, AN, Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/12, 2DA5 Dr. 5.
- ⁷⁹ J. Delebecque, 'Contre l'alliance funeste', *L'Action Française*, 20 May 1939.
- ⁸⁰ Bonnet to Naggiar, 14 Apr. 1939, *D[ocuments] D[iplomatiques] F[rançais]*, 2nd series, xv. no. 387.
- ⁸¹ Diary entry, 2 May 1939, *Maisky Diaries*, 183.
- ⁸² Cabinet Committee on Foreign Policy of 5 May 1939, TNA, CAB 27/624.
- ⁸³ Bonnet to Corbin, 18 April 1939, detailing a conversation he had had with Phipps on the evening of 17 April, AN, Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/13, 2DA6 Dr. 2; British aide-mémoire, 29 April 1939; Telegram, Bonnet to Corbin, 3 May 1939, AN, Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/13, 2DA6 Dr. 2.
- ⁸⁴ The British fear of antagonising Hitler was noted in Paris. See: 'Note: Négociations franco-anglo-russes (Sous-direction d'Europe)', 12 May 1939, MAE, Papiers d'agents: papiers Hoppenot, no. 7. See also Corbin to Bonnet, 3 May 1939, *DDF*, 2nd series, xvi. no. 19, and Paul de Villelume's (French Army Staff liaison at the Quai d'Orsay) diary entry of 3 May which noted Britain's 'unconfessed fear of upsetting Hitler', in *De Munich à Dantzig: Journal (30 août 1938 – 18 août 1939)* (Paris: Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2015), 271.
- ⁸⁵ Harvey diary entry. 7 May 1939, in John Harvey (ed.), *The Diplomatic Diaries of Sir Oliver Harvey, 1937-1940* (London: Collins, 1970), 289-90 [hereafter *Harvey Diaries*]. See also 'Foreign Office Memorandum on the Anglo-Soviet Negotiations', 22 May 1939, *D[ocuments] on B[ritish] F[oreign] P[olicy]*, 3rd series, v. no. 589 and, for a retrospective analysis of similar concerns permeating Paris, the Commission Sénatoriale des Affaires Étrangères: Séance du 23 février 1940: Rapport complémentaire présenté par M. Jacques Bardoux, sur les négociations anglo-franco-russes (20 mars – 23 août 1939), AN, Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/13.
- ⁸⁶ Diary entry, 9 May 1939, *Maisky Diaries*, 186-7.
- ⁸⁷ Bonnet to Payart, 13 May 1939, *DDF*, 2nd series, xvi. no. 171; Bonnet to Corbin, 15 May 1939, *DDF*, 2nd series, xvi. no. 184. Bonnet wrote to Halifax on these lines on 16 May 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, v. no. 531. This point was also expressed by Cambon to Strang, Strang minute, 16 May 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, v. no. 528.

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- ⁸⁸ Robert Rhodes James (ed.), *Chips: The Diaries of Sir Henry Channon*, (London: Phoenix, 1996): diary entry for 15 May 1939, 199.
- ⁸⁹ Halifax's comments, cited in *Harvey Diaries*, entry for 20 May 1939, 290.
- ⁹⁰ Chamberlain to his sister Ida, 21 May 1939, NC 18/1/1100. For criticism of Chamberlain's handling of the negotiations, see the question asked by Boothby on 8 May 1939, and Chamberlain's response, HC Deb. 5th series, vol. 345, c. 10, and the debate on 19 May 1939 (especially speeches by Attlee and Churchill, HC Deb. 5th series, vol. 347 cc. 1823 and 1848-49).
- ⁹¹ Diary entry, 18 May 1939, *Maisky Diaries*, 189.
- ⁹² Imlay, *Facing the Second World War*, 163.
- ⁹³ Daladier speech, 11 May 1939, *J[ournal] O[fficiel] de la République Française, Débats et comptes-rendus, chambre des députés*.
- ⁹⁴ See, for example, Péri in the French Chamber on 11 May, recalling consistent attempts by the French ruling elites to criticise the USSR and denounce the Franco-Soviet Pact: *JO*, 11 May 1939.
- ⁹⁵ UK Delegation at Geneva to Cadogan, 21 May 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, v. no. 576.
- ⁹⁶ Duroselle, *La décadence, 1932-1939*, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1979), 423.
- ⁹⁷ *Cadogan Diaries*, entries for 20 and 24 May 1939, 182-4; Halifax to Seeds, 24 May 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, v. no. 609.
- ⁹⁸ Chamberlain to Hilda, 28 May 1939, NC 18/1/1101.
- ⁹⁹ Shaw, *British Political*, 125, and Neilson, *Collapse of the Versailles Order*, 295.
- ¹⁰⁰ Hilda to Neville Chamberlain, 14 April 1939, NC 18/2/1122.
- ¹⁰¹ Hilda to Neville Chamberlain, 12 May 1939, NC 18/2/1126; Ida to Neville Chamberlain, 18 May 1939, NC 18/2/1127, and 25 May 1939, NC 18/2/1129.
- ¹⁰² Hilda to Neville Chamberlain, 16 June 1939, NC 18/2/1131.
- ¹⁰³ Comments attributed to the Quai's deputy-director, Charles Rochat, by Paul De Villelume, *De Munich à Dantzig*, diary entry for 22 May 1939, 298.
- ¹⁰⁴ Extrait des notes personnelles du Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, visite de M. Souritz, 26 May 1939, AN, Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/13, 2DA6, Dr. 3.
- ¹⁰⁵ Léger's comments were recorded in the diary of the Quai d'Orsay staffer, Raymond de Sainte-Suzanne: *Une politique étrangère: le Quai d'Orsay et St. John-Perse à l'épreuve d'un regard: Journal, novembre 1938 – juin 1940* (Paris: Viviane Hamy, 2000), diary entry for 10 June 1939, 58.
- ¹⁰⁶ As recorded in de Sainte-Suzanne's diary entry for 16 June 1939, *ibid.*, 60.
- ¹⁰⁷ Du Réau, *Édouard Daladier*, 349.
- ¹⁰⁸ This argument has been made by both Duroselle, *La décadence*, 346-51, and Puyaubert, *Georges Bonnet*, 192-3.
- ¹⁰⁹ See Maisky's diary entry, 12 June 1939, in which he 'hints' to Halifax that the Foreign Secretary himself should make a trip to Moscow (*Maisky Diaries*, 200).
- ¹¹⁰ De Villelume, *De Munich à Dantzig*, diary entry for 8 June 1939, 320.
- ¹¹¹ Strang to Orme Sargent, 21 June 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, vi. no. 122.
- ¹¹² Seeds to Halifax, 15 June 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, vi. no. 60.

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- ¹¹³ For examples of British exasperation with Moscow, see Chamberlain to Hilda, 19 June 1939, NC 18/1/1103, Halifax to Seeds, 22 June 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, vi. no. 127, and Halifax to Seeds, 23 June 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, vi. no. 135.
- ¹¹⁴ Halifax to Seeds, 6 July 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, vi. no. 253.
- ¹¹⁵ Message from Bonnet to Halifax, relayed via Campbell, AN, Fonds Daladier, 496 AP/13, 2DA6 Dr. 5; Bonnet also instructed Corbin to apply further pressure on the British government to yield - see Bonnet to Corbin, 19 July 1939, *DDF*, 2nd series, xvii. no. 231, and de Villelume, *De Munich à Dantzig*, diary entry for 19 July 1939, 375.
- ¹¹⁶ Strang to Orme Sargent, 20 July 1939, *DBFP*, 3rd series, vi, no. 376.
- ¹¹⁷ On 14 July *The News Chronicle* published the results of the latest BIPO poll, conducted in June, which showed that 84% of respondents would favour a military alliance with Russia.
- ¹¹⁸ Maisky diary entry, 13 July 1939, *Maisky Diaries*, 207.
- ¹¹⁹ As reported by Corbin, to Bonnet, 26 July 1939, MAE, Série Z, Grande-Bretagne, no. 284.
- ¹²⁰ Pierre Lazareff, *Deadline: The Behind-the-Scenes Story of the Last Decade in France*, (New York: Random House, 1942), 229; Duroselle, *La décadence*, 428. This is slightly contested by Paul de Villelume's account, which records Bonnet instructing Doumenc to secure an agreement 'at any price', and being instructed by Daladier only to be 'loyal and frank above all'. *De Munich à Dantzig*, diary entry for 4 August 1939, 381.
- ¹²¹ Hilda to Neville Chamberlain, 30 June 1939, NC 18/2/1132; Ida to Neville Chamberlain, 7 July 1939, NC 18/2/1133.
- ¹²² Bonnet to Corbin, 27 July 1939, *DDF*, 2nd series, xvii. no. 322.
- ¹²³ For example, Geoffrey Roberts, 'The Alliance That Failed: Moscow and the Triple Alliance Negotiations, 1939', *European History Quarterly*, 26 (1996), 406 and Carley, 1939, 183-207.
- ¹²⁴ Gorodetsky, in *Maisky Diaries*, 202, 212.
- ¹²⁵ See Shaw, *British Political Elite*, 137-38.
- ¹²⁶ Carley, 1939, 210-211.
- ¹²⁷ Strang, 'John Bull in Search of a Suitable Russia', 82.
- ¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 83.