Civil Defence as a Harbinger of War in France and Britain during the Interwar Period

Lindsey Dodd, University of Reading
Marc Wiggam, University of Exeter

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Summary: *Few harbingers of war presented a more explicit vision of a future conflict than the public campaigns of the civil defence authorities in Britain and France during the later 1930s. In the wake of the Sudeten crisis, civil defence preparations in both countries assumed a level of earnestness not seen since the end of the First World War. However, popular reaction to civil defence preparations ranged from indifference to fear. Our article examines and contrasts French and British civil defence planning, its portrayal in the public output of the civil defence authorities, and its reception by the population. It considers the quality of the threat each nation faced, and how successfully the authorities communicated the facts of civil defence preparation, asking whether the vacuum created in the interwar years by a lack of official discourse on civil defence challenged or hindered the efforts of the authorities.*

Keywords: *bombing, civil defence, interwar, France, Britain, aviation*

Résumé : *Peu de signes précurseurs de la guerre présentent une vision du futur conflit aussi explicite que les campagnes des autorités de défense passive en Grande-Bretagne et en France vers la fin des années 30. Au lendemain de la crise des Sudètes, les préparatifs de défense passive ont atteint un niveau de zèle jamais vu depuis la fin de la Grande Guerre. Cependant, la réaction populaire à ces préparatifs allait de l'indifférence à la peur. Cet article examine et compare la planification de la défense passive dans les deux pays, ainsi que sa représentation et sa réception publiques, et fait ressortir les contrastes qui existent entre les deux nations. Il évalue la nature de la menace à laquelle chaque pays était confronté et la façon dont les autorités communiquaient sur les activités de défense passive, se demandant si l'absence d'un discours officiel au sujet de la défense passive pendant l'entre-deux-guerres a pu contrarier, voire entraver les efforts des autorités.*

Mots-clés : *bombardement, défense passive, l'entre-deux-guerres, France, Grande-Bretagne, aviation*

The birth of aviation at the turn of the twentieth century created a new space in which nations could imagine and realise their national and imperial ambitions.[1] The corollary to the freedom aviation promised was the invention of a new threat to the nation – aerial bombardment. The experience of bombardment during the First World War left politicians and citizens mindful of bombing's inevitable return in a future conflict. Yet the interwar period saw the development of civil defence outpaced by advances in aviation. Civil defence – generally called Air Raid Precautions (ARP) in Britain and *défense passive* in France – comprises the means to protect civilians from aerial attack. It includes provision of gas masks, blackout and shelters, emergency services and systems of warning and alert. In this article, we will compare the development of civil defence preparations in France and Britain during the interwar period. In as much as preparations foreshadowed the air war which later arrived, they can be seen as a harbinger of war, portentous in their prewar assumptions, and in their requirements to protect oneself and one's town, and to survive the imagined future war. However, the extent to which they were communicated to and accepted by the population in each country modified their nature as a harbinger: the harbinger may foretell a future event, but its warnings or advice may be unwelcome or go unheeded.

The first section of the article sketches the development of British and French civil defence as a reaction to international events, specifically the growing German threat; the second section looks at the communication of civil defence preparations to the population, and the population's reaction. We contend that while both countries developed civil defence in response to events in Germany, and in both countries the public reception was lukewarm, the two governments' approaches to involving and educating the population differed. Whilst the French public were, in comparison with their British counterparts, exposed to civil defence propaganda from an earlier date, and hence for a longer period, in practical terms they were no more prepared when the bombs began to fall. The organisation of systems of civil defence existed in both countries during the interwar alongside the existential threat of a bombing war. As a harbinger, civil defence was ultimately compromised by the ambiguity of what the bombing would realistically look and be like. It would only resolve into something the public could understand and appreciate once war began.

The common principle around which civil defence was organised in France and Britain during the interwar was the potential German threat. After the devastation of World War One, the French defensive military posture focused attention on securing the Franco-German border. The overwhelming fear was of invasion rather than bombing (Diamond, 2007: 18), in spite of the increased range of contemporary aviation and the experience of bombing during World War One (Grayzel, 2006: 596), but also partly because the doctrine of strategic bombing lacked influence within the French Air Ministry (Baumann and Segesser, 2003: 219–21). For Britain, the German threat would also be the motivating force for the development of ARP[2]. In contrast to France, the British government's plans were rarely discussed openly, and few practical measures were undertaken until the situation on the continent required – or indeed allowed – them to be.

The first French law on *défense passive* appeared as early as 1922. However, two major legislative developments occurred in 1931 and 1935, reflecting an increased feeling of vulnerability. During 1930, Allied occupation forces left the Rhineland. In February 1931, the Inspection générale de la Défense aérienne du territoire was created, and an inspector appointed, Marshal Philippe Pétain. The inspector was to investigate "l'importance relative des divers moyens de défense active ou passive" (AMCB, Apr. 1939), and provide ministers with the necessary information to make decisions on defence against air attack. In November 1931 Prime Minister Pierre Laval issued the *Instruction pratique sur la défense passive contre les attaques aériennes*, a detailed guide requiring prefects and mayors to begin organising civil defence in their localities (AMBB, 25 Nov. 1931). During 1934, paramilitary activity in the Rhineland, including an air force nominally under police jurisdiction, became increasingly visible (Schuker, 1986: 308), and this tangible threat was built upon by the exaggerated estimations reaching Paris concerning the size of the German army (Sinclair, 1990: 326; Overy, 1984: 469; Schuker, 1986: 305). Hitler's announcement of the reintroduction of conscription and the unveiling of the Luftwaffe in March 1935 concretised growing fears, and marked 1935 as a watershed year both in the escalation of tensions, and in the preparation of civil defence schemes in Europe. The second key law on civil defence was passed on 8 April 1935, concerning *L'organisation des mesures de protection et de sauvegarde de la population civile*. Yet the vast majority of civil defence legislation, and arguably that which had a lasting effect, took place under Prime Minister Édouard Daladier from April 1938, reflecting both Daladier's efforts to pull France into war preparedness, and the mounting European crisis. The *décret-loi* on the *Organisation de la d*éfense *passive* of 28 July 1938 was the key piece of legislation on civil defence in France, and the law that remained in place into the war; however, it was following the Munich crisis that Daladier's lawmaking on civil defence significantly accelerated.

This activity was not mirrored in Britain. Indeed, following the appearance of Laval's comprehensive *Instruction pratique* in 1931, a member of the British ARP committee remarked that Britain had been "left sitting on the fence" (O'Brien, 1955: 42). Although British ARP had been extensively planned by this point, its design had, in contrast with France, remained largely hidden from both the public and the local authorities who would ultimately organise ARP within their districts. Britain's prewar development of ARP was summarised in Terence O'Brien's official history of civil defence as consisting of three distinct phases: the first period leading up to the creation of the Home Office's ARP department in 1935, the second period between then and the Munich crisis, and the third lasting until September 1939, with each phase marking an escalation of ARP resources and a gradually deteriorating international climate. In particular, O'Brien characterises the years of 1918–1935 as "a long period of desultory consideration" (O'Brien, 1955: xv). The committee charged with developing ARP policy, which first met in 1924, felt that public education should remain low-key. This mindset was nourished by the optimism prevailing within the British government at the largely pacific disposition of the world in the 1920s. The collapse of this optimism between 1929 and 1935 came with the realisation that further ARP development could not be achieved without public involvement. Nevertheless, ARP remained in the background during the early 1930s amidst the government's attempts to secure a meaningful arms limitation agreement in Geneva. Disarmament was seen as a panacea for reducing the tensions between France and Germany, and may explain why this period brought little in the way of practical ARP preparations in Britain; with the focus on disarmament, it was hoped they would not be necessary (Bialer, 1980: 7–39). But the British strategy of drip feeding the public information left the country at a practical disadvantage, recognised by the ARP committee, but not remedied by ministers until the international situation required it. The government's first public statement on ARP was published as a circular to local authorities in July in the key year of 1935. The first ARP Act, legislating on the duties of citizens and local authorities, was not published until January 1938. The final key piece of ARP legislation, the Civil Defence Act, appeared in July 1939, and was hurried through after the German seizure of Czechoslovakia. The development of ARP policy was again dictated by rising tension on the continent. Thus both countries followed a similar pattern of escalation, matching the beats of German rearmament and the deteriorating European mood.

How did authorities educate civilian populations about civil defence? Educative output included conferences, films, posters and brochures. The French civil defence campaign began earlier than the British one; planners aimed at the "sensibilisation du public au problèmes du défense passive" (Besselievre, 1998: 98). For example, public conferences were organised in Lille and in Brest from 1933 onwards, some specifically aimed at "élèves des écoles, commerçants, retraités" (AMCB, [undated]). In both countries the Munich crisis accelerated the public education campaign. In Britain, local authorities were rattled, and desperately escalated their ARP schemes in September 1938. As the crisis unfolded, parks and playing fields were lined with air raid trenches, though ambitions were sometimes thwarted by time and lack of preparation. At the height of the crisis, Manchester City Council planned to dig enough trenches for 80,000 people. Excavation stalled with the passing of the crisis, with enough trenches dug for 8,000, though these were incomplete; they remained uncovered and, in any case, had no infrastructure for accommodating people (MCA, Nov. 1938). Local authorities also arranged public talks to underline the importance of ARP; Bristol council's ARP publicity sub-committee, formed after the difficulties it faced recruiting volunteers during the Munich crisis, was especially keen on lectures for promoting ARP awareness and discipline in the city (BRO, Jan. 1939). In both countries the cinema was used. Bristol council funded a short film outlining ARP requirements and citizens' "civic duty" to attend to them, preparation for which was discussed during the height of the Munich crisis; the film eventually premiered in the city on 13 March 1939 (BRO, Sept. 1938; Jan. 1939). In Brest, cinemagoers would have seen the message "Pensez à la défense passive: l'obscurité est la meilleure défense contre les attaques aériennes" on screen before the main feature from early 1939 (AMCB, 27 Feb. 1939). The local prefect also recommended that the mayor of Brest purchase a series of civil defence training films from the central Service de Propaganda of the Défense Passive (AMCB, 19 July 1939).

The local press in both countries was used to disseminate instructions. In Brest, local papers published air raid instructions from the civil defence authorities in October 1938, inviting the population "de les découper et de les conserver" (AMCB, 27 Oct. 1938). Three months later, in Bristol, the local ARP committee formed a sub-committee composed of an ARP representative and the editors of the city's three main newspapers – who, in the wake of the Munich crisis, felt a "sense of duty" to report the committee's decisions (BRO, Jan. 1939). Its formation was an acknowledgment by the council that, amidst the escalating requirement for ARP volunteers, they had failed to communicate the needs of ARP coherently enough.

The main campaign in France was conducted through numerous educative brochures, most published in 1939, although some appeared much earlier. Their content remained relatively fixed, although some were designed for particular audiences, especially as in theory the law of 6 May 1939 made civil defence education compulsory in schools. Thus the journal *L'Illustration* published a *défense passive* supplement for secondary schools, and illustrator Marcel Jeanjean's *Alerte aux Avions!* was distributed to younger children (AMCB, 15 July 1939; Besselievre, 1998: 99). It was hoped that children would pass on this information to their parents. The main bulk of educative brochures – for children or adults – contained a similar content. They were explicit about the threat and detailed in their explanations of how to protect individual and family in order to survive an air raid. Brochures typically began with an instruction: if possible, "partez, partez", before the threat becomes real. The reader is then introduced to the developments in military aviation since World War One, and the alarming effects of explosives, incendiaries and toxic gases, most space being devoted to the latter. Despite a mass of advice on shelters, masks, blackout and so on, the picture painted was frightening. Civil defence literature showed air war to be every bit as apocalyptic as had been imagined.

Populations were also passively exposed to civil defence preparations. In France, surveys of the suitability of domestic cellars as bomb shelters provided an early contact with *défense passive*, in Brest from 1929, in Lille from 1933, although not until 1937 in Boulogne-Billancourt, reflecting the perceived vulnerability of each location (AMCB, undated; ADN, 28 Dec. 1933; AMBB, 15 Nov. 1939). Sand was delivered to houses during September 1938 to spread in roof spaces as a protection against incendiary bombs (AMBB, 14 Sept. 1938). Manufacturers played on fear to sell their products, advertising fire extinguishers, emergency ladders, domestic bomb shelters, gas-proof storage cupboards, and other items, using dramatic images and language to boost sales, illustrated by the wording of a fire extinguisher advertisement: "Cris d'angoisse!! Clameurs d'épouvante!! Puis c'est le triste cortège, le chômage, la ruine, peut-être une morte affreuse. Contre ce fléau: l'incendie, un remède certain – L'extincteur Stop-Fire." (AMBB, undated) This intrusion into the domestic space continued in blackout exercises, which required civilian participation. Brest's *défense passive* authorities felt it was "indispensible de choisir des heures pendant lesquelles la vie continue" to ensure the population was included (AMCB, 3 Nov. 1938). In contrast, public exposure to ARP exercises in Britain remained limited: in summer 1935 the first ARP exercise took place in the Medway, and was followed by others. However, they were more instructive for the authorities than for the public. Exercises were held in the dead of night to minimise disturbance and the liability of local authorities for any accidents that might occur.

Some French towns saw the testing of all the functions of *défense passive* before war broke out. Exercises and drills included planes dropping fake bombs (AMCB, 5 Mar. 1938), simulations of the effects of poison gas (AMCB, 1 July 1938), evacuation procedures (ADN, 22 May 1937) and many examining the use and efficiency of blackout and sirens (e.g. AMCB, 18 Mar. 1938; AMCB, 3 Nov. 1938, AMBB, 3 Apr. 1939). The wail of the sirens, the drone of planes, the spectacle of emergency service teams in rubber suits and masks, and life in a blacked-out town, while far from everyday occurrences, were not unfamiliar experiences in certain places. Yet frequency, scope and public involvement varied from town to town: exposure was patchy. The British public, while under-exposed to the look and feel of air war, were not starved of evidence of its threat. Fictionalised representations, as well as publications by interested parties, filled the gap.[3] While this was also the case in France, it was coupled there with a more visible exposure to the realities of *défense passive*.

How did people react to these preparations? In both countries, the strong pacifist current impeded public acceptance and involvement in civil defence. In France, Louise

Weiss, running a *défense passive* stand at the Salon d'Aéronautique in 1938 encountered a hostile reaction, particularly from schoolteachers: "Vous inculquez criminellement l'esprit de guerre aux enfants" (Weiss, 1970: 221). Though the change in the international situation in 1935 had emboldened the British government to begin public exercises, local authorities faced hostility in their implementation, and the interwar period was marked by an anti-war sentiment that permeated the official mindset (Bialer, 1980). This led to a prolonged public debate on ARP. Anti-war sentiment during the 1930s linked ARP with a militarisation of the civilian population (Overy, 2008: 13), and was actively resisted by pacifists. As one woman put it when interviewed by Mass Observation in 1939, "We are pacifists, and we're against Air Raid Precautions because we think they're just part of the war machine" (MOA, Jan. 1939). The collective responsibility of ARP, and the blackout, was only ever as secure as its collective understanding. Ultimately, the manner in which ARP was communicated by government in the interwar years, coupled with public discussion and dissent, left the public confused. In January 1939, in the wake of the Munich crisis, a survey of opinion on ARP by Mass Observation in Bolton found a baffled and often almost cynical reaction (MOA, Jan. 1939). Other interviews from around the country at this time appeared to mirror the confusion. An ARP warden in London told his interviewer: "I don't know any more than you do. I had my lectures and since then, well, to tell you the truth, I have forgotten all about them" (MOA, Jan. 1939). When asking a group of women in the London suburbs what they felt about ARP, a Mass Observation interviewer reported that:

> One woman of 65 did not understand the meaning of A.R.P. Another, asked what she thought of A.R.P., replied: 'I'd rather not say, thanks. It's best to leave it alone.' A third answered: 'I can't be bothered with all that now.'(Turning to greengrocer, also at door): 'I can't be bothered with A.R.P. now, can I, when I've the dinner to get?' (MOA, Jan. 1939)

Apart from hostility, what other reactions are evident? Many in France simply could not take preparations seriously, and official civil defence workers often faced a derisive public: the oilskin-clad firemen participating in an exercise in gas attack in Brest were a big hit with onlookers, until more elaborately dressed disinfection teams began their work, "à la grande joie des curieux" (AMCB, 1 July 1938). Elsewhere, people were irritated, sometimes into a sullen non-compliance: confronted by a survey planning evacuation, Brest's inhabitants refused "soit de prendre les questionnaires qui leur étaient présentés, soit plus fréquemment de les rendre convenablement". The organiser of Brest's public education conferences commented on "l'indifférence, voire même l'hostilité" towards his project (AMCB, Sept. 1939). Boulogne-Billancourt's mayor received complaints about the sand distributed in September 1938: one man wanted permission to throw it away as it was rotting his floorboards – the Munich crisis had passed, and so had any sense of urgency (AMBB, 20 Oct. 1938). Such precautions were simply an irritation. Nonetheless, Munich did precipitate some volunteers into the ranks of the *défense passive*, but by and large, recruitment was difficult (ADN, 27 Sept. 1938). The call in 1938 for volunteers in Bristol was also dispiriting. A report to the city's council on 7 September noted that its original call for 5,000 volunteers had yielded only 2,400. By 24 September this number had fallen to 2,200, though the number of volunteers required had been raised to 7,700 (BRO, Sept.–Oct. 1938). The government's response was to professionalise the service, improving training and, though it remained a voluntary service, instituting a quasi-military style system of ranks, uniforms and discipline (O'Brien, 1955: 201–18). This gave rise to a strange paradox: whilst ARP was promoted as a voluntary, civic duty, recruitment and retention of volunteers could only be improved by militarising it. This was, perhaps, an acceptance of the fact that ARP made little sense unless set within the framework of an imminent military threat.

This cool reception could appear surprising given the apocalyptic nature of many fictionalised or scaremongering representations of future war: did people not want to protect themselves? Pacifism played its part, but there were other forces at work which affected public acceptance and involvement. In France, three contradictions can be identified which impacted upon public reaction. The first was a contradiction with the dominant, official discourse on French military strength, which assured the population that it was well defended. French military leaders faced enormous pressure to avoid another war on French territory. The Maginot line of defensive fortifications running from Luxembourg to Switzerland symbolised French defensive planning. The population knew it well; it had become, along with the French army, a star of films and newsreels (Benteli et al., 1978: 27–41). The message was reassuring: the borders were safe, the army strong. Air policy, they were told, comprised *défense active*, that is, fighter planes to shoot down encroaching bombers, and *défense passive*; civil defence brochures illustrated the multiple obstacles active defence would throw in the path of enemy planes. On one hand, the "official" line assured people that they were defended, they could trust the French army. On the other, they were instructed to participate in their own defence, as the active, military defence that existed might not be enough.

Second, the preparations underway faced strong public criticism. The French had seen the destructive power of bombing regularly on newsreels and in magazines since the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (Benteli et al., 1978: 37). Picasso's *Guernica,* exhibited in Paris in 1937, was a vision of the future horrors of air war, the harbinger of a dreaded apocalypse (Lascaux, 1990: 427–32). Furthermore, poison gases represented the catastrophe to end all catastrophes, "capable[s] de détruire en quelques minutes toute espèce de vie dans une ville grande comme Paris" (Mysyrowicz, 1973: 319).[4] In 1934, the magazine *Je sais tout* ran a feature entitled "Alerte aux gaz! Nous ne sommes pas prêts", lamenting the unprepared state of the capital to deal with gas attack; no gasproofed shelters, too few masks, no disinfection services (AMBB, June 1934). In 1939 *Le cri de France* published an exposé of the gas mask "scandal". The masks on sale, it claimed, were "incapables de protéger leurs porteurs", and would do nothing to prevent "une mort atroce et lente" (AMBB, 9 Mar. 1939). This scaremongering reinforced the idea that the protection planned for *défense passive* was inadequate.

Finally, there was a manifest deficiency of equipment, notably shelters and masks. In Boulogne-Billancourt in September 1938, some 40,000 inhabitants remained without a shelter (AMBB, Sept. 1938). In Lille in December 1938, it was stated that trench shelters would only be dug "au moment du besoin" (AML, 24 Dec. 1938). This clearly did not happen, as the stream of worried letters to the mayor at the beginning of September 1939 demonstrates (e.g. AML, 8 Sept. 1939). Poison gas was the most feared of airborne weapons. The poor provision of gas masks caused great anxiety from the mid-thirties (Mysyrowicz, 1973: 319). Yet the situation did not improve; in Boulogne-Billancourt in June 1939, only 27,000 masks had been distributed to a population of 96,000 (AMBB, 1 June 1939). In the event of a gas attack – a concern which never disappeared – people would have to rely on homemade masks (AML, 1–15 Sept. 1939). The lack of shelters and masks was a concern for population and planners alike. The problem arose partly from the fact that, until 1935, the financing of civil defence was in the hands of the municipalities. As a result, although plans were made, very little could actually be done. From 1935, expenses were split between the department and the municipality, but obtaining credits was slow. The contradiction thus extends: people were being taught and trained to use equipment that they had no access to, equipment which was potentially useless against bombing anyway, and which they were unconvinced they would even need. Such contradictions muddied the clear, if frightening, message that the *défense passive* had been trying to convey to the public through its educative output.

In Britain, whilst activity on publicising plans for ARP had increased after 1935, critics complained that too often a lack of detail prevented complete understanding of their requirements. In 1938 the prominent left-wing scientist J. B. S. Haldane published his thoughts on ARP, and criticised the government's reluctance for specifying ARP and blackout measures outright. This lack of specificity, he felt, left too much uncertainty for the public to adapt quickly to ARP. In his words, "the more we can learn in advance about our duties the less confusion there will be should war come" (Haldane, 1938: 86). But the development of ARP in Britain was controlled from the confines of Whitehall. Whilst concerned groups of professionals outside of government – architects and scientists in the main – developed their own proposals, they did not affect much of ARP policy. As Meisel states, "with the power to sanction and fund ARP projects, the government was able to meet the challenges to its policies" (Meisel, 1994: 301). The result of this, inevitably, was confusion. Nevil Shute's novel *What Happened to the Corbetts* is exemplary of the failure by the authorities to communicate the requirements of ARP on the eve of the war (Shute, 1965 [1939]). Published in April 1939, it imagined the consequences of a devastating air attack on Southampton. On publication 1,000 copies were distributed amongst ARP volunteers by the publisher William Heinemann, both as a marketing stunt and to offer ARP members a foretaste of what a bombing war might look like. The book, however, mirrored the public's confusion, and in its imagined bombing war neglected the blackout, firebombing and official shelter policy – all of which had been trialled and discussed publicly by the government with increasing frequency since 1935, and were indeed specified in the Air Raid Precautions Act of 1937, but which had thus far not trickled down to the general population. A report prepared by the ARP committee for the Chiefs of Staff in 1937 had stated, or perhaps rather hoped, that "the more serious minded section of the public at any rate, will have appreciated the necessity for their co-operation in the general scheme of air raid precautions" (NA, Jan. 1937). Two years later, the majority of the British public were yet to understand civil defence beyond a limited appreciation of its practical requirements.

When war broke out, fear and concern caused a sudden enthusiasm for civil defence in France; imminent fear changed to immediate fear, which pushed people to act. Louise Weiss describes the panicked phone calls to her propaganda centre: "Quelles sont vos consignes? Le vent disperse-t-il une nappe de gaz? Ma cave résistera-t-elle aux bombes?" (Weiss, 1970: 226) Blackout requirements were being observed in "la façon la plus consciencieuse". Yet as the Phoney War progressed, there developed "une ambiance de confiance excessive qui s'est dégagée du fait de l'absence de tout bombardement"; in the words of Lille's police commissioner, people no longer believed in the "imminence du danger" (ADN, 28 Mar. 1940). Surveys by Mass Observation in Britain during the first months of the war showed a largely cynical, passively resistant attitude to ARP. While preparations in both countries, spurred on by the same international events, had followed different courses – the French *défense passive* beginning its work earlier, with greater visibility, the British more reticent to educate and involve – public reception shows similar hostile or non-compliant traits. In France, the public education campaign had tried to make civil defence a *helpful* harbinger of war, in the sense that the knowledge and understanding of the threat would lead to greater protection. In Britain the harbinger was deliberately *hidden* for some time. In neither country was the harbinger greeted with enthusiasm.

Preparation for war requires action, and in total war the involvement of civil society in its own defence is paramount. But government planning could only present a certain vision of civil defence to a public that, in both countries, was not neutral in its receptiveness. It was, in fact, during the first few months of the war that ARP took meaningful shape in Britain. Daily exposure to its restrictions gave the public a familiarity it could not have developed during the interwar. In France, in contrast, it was only once heavy Allied bombing began that *défense passive* was able to adapt to the air war that had arrived. The organisation of civil defence, and its impact as a harbinger of future war, was conditioned by the external and internal politics of France and Britain. While both faced an identical threat, and the same concern over a remilitarised and nationalistic Germany, their approaches necessarily differed.

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Notes

[1] For a discussion on the idea of "airspace" and the nation state see Millward, 2007: 17–29.

[2] Development of British air defence policy in the 1920s assumed a threat from France, due to its status as the only continental power capable of challenging Britain at the time. This was, however, a worst possible case scenario, an "evil dream" necessary for ensuring national security (NA, Feb. 1923).

[3] For an overview of such representations up to 1931 see Powers, 1976: 107–57.

[4] Quoting G. Ferrero writing in *L'Europe*, 15 Sept. 1931, pp. 5–6.