

**THE CREATION OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN ALLIANCE, 1937-41: A Study in Competitive Co-operation.** By David Reynolds. London, Europa Publications Ltd, 1981. Pp. xiv + 397. £20.00.  
**LORD LOTHIAN AND ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, 1939-1940.** Transactions of the American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge, Vol. 73, Part 2, 1983. By David Reynolds. Philadelphia, The American Philosophical Society, 1983. Pp. vi + 65, \$8.00.

Close as the Anglo-American relationship was during World War II, it was filled with suspicions and irritations, as shown by a growing number of studies of the subject. Important recent additions to this group include Terry Anderson's *The United States, Great Britain and the Cold War: 1944-1947* and Robert Hathaway's excellent *Ambiguous Partnership, Britain and America, 1944-1947*.

David Reynolds has now made superb contribution to the collection. The value of his book, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-41*, lies not only in its well-written account of events but in the extraordinary understanding of two cultures that he brings to his work. Consequently, it stands in marked relief among so many diplomatic histories of the mid-century that either hew remorselessly to government actions and official pronouncements or, like so much of the work of the Cold War revisionists, that seem determined first to try and then to convict various statesmen and governments. In both cases, vast areas of the historical environment are often ignored. Reynolds, to the contrary, gives his readers an enormously broad, thorough and sensitive description of events and their background, the reason perhaps why this study has already been awarded the annual book prize of the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations. As a result of extensive research on both sides of the Atlantic, he presents an insightful analysis of the personalities, domestic forces, bureaucratic in-fighting, culturally skewed perceptions, and Hydra-headed international pressures that shaped Anglo-American diplomacy.

Reynolds explores all of the major diplomatic issues that arose as this key Western alliance was evolving, e.g., the US steps to supply Great Britain, eventually resulting in Lend-Lease, the naval measures to hinder the Germans at sea, and the British effort to have an American fleet stationed in Asia to check Japanese expansion.

The author shows us a British elite, especially in the Foreign Office, frequently misinterpreting American action because it could only view the US as a kind of wayward dominion, or in his words, 'a youthful adolescent or skittish belle' to be guided and educated to her international responsibilities. American journalists and officials, on the other hand, are seen to be skeptical about the depth of Britain's democracy, to despise British imperialism although often knowing little about it, and frequently to be manoeuvring for postwar political and commercial advantage even while the fighting raged. We see a Chamberlain aware of the need for American backing in order to be more forceful with Hitler but fearing the implications of bringing the US fully into European politics. Could the Americans be relied upon? Would they swamp British influence? Meanwhile, we see Roosevelt's Administration keeping all of Europe guessing about its intentions after Munich; negotiating hard for bases on Britain's territories in the Americas, partially from fear of a British collapse that would leave America alone to face Germany in the Atlantic; making peace proposals that were clumsy and naive in Whitehall's opinion, and worrying always about the fate of the British fleet.

The book, in short, brings many standards together in new and useful ways, making it an important addition to the history of World War II and of Anglo-American relations.

Reynolds' monograph on Lord Lothian touches on many of the same events as the book but with a clear focus on the interesting and complex man who served as Britain's envoy in Washington from August 1939 until his death in December 1940. Reynolds explores his foibles, failures and triumphs as he and his government worked to bring to their aid a neutral America, divided both in its feelings about the war and about Great Britain. Lothian felt keenly the need to put his country's case to the American public, hoping thereby to create pro-British pressure on its political representatives, including the President. Here, he was often at odds not only with the Foreign Office, which feared that his efforts would be seen as propaganda and cause an anti-British backlash, but with Churchill, who much preferred to deal in secret with the top echelon of the U.S. Administration. And, indeed, although Lothian understood far better than his colleagues in London the importance of media and public opinion in American governance, he occasionally underestimated the complexities of using them to one's advantage. Nevertheless, the results of his efforts, although mixed, as Reynolds shows, were on the whole surely to Britain's advantage.

Reynolds describes the highlights of Anglo-American diplomacy during that period of almost seventeen months. These include the deal to provide the UK with American destroyers and the US with rights to bases in Britain's Western Hemisphere possessions as well as the effort to bring about the Lend-Lease agreement so crucial to Britain's survival. As a result, he has provided an interesting and useful look at a short but critical period in Anglo-American relations.