vision that would maintain GB’s global naval supremacy; aircraft carrier rejected in favour of more heavily armed battleships, naval development constrained by 2 factors:

1. 1919-1921: naval funding fell from £334m to £84m
2. International pressure opposed development of naval arms race; illustrated in Washington Conference 1921

**Strategic**

- War had undoubtedly weakened/destroyed GB’s great power rivals:
  1. Germany defeated, its military strength destroyed at Versailles; empire dismantled and economy in ruins; it could and did recover; Germany’s resentment of Versailles was best incentive for them to rise again and restore military/economic power
  2. Russia in throes of revolution by 1918 but remained potential threat- Lenin declared (1919) that no power on earth could “hold back the progress of world communist revolution towards the world Soviet Republic”; India, lynchpin of GB’s empire, geographically close to Russia and therefore any instability in USSR could impact on India
- Other nations also emerging as significant power bases:
  3. Japan: ambitions for imperial expansion in Pacific/Far East; Economic necessity, weak neighbours and aggressive military leadership drove idea of expansionism; GB’s Far East Empire was vulnerable
  4. USA: close ally of GB but emerged from was as major economic competitor; isolationist and no clear plan to expand global influence but certainly developing economic enabled it to do so if it wished in the future
- For GB, interwar years characterised by economic problems, military decline and resurgence of international rivals; WW1 didn’t mark irreversible debilitating weaknesses from which GB could hardly recover; restoration of supremacy it had enjoyed in 19th C was unlikely; Another potential problem was resurfacing in more threatening form after 1918 - nationalism rising within GB’s Empire

**Impact of rising nationalism in the Empire**

- Nationalism within GB’s Empire not a consequence of WW1; long term phenomenon that, like economic decline, was accelerated by WW1

**Indian nationalism**

- Demand for independence has been on the formation of Indian National Congress in 1885; during WW1, Indian citizens had rallied to imperial cause; increasingly, however, nationalist groups demanded reform as cost of India’s continued participation in war; by 1917, GB government willing to move towards some form of self-government in India, but within framework of the empire
- 1935: GB introduced further Government of India Act: elected Indians were to determine policy on public health/education/agriculture, to happen at provincial level rather than nationwide basis, and Viceroy to control foreign policy/defence/law & order/financial policy; failed to satisfy Indian nationalists- policy of passive resistance promoted by Party and leading figure Mahatma Gandhi
- 1929: Viceroy, Lord Irwin, announced it was GB’s intention to grant India dominion status but not enough for Party and Ghandi continued with policy of civil disobedience; clearly GB government was willing to accept some significant form of reform and Ghandi convinced that he could achieve more than merely dominion status
- 1935: GB introduced Government of India Act: aimed at creation of a federation or union of Indian states, each becoming responsible for its own internal affairs through series of provincial parliaments; an elected national parliament but British Viceroy would remain overall head of state and remain in control of foreign policy/defence; but GB had still not committed itself to idea of independence for India, as Ghandi commented on the Act “India is still a prison, but the superintendent allows the prisoners to elect the officers who run the jail.”

**The dominions**

- Nationalism less clearly defined amongst white controlled dominion states of the empire; however, powerful post-war drive amongst dominions to redefine relationship with GB
- Key issue: demand to have control over foreign policies and recognised as sovereign states in