

THE FAILURE OF BENEŠ' DIPLOMACY OF  
MEDIATION IN THE SPRING OF 1924: ON THE  
PROBLEMS OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF A SMALL  
STATE

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The circumstances surrounding the conclusion of the French-Czechoslovak treaty of 25 January 1924 are depicted as the culmination of the foreign policy activity

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of Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Beneš in the first five years of an independent Czechoslovak foreign policy. Against the background of the estrangement between France and England over Poincaré's policy toward Germany, Beneš — after long hesitation — had to accept a treaty that promised him French support, but at the price of mistrust in Great Britain, Germany, and among the Little Entente allies. With this step, Beneš hoped to play the role of mediator in a whole series of questions — French-English relations after the Ruhr conflict and the victory of the Labour party; recognition of the Soviet regime by Great Britain; and settlement of reparations questions for Germany. All this, however, meant overextending the possibilities of Czechoslovak foreign policy, and all of these efforts ended in failure. Thereafter, there was a transition from this „diplomacy of mediation“ phase to one in which the League of Nations policy was given stronger emphasis.