

French opinion on war and diplomacy during the Second Empire.

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On 23 January 1859, a treaty of defensive alliance was agreed with France based on what was discussed at Plombières. And even after the decision had been taken in 1928 to proceed with the publication of the Documents Diplomatiques Français DDF the project was beset by financial difficulties. After the War he soon gained a reputation in the civil service of the Third Republic, and held in turn two of the most important prefectures of France.

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Those engaged in editing the major national series of diplomatic documents tend to conceive of their task in less pedagogic terms. Payne, The Police State of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, 1851-1860 1966 ; and E. A duel of giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the origins of the Franco-Prussian War 2003.

Second Empire

One of the key theses of this article is the statement of the following situation in French historical science: since the second half of the 19th century the Crimean war was studied in the framework of studies on the history of the Second Empire. On 2 December 1852, France, still under the effect of Napoleon's legacy, and the fear of anarchy, conferred almost unanimously by a plebiscite the supreme power, with the title of emperor, upon Napoleon III. The majority of the English people, with less knowledge of history, and less direct under- - standing of the significance of force, drew a different conclusion, entertained greater hopes, and set aside too easily the fore- bodings of their French neighbours and allies.

The Second Empire and the American Civil War

Yet, also like the British, the French never truly succeeded in regaining the historical initiative in the inter-war years.

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