

**SESSION 2025**

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**ANGLAIS**  
**Épreuve à option**

Sujet commun ENS Ulm, Lyon

**Durée 6h**

Le sujet comporte 6 pages

**TOURNEZ LA PAGE S.V.P**

## ANALYSE DE TEXTES OU DOCUMENTS EN ANGLAIS

Analysez et commentez, **en anglais**, les cinq documents suivants :

### Document 1

Whether or not the US can be labelled an 'imperialist' power today matters very little, I think. It's mainly a matter of semantics. The word 'imperialism' is used today in a confusing variety of ways, by some of which America clearly does qualify, but not by others. Donald Rumsfeld's claim (in 2003) that 'We don't do empire', for example, is certainly defensible, by one rather

5 narrow definition of the term. (The USA has no desire to annex other countries and rule them directly.) As it happens my own preferred usage, in common with most other imperial historians', is broader than this, and so does include America. (...) What has American 'imperialism' in common with the British kind, and what aspects are different?

The first thing to say is that the USA has certainly been imperialistic – even by Rumsfeld's  
10 narrow definition – *in the past*. (...) The myth of US 'anti-imperialism' doesn't go back much further than Woodrow Wilson, and even he was far more 'imperialistic' than he liked to pretend. (He supported the US annexation of the Philippines, for example, and always believed there were some peoples who would never be fit for independence from colonial rule.) The American Revolution is misleading. What the colonists were rebelling against then was not imperialism  
15 in general, but the British Empire in particular; and partly in order to give them freedom to imperialise their own continent – and later hemisphere – which Britain was less keen on. (In one sense, the Brits were the anti-imperialists here.) To exclude the colonisation of the American West from the rubric 'imperialism' simply because it didn't involve getting into boats is tendentious, to say the least. (...)

20 Much of Britain's imperialism in the nineteenth century – in Australia and South Africa, for example – was almost exactly comparable with America's westward expansion. The professed aim of both was to spread 'freedom' (for whites). Both involved dispossessing peoples seen as 'primitive'. Then, of course, there were those blatant overseas annexations of the 1890s: the Philippines, and so on: taken from *another* empire, of course – but then so, in a way, was British  
25 India. Thirdly, America's commercial and financial expansion in the twentieth century was closely similar to Britain's *preferred* strategy in the nineteenth, which in the latter's case is now almost universally called 'imperialism'. If you want to exclude the one, you must logically exclude the other too. The early and mid-Victorian British did: were as adamant as Rumsfeld is today that they didn't 'do empire' – in the face, you might think, of all the evidence – on the  
30 grounds that they didn't *want* to rule other peoples, only to spread 'free trade', for everyone's benefit, not only their own. Hence all those naval bases they annexed across the world: another form of 'imperialism', by most lights, but not by Britain's. One is reminded here of US War Secretary Stimson's description of the bases America accumulated in the Pacific in the 1940s: 'these are not colonies; they are outposts'. The parallels don't stop there. Many of the disasters  
35 of the two 'imperialisms' are uncannily similar: compare Little Big Horn with Isandhlwana, for example; and the atrocities that seem to accompany imperial expansion almost inevitably. (...)

Britain's imperial rulers (...) didn't go in for 'ideal' systems. Around the turn of the twentieth century this came to be called 'Indirect Rule'; but it was also the dominant way of colonial government before then, dictated as much by practicalities – Britain simply didn't have the  
40 numbers of personnel to try to *revolutionise* her subjects – as by principle. Besides, she couldn't have functioned without local collaborators. (This is another way in which her real imperial

power was more limited than may appear (...)) So she generally – not always – left local societies alone. Her function was simply to rule. (...)

There have always been Americans who have believed that their system is for everyone: from  
45 John Winthrop, of ‘City upon a Hill’ fame; through Benjamin Franklin: ‘America’s cause is the cause of all mankind’; to Condoleeza Rice in 2000: ‘America’s values are universal’. (...)

At the root of most modern imperialism lay the perceived need for the new dynamic capitalist economies of the West to expand their commercial and financial markets and sources of raw materials beyond their domestic bases. (...) Britain’s nineteenth-century expansion in the world  
50 was essentially an early stage of ‘globalisation’: the spread of capitalist markets, *ideally* to be accomplished ‘freely’, that is, without any blatant compulsion; but occasionally provoking local disorder and resistance (Chinese resistance to the ‘free’ import of opium is the most notorious example), which required firmer methods of control. Hence the territorial annexations of the period; which was when our upper class paternalists stepped in, to govern these annexed  
55 territories: but, because of their rather more old-fashioned values, often in *counter-capitalist* – i.e. ‘paternalistic’ – ways.

Thus was *capitalist* imperialism subverted, in part, by the men who came to manage it. That caused stresses and contradictions (again, this is no place to go into details) which helped bring down the formal British imperialism of the nineteenth century during the third quarter of the  
60 twentieth; but leaving the ‘informal’ imperialism of capitalism still intact, this time dominated by the USA, who had by now become the leading capitalist power. (...)

**Bernard Porter<sup>1</sup>, “British And American ‘Imperialisms’ Compared”, *History Network*,  
<<https://www.historynewsnetwork.org/article/british-and-american-imperialisms-compared>> (accessed on December 22, 2024)**

## Document 2

The institute was founded in 1868 [...], and I confess that I admire the faith of its promoters, who, in a time not altogether favourable to their opinions, sowed the seed of Imperial patriotism.

It seems to me that there are three distinct stages in our Imperial history. We began to be, and we ultimately became a great Imperial power in the eighteenth century, but during the greater  
5 part of that time, the colonies were regarded, not only by us, but by every European power that possessed them, as possessions valuable in proportion to the pecuniary advantage which they brought to the mother country, which, under that order of ideas, was not truly a mother at all, but appeared rather in the light of a grasping and absentee landlord desiring to take from his tenants the utmost rents he could exact. The colonies were valued and maintained because it  
10 was thought they would be a source of profit - of direct profit - to the mother country. That was the first stage, and when we were rudely awakened by the War of Independence in America from this dream that colonies could be held for our profit alone, the second chapter was entered upon, and public opinion seems then to have drifted to the opposite extreme; and because the colonies were no longer a source of revenue, it seems to have been believed and argued by  
15 many people that their separation from us was only a matter of time, and that that separation should be desired and encouraged lest haply they might prove an encumbrance and a source of weakness. [...]

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<sup>1</sup> He is the author of *Empire and Superempire: Britain, America and the World*, Yale University Press, 2006.

Partly by the efforts of this institute and similar organizations, partly by the writings of such men as Froude and Seeley, but mainly by the instinctive good sense and patriotism of the people  
20 at large, we have now reached the third stage in our history, and the true conception of our Empire.

What is that conception? As regards the self-governing colonies we no longer talk of them as dependencies. The sense of possession has given place to the sense of kinship. We think and speak of them as part of ourselves, as part of the British Empire, united to us, although they  
25 may be dispersed throughout the world, by ties of kindred, of religion, of history, and of language, and joined to us by the seas that formerly seemed to divide us. But the British Empire is not confined to the self-governing colonies and the United Kingdom. It includes a much greater area, a much more numerous population in tropical climes, where no considerable European settlement is possible, and where the native population must always outnumber the  
30 white in habitants; and in these cases also the same change has come over the Imperial idea. Here also the sense of possession has given place to a different sentiment – the sense of obligation. We feel now that our rule over these territories can only be justified if we can show that it adds to the happiness and prosperity of the people, and I maintain that our rule does, and has, brought security and peace and comparative prosperity to countries that never knew these  
35 blessings before. In carrying out this work of civilization we are fulfilling what I believe to be our national mission, and we are finding scope for the exercise of those faculties and qualities which have made of us a great governing race. I do not say that our success has been perfect in every case, I do not say that all our methods have been beyond reproach; but I do say that in almost every instance in which the rule of the Queen has been established and the great Pax  
40 Britannica has been enforced, there has come with it greater security to life and property.

**Joseph Chamberlain, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, speech delivered at the annual dinner of the Royal Colonial Institute on March 31st, 1897.**

### **Document 3**

We now have a Commonwealth divided in structure though still associated in function. It demands study and understanding. Some of the changes have arisen by formula, others by the far-reaching wear and tear of modern circumstances. One of the great psychological factors has been that the word ‘Empire’ has, in itself, lost its respectability. There is still an Empire,  
5 but one must not speak about it. This strange fact represents one of the remarkable paradoxes of our times. For the truth is that the Communist Powers, while practising aggressive Imperialism on the grand scale and with astonishing success, have in non-Communist and free countries succeeded in making peaceful Imperialism disreputable. But the greatest changes that have occurred to produce the new Commonwealth have been in the structural significance of  
10 the Crown, which means, in effect, the structural existence of the Commonwealth.

What do I mean by the ‘structural’ significance of the Crown, a significance of such overwhelming importance between 1926 and the Indian Republic formula of 1948? I will illustrate it by reference to my own country. The Crown was and, I am happy to say, is an essential ingredient in Australian Government and life. Our Acts of Parliament are made by  
15 ‘The Queen’s Most Excellent Majesty, the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia’; the Governor-General is the Queen’s personal representative; the Queen’s writs issue from our Courts; I am Her Majesty’s Prime Minister of Australia; Dr Evatt is the Leader of Her Majesty’s Opposition.

Up to 1948, this was true in every member nation of the Commonwealth. It was a Crown Commonwealth. The Sovereign was the head of the State for all purposes, external and internal; the great 'common' element of unity. The subjecthood of the individual citizen, whether Indian, Canadian, or Australian, did not connote subservience or any derogation from liberty, but was, in fact, a proud guarantee that individual liberties to choose, speak, share in Government, would be sustained by a common membership of a great association of free peoples, all of the 'the King's men'. True, we were also held together by common interests, in some cases by common race, in many cases by a common intellectual and spiritual inheritance. But all these things we had and have in common with some great nations outside the Commonwealth. It was the Crown, our relation to it, our high feelings about it, its legal significance going so far beyond the mere techniques of the law, which gave its special character to the British Commonwealth which Balfour and his associates set out to define thirty years ago.

The year 1948 saw a momentous change. India became a republic, but remained a member of the Commonwealth. The Crown ceased to have significance inside India; for external purposes India recognized the King as 'the head of the Commonwealth'. Clearly the 'new' Commonwealth had emerged. Superficially, it may look like the old one, but in reality we no longer have a Commonwealth fully integrated on the basis of the Crown. Indeed, it might be more accurate to say that we have now a Crown Commonwealth within a total Commonwealth. The relations between Australia and Great Britain, for example, and between Australians and Her Majesty the Queen are precisely the same as they ever were.

But the relations between India or Pakistan and the United Kingdom are different, for the Crown has, for local purposes in those countries, disappeared. That the Queen remains the head of the Commonwealth is no doubt important. But a new name for a new office doesn't assure the continuance of the significance of the Crown. On the contrary, it draws sharp attention to the fact that there is a world of difference between Australia's relationship to the Throne and that of India. [...]

**Robert Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia, "The Ever-Changing Commonwealth", in  
*The Times*, 11-12 June 1956**

#### **Document 4**

We of this generation do not have to face a task such as that our fathers faced, but we have our tasks, and woe to us if we fail to perform them! We cannot, if we would, play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders, taking no interest in what goes on beyond them, sunk in a scrambling commercialism [...]. If we are to be a really great people, we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world. We cannot avoid meeting great issues. All that we can determine for ourselves is whether we shall meet them well or ill. In 1898 we could not help being brought face to face with the problem of war with Spain. All we could decide was whether we should shrink like cowards from the contest, or enter into it as be seemed a brave and highspirited people; and, once in, whether failure or success should crown our banners. So it is now. We cannot avoid the responsibilities that confront us in Hawaii, Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines. [...] The timid man, the lazy man, the man who distrusts his country, the over-civilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues, the ignorant man, and the man of dull mind, whose soul is incapable of feeling the mighty lift that thrills "stern men with empires in their brains" -- all these, of course, shrink from seeing the nation undertake its new duties; shrink from seeing us build a navy and an army adequate to our needs; shrink from seeing us do our share of the world's work, by bringing order out of

chaos in the great, fair tropic islands from which the valor of our soldiers and sailors has driven the Spanish flag. . . .

20 [...] The guns that thundered off Manila and Santiago left us echoes of glory, but they also left us a legacy of duty [...]

The Philippines offer a yet graver problem. Their population includes halfcaste and native Christians, warlike Moslems, and wild pagans. Many of their people are utterly unfit for self-government, and show no signs of becoming fit. Others may in time become fit but at present can only take part in self-government under a wise supervision, at once firm and beneficent.

25 We have driven Spanish tyranny from the islands. If we now let it be replaced by savage anarchy, our work has been for harm and not for good. I have scant patience with those who fear to undertake the task of governing the Philippines, and who openly avow that they do fear to undertake it, or that they shrink from it because of the expense and trouble; but I have even  
30 scant patience with those who make a pretense of humanitarianism to hide and cover their timidity and who cant about "liberty" and the "consent of the governed," in order to excuse themselves for their unwillingness to play the part of men. Their doctrines, if carried out, would make it incumbent upon us to leave the Apaches of Arizona to work out their own salvation, and to decline to interfere in a single Indian reservation. Their doctrines condemn your forefathers and mine for ever having settled in these United States. . . .

35 [...]

I preach to you, then, my countrymen, that our country calls not for the life of ease but for the life of strenuous endeavor. The twentieth century looms before us big with the fate of many nations. If we stand idly by, if we seek merely swollen, slothful ease and ignoble peace, if we shrink from the hard contests where men must win at hazard of their lives and at the risk of all  
40 they hold dear, then the bolder and stronger peoples will pass us by, and will win for themselves the domination of the world. Let us therefore boldly face the life of strife, resolute to do our duty well and manfully; resolute to uphold righteousness by deed and by word; resolute to be both honest and brave, to serve high ideals, yet to use practical methods. Above all, let us shrink from no strife, moral or physical, within or without the nation, provided we are certain that the  
45 strife is justified, for it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor, that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness.

**Theodore Roosevelt, "The Strenuous Life", speech made to a men's club in Chicago on April 10, 1899.**

### **Document 5**

The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality, [...] we will find ourselves organizing "clergy and laymen concerned" committees for the next generation. They will be concerned about Guatemala and Peru. They will be concerned about Thailand and Cambodia. They will be concerned about  
5 Mozambique and South Africa. We will be marching for these and a dozen other names and attending rallies without end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and policy. So such thoughts take us beyond Vietnam, but not beyond our calling as sons of the living God.

10 In 1957, a sensitive American official overseas said that it seemed to him that our nation was on the wrong side of a world revolution. During the past ten years we have seen emerge a pattern of suppression which has now justified the presence of U.S. military advisors in

Venezuela. This need to maintain social stability for our investment accounts for the counter-revolutionary action of American forces in Guatemala. It tells why American helicopters are being used against guerrillas in Cambodia and why American napalm and Green Beret forces  
15 have already been active against rebels in Peru.

It is with such activity in mind that the words of the late John F. Kennedy come back to haunt us. Five years ago he said, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken: the role of those who make peaceful revolution impossible by refusing to give up the  
20 privileges and the pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investments. I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin, we must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets  
25 of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. On the one hand we are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside, but that will be only an initial act. One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho Road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and  
30 robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.

A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Africa, and South America, only to take the  
35 profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say: "This is not just." It will look at our alliance with the landed gentry of South America and say: "This is not just." The Western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach others and nothing to learn from them is not just.

A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war: "This way of settling differences is not just." This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling  
40 our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice, and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military  
45 defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death. [...]

This kind of positive revolution of values is our best defense against communism. War is not the answer.

**"Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence", speech delivered by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Manhattan's Riverside Church, April 4, 1967**