

ANGLO - RUSSIAN RELATIONS  
IN THE  
BALKANS & THE MIDDLE EAST

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## CHAPTER 1

### IN THE FORM OF AN INTRODUCTION

#### THE DIFFERENT FACTORS.

Now and in the foreseeable future world security will devolve upon the shoulders of the three greatest powers i.e. U.S.A. U.S.S.R. and the British Commonwealth. Modern military technology including the harnessing of atomic energy to military ends place the three great powers above the rest of the world and increase the disparity in strength between them and any other power. No modern state, including two of the big five - France & China - can withstand for long the mechanical might air-power naval strength and armour of any of the big three. World peace or world war will rest definitely with the great powers. The rest of the world can act only as reinforcements to the greatest powers.

Even amongst the big three only two, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, can pass the test of a really first rate power in relation to resources, man-power and economic and military potential. Great Britain, is the smallest of the greatest powers, <sup>But through the smallest she</sup> is by far the strongest geographically and strategically. Her early industrial development, her century old naval supremacy and the consequent far flung conquests and commitments have placed Britain in a unique world position. From the geographical standpoint the British Isles command the northern entrance into, and exit from, Europe. Gibraltar and the Suez Canal and Aden command the inland seas waterways from the Atlantic to the <sup>Indian</sup> ~~Persian~~ Ocean. When the Napoleonic wars were over and British sea-power, encompassed, almost without competition the great African continent and the seas between Africa and Japan it gradually established itself in the west African sea-board and the Cape of Good Hope which command the entrance to the Indian Ocean. The British Falkland Islands command the southern entrance from the Pacific ocean round Cape Horn and the West Indies command the north-south American sea-routes through the Caribbeans and also command

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the western approaches to the Panama canal. <sup>Thus</sup> British sea power and possessions notably in the Caribbean and the Pacific ocean come geographically near and are in cases intermingled with American possessions. By the agreement of 1940 when British bases were leased to the U.S.A. in the Bahamas, in Jamaica in Barbados and Trinidad and the inevitable American establishment in a number of Pacific islands has led and will increasingly lead to an "intermixture" of the possessions and power of the two countries. This in itself is a guarantee that territorially and strategically the interests of the two countries do not fundamentally conflict. The economic conflict, which is likely to remain unresolved for some considerable time cannot in itself jeopardise Anglo-American relations unattended as it will be by geographical and/or historical complications and claims.

America, unlike Britain, is a ~~world~~-power of the first magnitude but a predominantly American power. Her world influence without world naval and air bases has been up to now intangible and whenever it has been exercised it proved to be feeble and unenduring. But the results of two world-wars has impressed upon the Americans the <sup>necessi-</sup>~~necessi-~~ty of establishing their power beyond American shores and reinforce the admirable defensive position of America with further defensive rings stretching far into the Atlantic and indirectly to Europe and spreading over the Pacific to the borders of China. With leased bases with occupation and <sup>conquests</sup>~~agreements~~ of territory with massive armaments and so far the monopoly of atomic-bomb production America emerges in the second half of the twentieth century as a truly formidable world power. From the Arab lands, right round the world to the coast of China and beyond the U.S.A. is making the volume of its power felt. Will that power be a stabilising force in the future or will American isolationism turn into rabid imperialism and try and supplant British domination or render British power a mere appendage to American omnipotence? The open ports, the direct connection through the ocean moins to all parts of the world the air-naval domination of the Atlantic and the Pacific which are within America's physical reach

and which can place America's power into swift contact with any point of the globe with the sole exception of the mass-land of northern Europe and Asia, make America one of the decisive factors in world destiny in our future.

The U.S.S.R. unlike Britain which is a naval power and America which is both military, naval and air power, is predominantly a land power. Potentially the Soviet Union is the strongest and richest power on earth, and on present reckoning she ranks a power on an equal footing with America. But in spite of its size and power, actual and potential, the U.S.S.R. is not a world power of the magnitude of the other two. The U.S.S.R. is an imprisoned giant with its influence confined within its own regions and not "directly" brought to bear upon other communities. Even if its influence is bound to grow upon the border states still those states cannot be encompassed by that influence in the same way that naval power can which is both intangible and potent. America and Britain with their navies can exercise far more influence, let us say upon distant Iraq or Persia than the U.S.S.R. which is next door. And when it comes to points relatively removed from the U.S.S.R. then the latter's influence is practically non-existence - influence that is to say that springs directly or indirectly from the existence of power.

The U.S.S.R. in spite of her immense size of uninterrupted compactness is almost completely land-locked. Modern U.S.S.R. in spite of her great power is hardly in any different position as far as the elusive world-skirting sea influence is concerned than the old Tsarist Empire was. Ever since Russia began to expand from a small inland state in the neighbourhood of Moscow and drove the Tartar invaders eastwards started her drive to the sea. The expansion was both north-eastwards and southwards. To the east, the Russian following the invaders pushed steadily into Siberia, and Russian Corsairs were on the Pacific Ocean before they were on the Black Sea. That urge to the sea has been interpreted by Western observers to be the dominant characteristic of Russian policy during the last few

centuries. But whatever the motives behind that drive itself has been resisted with unabated obstinacy by the Western Powers particularly by Great Britain. The drive itself and the opposition that it had excited which at times made Russia face the whole of Europe resulted in some form of Russian isolationism which for centuries have kept that country outside the main European political social and economic cross-currents.

The physical aspect of ~~Russia's~~ <sup>The</sup> power of the U.S.S.R. from the standpoint of world problems is, unlike the two other powers (Great Britain and the U.S.A) severely restricted. A look at the map will convince anybody of this serious drawback of the U.S.S.R. if she is to play her co-equal share in world security and international stability and peace. Sea power ~~with~~ <sup>and</sup> the attendant bases is still, and is likely to remain for some considerable time the key to world peace and the means of enforcing peace; it is equally important in the promotion of trade and the steady and irresistible rapprochement among peoples. But for sea-power, whether naval or commercial to play its part it requires the unrestricted use of sea lanes, the requisite bases and points of appui the freedom of the oceans. How is the U.S.S.R. served in that direction? Indeed very badly. The two main sea "ways out" from the Baltic and the Black sea are both through partially closed seas, the exits of which are not under her control. The Skagerrag is dominated by Denmark and the Kiel Canal runs through German territory. From the Black sea the outlet of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles are under Turkish sovereignty. The Caspian sea is land-locked and her greatest <sup>inland</sup> waterway the Volga flowing into the Caspian sea leads thus to nowhere. To the north the Arctic ocean for almost the whole of the year limits navigation to complete standstill with sole exception of the ports of Murmansk and Petsamo - inevitably of limited and restricted importance - which are ice-free ports. To the south between the U.S.S.R. and the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean stand Persia, Afghanistan and

the North West provinces of India. Equally restricted is the U.S.S.R's sea position in the Far East. Up to the capitulation of Japan, Vladivostok and the whole eastern sea-board of the Soviet Union was effectively enclosed by the chain of Japanese islands stretching from the southernmost tip of Kamchatka for three thousand miles down to Formosa. A Soviet ship in war or peace had to pass through the Korean straits or through the Kurile chain, both Japanese dominated before reaching the freedom of the open ocean. With the defeat of Japan and the establishment of the U.S.S.R. in Southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands an open Soviet window to the Pacific ocean has been established. That window leads through the inhospitable Yakutsk sea. Thus the U.S.S.R. occupying a sixth of the world's surface has only two unrestricted openings to the broad sea, one in the north-eastern tip of the Scandinavian peninsula and the other in the Pacific Ocean south of Kamchatka.

In contrast to this the U.S.A. is now anchoring its defensive power in the Ryuku islands - almost to the shores of China, and behind it is a series of islands stretching to Hawaii which form an admirable defensive and offensive region and provide the U.S.A. with innumerable air and naval bases. Lower down in the southern Pacific the U.S.A. power reaches to the regions of Australia. To all intents and purpose, from the standpoint of bare power the Pacific is becoming an American Lake. Throughout all that vast sea as well as in the Caribbean American power is supreme and its influence is relatively preponderant in the Atlantic. In such position the U.S.A. can exercise admittedly at times indirect but nevertheless potent influence in the shaping of events throughout the whole American continent as well as in the countries washed by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Great Britain finds herself in the second half of the twentieth century almost in the same advantageous situation as she held after the Napoleonic wars: with only one exception - that her influence in the American continent has diminished and if it is to be relatively reasserted it has to be done with U.S.A. indulgence. British sea power, with

the collapse of Italy and the elimination of the Italian navy and the great weakening of France dominates the Mediterranean and skirts the world-promontory from Gibraltar to Singapore round the coast of Africa. Indonesia becomes a kind of no man's land between the sea powers of Great Britain and the U.S.A.

Such is the world picture if one looks beneath the covering of words and wishes and sees the bare bones of power at the end of the second world war. As such it means that in every case U.S.S.R. forces have to be used under the world security organisation for maintaining peace or for exerting compulsion to would be aggressors in the future, those forces, some where there is territorial contiguity will be the hostages of Britain or America. The U.S.S.R. has no world bases. Her ships have to use the bases of her allies or collaborators something which is not a right but a privilege. Consequently there cannot be harmonious world co-operation between the three great powers where such a geographical military disparity exists. The whole complex of world power harmony centres round the question of control of the seaways. Are they to remain the exclusive right of individual powers <sup>with the consequent</sup> ~~arising~~ to become uneven distribution of world authority and the attendant friction and conflict or are they to become the property of some international authority for example the world security organisation (Security Council) in order to promote world harmony.

## CHAPTER I.

### BIG POWER RESPONSIBILITY.

Experience teaches us that world wars are the responsibility and the prerogatives of the big powers. Small states can go to war, but unless there is one or another big power behind them that war will remain localised. There were two wars in the Balkans one in 1912 and the other in 1913. There was the Aron Chaco war in South America between the two world wars. In no case was the conflict spread as no big power was directly involved. But when



Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia behind which stood Russia in 1914 and when Hitler attacked Poland behind which stood - by declaration of policy - Great Britain and France, in both cases the action led to general conflagration and eventually expanded into global conflict. Not only are the big Powers themselves ultimately, absolutely responsible for war and chaos but in the same sense responsible for progress and well-being throughout the world. The U.S.A. alone due to her incomparable economic position can create scarcity, ~~impoverish~~ ~~frugality~~ and organise hunger if they so wish on a great stretch of the human race. It was the Wall Street crash in 1929 which led to that cyclonic depression which engulfed the world for nearly five years, which amongst other things <sup>provided the</sup> gave birth-pangs of Hitlerism and upset the precarious system of international conflicting balances imposed by the treaties of peace of 1919-20 and subsequent agreements. The economic collapse of let us say Venezuela or Bulgaria could hardly have caused a ripple on the surface of the inter-war artificial tranquillity. The economic typhoon from the U.S.A. produced a world storm. If in the economic field America's influence for good or evil is so enormous her political influence is no less so. If America decides to use a big stick or bandy diplomacy about with an atomic bomb thickly sugared with moral abstractions the influence of her actions will be felt in every home in the world. Great Britain by her own policy can influence directly nearly a quarter of the human race and indirectly another 150 million in Western Europe and the Middle East. The influence of the U.S.S.R. is mostly ideological. Being the world's first socialist state ~~its~~ influence is great but indirect. Possessing a more or less self-sufficient economy and comprising territorial unity internal changes and developments can influence the outside world indirectly by example only. Behind that example does not lie contact which is the thin edge of power.

Therefore whatever the three biggest Powers do now and are likely to do in the future is bound to have incalculable influence upon

the entire planet. A concerted policy among them based on realisable aims will confer the cherished blessings of security, peace and progress on humanity. Prolonged and sustained disagreement and antagonism will result in instability, stringency and eventually another and more dreadful holocaust. The world might then truly plunge into Armageddon!

Is such concerted policy among the three principal Powers feasible? Unfortunately angry streams of suspicion and mistrust still flow between them. To bridge them, or at least to give the appearance of bridging them was comparatively easy while the war was on. The dire question of survival or subjection put every other consideration to the back-ground. Harmony was established. But it was a deceptive harmony. With the ending of the war policy ceased to be looked from the standpoint of the world's crying demands but through the dusty prism of Foreign offices archives from which the formulators of policy are hardly able to lift their noses.

The elimination of the Axis, Germany, Italy and Japan from the list of reckorable powers has left a void in the world of precarious balances and brought the three victorious powers, which for so long before looked <sup>or snarled</sup> at each other from behind safe distances into proximity and contact. As there was nothing ready-made to fill the void and preserve a form of stability the angry currents were stopped where they did ~~form~~ the "opposing fear". Thus a balance based on mutual fear has been found. But as fear is the worst possible guide to future policy and as it is the <sup>sure</sup> ~~only~~ road to anarchy men began to feel less secure with the ending of the war than they were when rockets, bombs and shells were flying about. If this feeling of insecurity continues then central Europe, Indochina and Japan will become a vast "marsh" and what is on either side of them will become "glacis" of individual big powers. Then all points of contact between the three Powers will become joints of conflict and tension will mount till either sanity will prevail or all universal explosion will result.

What is the driving force behind this apparent drive for the division of the world into three powerful constellations? Is it that

so-called community of interest fall into the pattern of domination and become a scheme of empire; or is it due to the modern pernicious conception that the defence of any given power extends far beyond its own frontiers embraces adjacent territories and pushes on beyond that at infinitum? If we accept the principle that the active defence, in distinction to the passive defence, of the U.S.A. must be emplaced in the Ryukyu islands and of Anglo-American defence must be stretched somewhere to the depth of Eastern Europe, a line running from the Baltic to the Black Sea and embracing Poland and Rumania, then on the same principle the "active defence" of the U.S.S.R. must be pushed to the Atlantic seaboard in Europe and to the Alaskan and Canadian shores in the Pacific? In that case the whole thing becomes an unholy mix-up and instead of the big Powers becoming trustees of peace they become the real or nominal bosses, but nevertheless bosses of the smaller states. National sovereignty will go by the board and the clock of human progress pushed back.

The student of politics cannot fail to realise ~~while~~ the significance why the focal points of conflict are in central Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East and the Far East, particularly China. They do not embrace any of the countries of South America or the western sea-board of Europe or the Continent Africa. Conflicts might be in those places but they do not carry in themselves the seed of world war. Events in South America might interest the U.S.A. and to an extent Britain, but the latter has to play a secondary and subordinate role to the U.S.A., but at least she can claim a voice. Events in the Middle East Syria or Palestine interest Great Britain and to an extent the U.S.A. although the latter can play a secondary role but can nevertheless claim and demand the "right" to have a co-equal share in responsibility. And yet if the Soviet Union will demand a proportional voice in South American events on the principle of big-power equality and world responsibility the reaction of Great Britain and America will be catastrophically adverse. Even in

in the Middle East which is territorially near to the Soviet Union and for which geographically and strategically it is vitally affected, the Soviet Union can have no voice or at least is not given a voice. And yet G. Britain and the U.S.A. demand not only a voice but the arrangement of the problem of Eastern Europe not according to the U.S.S.R.'s or the peoples concerned wishes but according to their (G. Britain & U.S.A.) satisfaction. Thus equality of responsibility in world affairs is interpreted that the U.S.S.R. should cease to be interested in anything outside the U.S.S.R. while the rest of the world is conditioned by Anglo-American pressure and or guidance.

Stripped of all the high sounding words and moral utterances about democracy, representative institutions, peoples' will etc. with which the issues of central and Eastern Europe and also of China are clothed the bare fact emerges that it is the "unexpressed" will of the United Kingdom and of the U.S.A. to imprison the U.S.S.R. within the confines of its state frontiers. Nothing less than that will suffice, in the eyes of the pursuers of such policy, to ensure big three co-operation. But such an urge fundamentally conflicts with the principle of equality of responsibility and undoes all the results of the war. It even goes further than the surrendering of the entire world to Anglo-American influence, it presupposes that the U.S.S.R. equally bows before that <sup>above</sup> combination. Realisation of such a policy is fraught with dire potentialities. It ignores and antagonises a big country and violates the often expressed but hardly ever honoured principle that peoples should be allowed to determine their own destiny. Under Anglo-American world omnipotence the so-called determining of ones destiny will be fashioned according to the wishes of the Big Two.

Apart from the fact that such policy is both impracticable and impossible of realisation it is not one that will preserve peace. it is rather one which ultimately will lead to war

When one examines cursorily the whole world scene one comes to the startling realisation that there appear to be no profound

conflicts of interest among the Great Powers. Britain is separated from the U.S.A. by three thousand miles of ocean and both are separated from the Soviet Union by the sub-continent of Europe and China. Each of them, if we include Britain and the Commonwealth possess of vast territories large resources and capable of immense advancement and economic prosperity. No one covets the territory of the other. The logic of economics, particularly if one takes the short range of view, should render harmonious co-operation inevitable. The U.S.A. could find great markets in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China and the undeveloped parts of the Western European Empires. Britain could equally find a great outlet for her products and provide in turn a market for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as well as within her empire. World-wide advancement as well as the rapid economic expansion of the big powers themselves depend on their fruitful economic co-operation. Why then if economically and territorially the three great countries do not come into conflict, should there be that seemingly unbridgeable chasm brought them? Economically :- i.e. from the standpoint of the 19th century discredited economics of laissez faire - there might be considerable antagonism and ultimately friction between Great Britain and the U.S.A. but there is none that one can at least foresee between the above two and the U.S.S.R. Politically however Britain becomes almost an appendage to U.S.A. policy towards the U.S.S.R. i.e. there is politically an apparently inexplicable hostility of the U.S.A. to the U.S.S.R. to which Britain plays the role of a planet to the American sun.

Seeing that conditions of harmony are hard to materialise the historian can only examine the causes of the antagonism and lay bare the roots of an all pervading suspicion which conditions policies. In fact this is the only valid method by which one can go beneath the surface of things and examine the sub-soil upon which has grown this suspicion that has now hardened into policy. The history of relations of the different countries are also important because the foreign offices have their ~~few~~ <sup>views</sup> moulded by the contents of memoranda and

files, dusty volumes of précis and documents that stretch back whole decades and even centuries. Therefore what happened in the past, right or wrong which has not been expressly repudiated but allowed to continue or lapse into disuse helps to mould opinions for those who are directly responsible for formulating policy.

It is an inevitable accompaniment of a foreign policy that it does not only affect the life and destinies of the nations which fathered that policy but that it equally affects the lives of other peoples. We can say that the <sup>eastern</sup> Mediterranean must be under British domination or influence because it is paramount to British imperial security. But what happens then to the Egyptians, the Palestinians, the Syrians the Cypriots etc.? Must they remain the object pawns in the game of big power security? So far Foreign policy has been following the slippery path of trying to harmonise these two incompatible tendencies that of the security as it at a given time understood by the dominant nation and that of the demand of subordinate people for a full control of their affairs. That harmonising has been affected sometimes by force, sometimes by cajolery, sometimes by conversion but has remained essentially unstable and a fountain-head of tension. A tension that progresses with cumulative effect and makes for world-wide instability, strengthening the antagonism of the big powers and leading to war. This insistence upon <sup>the</sup> security of the vital interests of the most powerful states involves an illeberal and arbitrary treatment of the weaker nations. And as such it makes the prospect of an international order an elusive chimera.

When we examine the relations of Great Britain, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. amongst themselves and their policy vis à vis the rest of the world we must always bear in mind that their alliance and co-operation did not evolve peacefully as a result of ~~the~~ natural growth but has been forced upon them by the aggressive powers. As such it has worked more or less efficiently in war. But with the coming of peace we find that the negative basis of war-time co-operation has disappeared and historic antagonisms have come to the fore. That historical antagonism, spin-

ging from diverse and conflicting policies and interests is particularly <sup>deep</sup> ~~deep~~-rooted between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. They are not so long-standing neither so deep-rooted between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. And yet the U.S.A. is now the prime influence in anti-Soviet. The mantle of mantle of the anti-Russian policy of Pitt of Palmerston and of Disraeli has fallen upon the State Department, which appears to day to try to play in the world the same role that Great Britain played in the 19th century: i.e. of being constant in its anti-Russian pursuits and striving for a balance of powers ~~for~~ in the rest of the world. This is not a mere rhetorical statement but is borne out by the facts of U.S.A. policy. The demand for further bases in the Pacific, and presumably later on in the Atlantic, the maintenance of overwhelming forces in a constant state of preparedness, the unwillingness to share the manufacturing secrets of the atomic bomb the forbidding of direct or indirect concerted action by the other allies in areas considered to be within the American orbit and the insistence for a voice about the unfolding of events in Eastern Europe and the meddling in the internal affairs of China. All these are portents of the new American attitude to world problems. Great Britain has factually surrendered all her previous world influence and meddling to America with the exception of the Mediterranean zone and plays in general question a secondary and faithful role to the American protagonist. The U.S.A. protest about the governments established after liberation in Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria etc. Great Britain follows suit. The U.S.A. recognises the Hungarian Government and the Austrian Government Britain follows suit. In all cases in international affairs on the morrow of victory wherever there has been any single instance by which some form of pressure could have been brought to bear upon the Soviet Union, the U.S.A. led the way and Britain followed. Cooperation and understanding there must be and not only among the two of the great Powers but amongst all of them but that must be co-operation based on equality and not one based on pronouncement by the one side and acceptance by the other. The lack of variance in Anglo-American relations towards the U.S.S.R. is hardly in itself a commendable fact. It would have been commendable had there

been a fundamental harmony and co-operation in every aspect of economic, social and political life. As it has been unfolding in the decisively formative period of the end of the global war Great Britain - U.S.A. co-operation has been one of community in antipathies only.

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British - Russian antagonism is not in itself explosive or even ultimately unresolved. It only becomes so when American tendencies come into play. But in itself British - Russian suspicion and mistrust ~~is~~ by far the strongest contributor to world instability. <sup>Expressed in geographical</sup> ~~Roughly speaking~~ it covers as terms this region covers an area forming a semi-circle and stretching from the North Cape via central Europe, the Danube Valley, Asia Minor, Iran and Afghanistan i.e. from the Arctic region to the desolate Himalayan uplands. (The Far Eastern area another point of British - Russian friction has become now an American preserve and a point of American - Russian friction). Whatever happens in that vast region of the globe is directly a concern of both Powers according to contemporary reckoning. But acceptance of this fact renders the peoples of these countries under certain compulsion to so regulate their lives as to conform to the wishes of two great Powers where in principle it should be that the peoples concerned should be allowed to determine their future under conditions of freedom both in the external and internal field.

In Lord Baldwin's premiership the frontiers of England were on the Rhine. Now they have extended not only to the Elbe but one can say to the Vistula and the Danube. Such an extension of the security frontier implies direct and indirect intervention in the affairs of all states within that region, and promotes counter-measures by other ~~parties~~ <sup>parties</sup>.

The origins of British - Russian antagonism are hard to define. They go back into the dark past. There is no natural and <sup>or</sup> historical reason why it should be so. Those who delight in seeing a certain fundamental cleavage between East and West which cannot be bridged refrain from facing the logical conclusion of their argument or postulate their principles clearly that, in



that case the only solution to the world's ills is for the East to conquer the west or vice versa. As this is supposed to be impracticable the next best thing is a patchwork arrangement which will keep the fundamental East-West conflict in being. But when one sees beneath the surface of things one finds that the terms East and West are in meaningless expressions except as a geographical designations. There is not the implied unity which will render them, at this stage, close knit entities. Germany - at least Western Germany - Britain, France, Spain and Italy are Western Powers. This unity <sup>or lack</sup> ~~has~~ been amply demonstrated in the last few centuries. Britain and Japan are East and West powers and yet they have been allies and friends both in peace and war. Britain and Russia are also East and West countries and although they have been always at loggerheads in peace-time in the three major conurbations of the last 150 years - the Napoleonic and the first and second world-wars - they fought side by side. In the same period they only went to war once against one another - the Crimean war. If that is so then this antagonism does not constitute part of the nature of things and neither is it conditioned by geographical and historical factors which cannot be avoided. They are deep-rooted misturts springing from nothing else than the scheme of Empires which has been strengthened by historic traditions and geographic causes. Had Russia remained the small Muscovite state of the 16th century there would not have been this East to West antagonism. Had Britain kept out of the Mediterranean and the Middle East there might not have arisen the Anglo-Russian conflict. Have there been an accommodating British attitude over the Mediterranean <sup>area</sup>, similar to that ~~shown~~ in <sup>Britain showed</sup> Africa. To France, Germany, Belgium and other countries ~~that~~ Africa Anglo-Russian conflict might have been resolved long ago.

The distinction one can draw between East and West is that whereas in the West we have clearly defined national and state entities in the East the situation is more fluid. At Britain, <sup>and to a lesser extent Italy, the Netherlands</sup> France, Belgium, Portugal, ~~Italy~~ etc. <sup>Denmark etc.</sup> are and have been clearly defined states with more or less definite geographical barriers or historically established frontiers - as is the case of Portugal. For <sup>several centuries now</sup> ~~or downwards~~ this situation has remained valid. But in the East

the position is less stable. The ebb and flow of conquests, the spreading and overlapping of populations with distinct cultures and traditions over the barrierless European plains and the river valleys of central and south-east Europe have left ~~no~~ <sup>no clearly defined lines</sup> of national cultures. In the west the Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic element after centuries of struggle against the Latin west reached a stage of accepted territorial equilibrium. Since Queen Mary lost Calais there have been no British attempts to have possessions across the channel. With the sole exception of the rock of Gibraltar, no part of Spanish territory has been coveted by Britain, ~~and~~ <sup>the</sup> same applies to the other countries as regards Britain. In the East one has to remember that the boundary between the Germanic Tribes and the Slavs was ~~at~~ the time of Charlemagne was the river Elbe and that both Berlin and Vienna stand now in areas which were ~~partly~~ <sup>Slav areas</sup> in early Medieval times. Since then the Germans have spread eastwards, engulfing and dominating Slavic people. The German through the centuries made a three-pronged advance eastwards; one down the Danube valley, the second across the European plain beyond the Elbe the Oder and ~~the Vistula~~ <sup>almost towards the Vistula</sup> the Vistula and the third across the Baltic coast almost into the Gulf of Finland. And beyond these utmost reaches of Teutonic settlement there have been established scattered but compact German communities in the East. Before the 1939 war there were German communities in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania, Bessarabia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, White Russia and the Volga region of Russia and the Ukraine. Apart from the areas of over which the Germans were actually in complete domination wherever they have settled they were landlords or merchants. They were not assimilated by their surrounding people but remained a dominant "national minority" enjoying a privileged position amid subject population. German "Kultur" went <sup>along</sup> with the Germans. The fact that the Poles, the Czechs the Croats belonged to the ~~western~~ <sup>western</sup> branch of the Church - Roman Catholic Church - made the task of the crusading, conquering, rapacious Teutonic Knights and their followers much easier, as they ~~presumably~~ they carried upon the tip of their sword the writ of the Holy Roman Empire. This eastward Germanic

drive was checked by the Russians and Poles and eventually stopped by the rise of Russian power. But that it did not die down but remained an ideological driving force to which was added the economic momentum of an industrialised Germany has been amply demonstrated in the two world-wars of the twentieth century. Now the Slavs - i.e. Poles - have pushed their frontiers to the Oder and the Neisse, re-occupied historic Polish lands and along with the other Slav peoples strive to contain Germanism within more or less its historical boundaries and write finis to German drive towards the East.

Thus the German drives to the East, the Polish, Lithuanian and Swedish conquests and the czarist westward drives left in East areas an intermixture of peoples <sup>with</sup> varying and conflicting historical and religious attachments and differing accurate ethnological delimitation. Over the disputed territories from just beyond the Oder to the pre-1939 Polish frontier one would find this definite social pattern. First German landlords and German peasants. Second (in Silesia, Poznan, East Prussia etc.) German landlords and Polish peasants. Then in Poland proper Polish landlords and Polish peasants and finally beyond the Curzon line Polish landlords and Russian peasants. The south-eastward drive of the Germans rendered Europe an indisputably great service. It saved Vienna from the Turks in 1683 and then proceeded step by step to drive the Turks out Hungary and Transylvania and eventually to impose up to <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ conquering Sultan the Treaty of Belgrade of 1739 which for almost 100 years became the fixed <sup>boundary</sup> ~~line~~ of Turkish European conquests. Central and Western Europe was saved from Ottoman domination but the lands for which the Turks were thrown out by the Austrian Germans only exchanged the Turkish for the German yoke.

When Russia made its impact upon Europe at the beginning of the 18th century she was already a mature nation and a considerable power. ~~She~~ was an organically united nation with definite cohesion hammered out during the sharp struggle for survival against the Tartar invaders. Russia has matured and grown up outside of what is called Western European influence. The latter have derived their civilisation through Rome and the Catholic Church. From Rome they <sup>inherited</sup> ~~learned~~ the concepts and traditions of power of state organisation of military efficiency. Rule and order were and are the basic prin-

principles. This is effected by well defined laws and by the establishment of a system of social and economic hierarchy which by graduated but cumulative series of repressions from above were maintaining order. The Roman civilisation was essentially mechanical and in its application efficient but raw. It had efficiency in administration and to that end it had developed the organisation of the legions as the ultimate instrument of enforcing the will of the authority. It demanded from its subjects not loyalty but obedience. Its power of cohesion was force. On this crude mechanical and spiritually empty civilisation was superimposed the Christian church of Rome, the Papacy had left the old system in fact but provided the spiritual content, ~~which~~ which helped to hold the whole thing together. Slavery developed into feudal system which provided the initial organic uniformity of regions and areas that subsequently developed into states nations. The Pope <sup>with certain exceptions</sup> ~~as such~~ was not <sup>direct</sup> always the political authority in the areas over which he held sway. He did meddle in politics and did influence politics but did not wield throughout the catholic world state power. Thus the western Christian had developed a sense of dualism; he had to obey two authorities the spiritual and the Temporal, the Pope and the Emperor, and in the occasional conflicts of these two powers he could at times find temporary relief from oppression. The Roman Empire and the Papacy, ~~both~~ <sup>both essentially</sup> Roman in character with the <sup>emphasis</sup> ~~acceptance~~ of authority from above have provided the <sup>foundational</sup> ~~grounding~~ stone of contemporary European civilisation. The fact that western Europe is ice-free and easily accessible either directly or through rivers to sea communications have developed trade and communications and paved out to the discovery of new worlds in which they eventually built their empires and gradually extended their possession, their trade and their influence over the seven seas.

Russia <sup>has not been</sup> ~~remained~~ part of this general trend. Her civilisation has never been influenced by Rome but derives straight from the Greeks. First <sup>viz</sup> the Greek centre on the Russian Black sea coast in classical times and then directly through the Byzantine Empire from which Russia accepted Christianity and became a Christian Greek-Orthodox community. ~~Since~~ <sup>From</sup> the time when Constantine the Great <sup>made</sup> ~~became~~ Christianity an official state religion there has <sup>in the fourth century</sup>

grown up a unified politico-religious authority. The Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople although two different persons were acting as one. Their occasional differences never reached the point of cleavage. But as the Byzantine Empire grew up it shed off its Roman characteristic of authoritarianism and came to be based more and more on Greek civilisation <sup>of the with certain</sup> ~~but with certain~~ emphasis on the rights of people within the general politico-religious authority of the Empire. There was denouement of absolutism and the Emperor and Patriarch were the unifying symbols and power of the Empire. This pre-occupation with "humanity" did not have its exact counterpart in the west where detailed control from above was the guiding principle. With the religious schism of the 10th century the division between Eastern and Western Christendom became complete. A division which one can say that in different forms persists to this day. This is perhaps the reason why the Greek statesman, Venizelos writing to a friend in Athens from Paris in 1919 <sup>where he was meeting with all kinds of opposition to every Greek claim of</sup> said that the hostility of the Western powers to the Greek world is general since the time of the crusaders has been constant and inexplicable. The historian knows how much of the efforts of the crusaders were directed against the Mohammedans in Palestine and how much it was used to undermine and weaken the Byzantine Greek Empire already severely strained by the pressure of the virile Mohammedan forces from the East and South.

Russia, after the destruction of the Byzantine Empire and the occupation of Constantinople, became the heir to the Christian Byzantine tradition. The same unity between Church and state in Russia as in Byzantium. The same pre-occupation with "humanity". Even Russian autocracy at its worst was never a callous <sup>so-called</sup> Czarist machine. It was an adroit, spasmodic, brutality, more in the line of harsh paternalism than vicious tyranny. The age-long struggle of the Russian people against the Tartar invaders, the struggles for the ejection of the Poles and the unifying force of religion amongst an illiterate, superstitious people turned Russia into a cohesive nation. With the fall of the Byzantine Empire and whole Balkan peninsula and the Black sea littoral at the hands of the Turks with the Poles marching in from the west and the Tartars still powerful in the East Russia became ~~but~~ <sup>for</sup> close on four hundred

a state surrounded by enemies and completely isolated from the rest of the world. In this condition, hammered from all sides the Russians were growing up to nationhood. By the beginning of the 16th century the Russian enclave round Moscow which remained more outside the Tartar domination had grown in strength. The Tartar yoke had been thrown off. Now the Russian turned their attention towards recovering the <sup>Russian</sup> lands occupied by Poles and Lithuanians. The twin drive of religion and nationality was urging them on, to pursue what can be now termed as self-determination for their people. To a complaint of the Polish King supported by the Pope that John the Great of Russia (1462-1505) was seizing his patrimony and that many Russian princes in Lithuania were transferring their allegiance to Moscow, John replied: "And do not I regret my patrimony the Russian lands which are in the hands of Lithuania - Kiev, Smolensk and the other towns" adding that all Russian lands of old must be restored otherwise there was not going to be any peace but only "truces to draw breath". How prophetic! After the vicissitudes of four <sup>9 half</sup> centuries we arrive at last at the ~~stagnant~~ acceptance of the ethnographic delimitation of the Curzon line which gives indisputably Russian lands to Russia and Polish lands to Poland and the possibility of a permanent peace being established between the two sister countries.

By the time Peter the Great threw out of Russia the Swedes and established his authority on the Gulf of Finland and <sup>built</sup> opened St. Petersburg (Leningrad) as a his window towards Europe Russia was a considerable power with her own culture, a power which matured in isolation and with her own way of doing things. Peter's trips abroad and the building of his capital by the sea was a sincere Russian effort to come to closer understanding with the rest of Europe and acquire from more fortunate lands learning and the arts of civilisation. But Peter's gesture remained only a gesture for two reasons; a) the western world was staggered by the emergence of this sprawling, awkward, groping giant in the East of whose existence they were dimly aware and remained apprehensive as to his aims and portents. b) the Russian with a deeply-rooted suspicion against the foreigners engendered by a deep experience of suffering at the hands of surrounding states wanted only assistance from the west on a footing of equality but not guidance.

This double mistrust grafted on to the already lingering suspicion of partly forgotten religious differences which have hardened into prejudices have contributed in keeping these contributed in keeping the two sections of European peoples apart. Experience has taught the Russians that the foreigner has always hurt them and therefore they were not going to allow them a free hand to meddle in their affairs. The west torn by <sup>dynastic</sup> rivalries by commercial competition, colonial conflicts and gripped by the birth-pangs of emerging capitalism could see in Russia nothing but another danger to which it has opposed and still opposes an unmitigated <sup>enmity</sup> hostility. It is no accident that the Russian state has been left to fare more or less alone ever since and grow up facing at <sup>worst</sup> ~~times~~ the hostility of the whole Europe and at best only their opposition. Even when they <sup>Russians</sup> had allies that alliance was not based on friendship and understanding <sup>but of convenience</sup> and have been always contributing more than their due share of sacrifice in every war.

The remarkable thing is that although the emergence of Russia as a power put a ~~powerful~~ powerful check to the eastward drive of Germanism, the hostility that Russia encountered came always and constantly from the west. The Germans have remained down to our own time the mortal enemies of the Slavs and of Russia but there have been many cases of peace and co-operation between them. When Peter the Great emerged to the shore of the Baltic he moved away from a Russian entourage into a German environment. As a result for the next 200 years German influence was strong in Russian government. Many of the Tsar's officials and advisers were recruited from amongst the offsprings of the German baronial families of the Baltic area. Russian autocracy was politically "Germanised" and culturally it came under French influence. It became something apart and alien from the Russian people. Paternal autocracy developed into oppressive absolutism, and the Russian organic unity of old began to show signs of fissure.

Peter the Great began building a navy. This <sup>automatically</sup> ~~of course~~ aroused the hostility of England. The French kings did not like the appearance of a powerful military state just beyond the German provinces. Consequently the Russian was treated as an upstart in the comity of nations. It is characteristic of that whole emotional tendency that even the great Catherine

would find no strong enough words to up-braid Russia for all her efforts including the attempts to assist in the liberation of the Balkan Christians from Turkish oppression. In contrast to the Russians the Turkish <sup>ruler</sup> ~~governor~~ according to Voltaire were real gentlemen, and the Greeks, the Bulgars the Serbs, the Armenians and what not were cartigated for revolting against the Sultan their "bienfaiteur". How even that great thinker and fighter for freedom could just not fail to endorse the Turrophil policy of <sup>the</sup> French Kings ~~which~~ whom he so violently criticised. Possibly Voltaire like many modern thinkers believed in continuity of Foreign Policy without ever questioning the basis of that policy or see where it is leading to!

Hostility across safe distances has its academic interest only. It requires certain geographical proximity to fester into a sore. This was not long forthcoming. The religious and nationalistic drive of Peter the Great soon brought him up against the Turkish Empire then in control on the whole Danubian area, the Black Sea Coast the Sea of ~~Azoff~~ <sup>Azov</sup>, the whole of the Middle East and the North African sea-board; although in Algiers, Morocco, and Tunis the Sultan of Turkey exercised only indirect control as the Caliph - the religious head of the Mohammedans. It was inevitable that Russia and Turkey should come into conflict. ~~First~~ because Turkey was in control of Russian lands and secondly because Turkey was the oppressor of the Balkan orthodox Christian <sup>people</sup> ~~lands~~ ~~and~~ their co-religionists in Asia Minor (Greeks, Armenians) and other parts of the Middle East. This crusading spirit, <sup>for the liberation</sup> ~~and~~ of the Christians from the Sultan's rule, which incidentally was <sup>one</sup> ~~any~~ of the starkest tyrannies that appeared upon the earth, was very strong among the deeply religious Russian people. The Turk was the infidel; the Sultan's slaves were his Christian brothers. The anti-Turkish Russian policy was not of recent creation - it was <sup>constant</sup> ~~maturing~~ since the time the Turks invaded the lands of Eastern Christendom.

Peter the Great gave a considerable impetus to the anti-Turkish Russian drive, a drive which can be equated to a liberatory mission. He threw the Turks out of the sea of Azov, and began building a Russian Black Sea fleet. He ~~strengthened~~ <sup>Phanariote</sup> ~~like~~ Russian contact with the Greek <sup>Clergy</sup> ~~Clergy~~ of the Danubian Principalities (Wallachia and Moldavia - present-day



Rumania and issued a proclamation to the Greeks to whom he foretold the approaching restoration of the Byzantine Empire. The reluctant story was between the Ottoman Empire and Russia ended by the treaty of the Pruth in 1711 the terms of which were humiliating to Russia which imposed the retrocession of Azov to Turkey and the suppression of the Russian embassy at Constantinople (Istanbul). Few years later however these two onerous provisions of the treaty were modified, Russian influence was re-established in Azov and a permanent Russian Embassy established in the Ottoman capital. It is worth noting that during the treaty of 1711 ~~and~~ the subsequent developments the influence of England was used against Russia and for Turkey. For the first time England came out as the champion of Ottoman rule against a Christian power, for the simple reason that <sup>since</sup> the formation of the Russian navy the English Levant Co. which has supplanted the French traders and almost had the complete monopoly of the Near East Trade became alarmed at the rivalry of the Russian merchants. England's anti-Russian policy was motivated by economic reasons but to enforce she used political means. For example the British ambassador at Constantinople in opposing the <sup>restoration</sup> re-establishment of the Russian embassy at the same place drew the attention of the Sultan to the dangers of political and religious propaganda by Russian agents amongst the Sultan's Christian subjects, with the net result that Britain appeared willing to buttress Ottoman Imperial tyranny.

From this humble origin the fundamental design of Anglo-Russian antagonism has been fashioned. It has been based and it is based <sup>primarily</sup> on the geographical area embracing the Balkan peninsula and the Middle East. Britain's attitude was governed by economic considerations which later on were saddled with political and strategic considerations. Russia's policy was fashioned by the religious fervour of her people i.e. by ideological impulse, and by the inescapable dictates of geography which imposed upon her the necessity of seeking an outlet to the open sea and escaping the suffocating restriction of land encirclement. Between these two stools were the millions of struggling tortured agonised peoples - Slavs, Rumanian, Greeks, Armenians etc. - that Russia wanted to see liberated, and Britain wanted to keep where they were otherwise she felt that her commercial interests were threatened.

Although the rivalry between the two countries early in the 18th century throughout that century it was by no means constant. Britain and Holland united to stop the extension of Russian trade in the Levant and in 1719 Stanhope wanted to drive the Muscovites (Russians) as far back as possible. But by the middle of the 18th century France was the greatest commercial rival of Britain in the Levant and for a brief period particularly during the reign of Catherine the Second when there was spasmodic Anglo-Russian co-operation in the Middle East. Revolts among the Greeks and the mountaineers led to a Russo-Turkish war in 1768, and a Russian fleet, largely officered by Englishmen was dispatched to the Peloponnese, received the submission of a number of Aegean islands and at one time threatened Constantinople. It was this presence of the Russians on Greek soil that kindled the spirit of Greek resistance and showed them that they were not alone in their fight against the Turks. It was mostly in Russia that Greek patriots had the relative freedom to move about and organise their vast national revolutionary conspiracy which flared up into open revolt in 1821. To the Balkan peoples the Russians were the friends and supporters and were looked upon as their <sup>would be</sup> liberators. Though British officers served with the Russian Fleet Britain did not officially back Russia's actions against Turkey. But still the lack of British opposition was of major importance as the Turks floundered and faced with the prospect of the destruction of their state hastened to sign the peace of Kutchuk-Kainardji (the name of a small Bulgarian village) by which the lot of the Christian subjects of the Sultan was <sup>somehow</sup> slightly ameliorated and were allowed to walk about as human beings. The territorial losses suffered by Turkey on account of this Treaty were slight indeed and were exclusively confined to the Russian lands on the Black-sea and to the Crimean peninsula. Thus this fruit co-operation between Britain and Russia proved of certain benefit to subject peoples and did not result in any detriment to either power. The same can be said about every case over which they have cooperated, from their joint intervention along with France, in Greece in 1827 which secured Greek independence to their partnership in the fight against Hitler's attempt to dominate

Europe. It is also worth mentioning that during that period Britain offered to let Russia the island of Minora in the Mediterranean as a Russian base which Catherine rarely refused. Had that offer been accepted it might have been that the intermingling of the possessions of the two countries might have resulted in certain co-operation instead of having to contact or counter one another's moves across the sprawling body of European and Asiatic Turkey.

On the eve of the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji we find Lord Clatham expressing himself to the effect that he was ~~pro-~~<sup>pro-Russian</sup> and yet in few years later in 1791 we find his son Pitt wanting to declare war against Russia, in which he wanted to draw in revolutionary but not yet Jacobinist France, in order to maintain the Balance of Power in Europe. Pitt was pointing in this connection the usefulness of Turkey as an Ally of England against Russia. But the developments of France and the rise of Napoleon put a different complexion on the <sup>European</sup> world situation which resulted in an Anglo-Russian-Turkish alliance against France. In the complex fluidity of that period, with alliances being made and broken, with war continuing in one direction and peace reigning in another part of a generally warring Europe, Emperor Paul of Russia was reputed to have come to an understanding with Napoleon and to march a Russian army from the Ukraine to India in order to fight the British power there. Under the conditions of the time the idea was obviously ludicrous, and is hardly likely that any serious strategist would have taken it seriously. The very fact though of such an idea being mooted was sufficient to establish a precedent in Anglo-Russian relations and subsequently widen the field of conflict from the <sup>Balkans and the</sup> Middle East to the borders of India. Paul's successor <sup>instead of assisting</sup> ~~rather than~~ Napoleon was ultimately responsible in breaking Napoleon power. The rest of the 19th century after the defeat of Napoleon had been dominated by Anglo-Russian rivalry focussed first and foremost over the Balkans, and gradually extending to the central Asiatic Territories and towards the close of the century reaching to the far east. Thus by 1900 on a line stretching from the Carpathian Alps right through the Black sea to the lower Caucasian region,

Central Asia right through to the borders of Korea Anglo-Russian relations were in conflict at every point.

x x x

To say that the Balkans were an exclusive field of Anglo-Russian conflict in the 19th century is to oversimplify the case. There were ~~also~~ <sup>up to a</sup> degree a focus of Russo-Russian conflict and at times of French-Russian antagonism. At the close of the century and the beginning of the twentieth the Balkans became the point of war-like division between Germany on the one hand and Russia and the western Powers on the other. But the overall picture is that of Britain and Russia. These were the two big players. The second half of the 20th century leaves again Britain and Russia the two most important powers in Europe and from Mr. Benn's statements we understand that the 19th century policy of containing Russia ~~is~~ <sup>has been</sup> resurrected and enforced. The same motives, the same fears are in operation again.

We have seen that the original Anglo-Russian opposition sprang from Britain's fear that her mercantile interest in the Levant were threatened by Russia. That economic antagonism gradually developed into a concept that Britain's imperial security was threatened by Russia in the Mediterranean and the opposition of the two countries in the 19th century was both economic and strategic. Russia was credited with the intention of conquering the Balkans and the Middle East in order to reach warm water ports. Britain considered such an eventuality detrimental to her interests and naturally fought against them ~~with~~ <sup>in</sup> all means at her disposal. The fault is that British policy over-simplified Russian intentions. It saw in them primarily an anti-British drive through the prejudicial fear engendered by Tsar Paul's agreement with Napoleon whereas in truth there were two distinct <sup>Russian</sup> drives and ~~neither~~ <sup>of</sup> them was anti-British in character. The one was the liberation of the Balkan peoples from Ottoman oppression, an altruistic religious impulse which ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> the fashioning and goading Russian policy; through that drive the Tsar expected also by salving their consciences with the support to their Christian brethren to secure for themselves - with the elimination of the Ottoman Empire - the control or possession of the narrows i.e. the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and ensure their free and unrestricted exit into the Mediterranean.

Nations are not altruistic entities. Self-interest is the dominant the strongest guide to any act of policy. Britain's foreign policy is inexorably weaved into the fabric of British social life conditioned by British history. The British people, for centuries now, have been left free to settle their own way of life without interference from any outside person or nation. The last invasion of England was in the 11th century. The last battle on English soil - and not a serious one at that - was at the close of the 17th century and since <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ Prince of Orange was invited over in 1688 by a number of the leading English statesmen there has been no effective foreign interference in British politics. This immunity from direct foreign pressures permitted the ordered development of Britain and the extension of social and individual freedom. It ~~equally promoted~~ ~~certainly cultivated~~ a detachment from the affairs of the continent and of the world and gave British life up to our own ~~epoch~~ <sup>time</sup> has been free from the necessity of adjusting itself to the means of defence even in war time. Roads railways and ports have been built with practically no concern to strategic needs. Progress has never been held up or reversed by the threat or actuality of invasion or because some outside body or group or nation wanted it. All these promoted a sense of detachment and aloofness from the affairs of Europe and the world. British policy, so to speak has had for nearly three centuries a ring-side <sup>seat</sup> ~~view~~ of the interminable world squabbles. Free from foreign pressure Britain built up her industrial and military power. From her position of vantage and detachment, secure as she was ~~beside~~ herself, she could only intervene when the squabble underneath was threatening to trespass upon her preserves. And her intervention, always on the side of someone, has always proved decisive. Only during the 2nd world when her intervention on the side of Poland was almost ruinous did Britain's historic role of detachment and aloofness come to an end. Out of these developments a foreign

From whichever point of view one sees this aspect of the Tsar drive one cannot condemn it as not being commendable. The assistance of subject peoples, almost constantly in revolt, to gain their independence was praiseworthy and the <sup>constant</sup> championing of the cause of freedom for the Balkan peoples was perhaps the most unselfish service that a nation ever rendered another nation or group of nations. The second drive of the Tsars was through Anatolia, over Turkish or Arab territories down to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. This was an imperialistic drive dictated purely by selfish Russian <sup>self-</sup>interests and in line with general practices of Empires during that period and in subsequent times. So both these drives Britain primarily opposed the most strenuous and consistent opposition and became for nearly 75 years the upholder of the crumbling Ottoman Empire.

Why should Britain's opposition be so determined when there was no direct British interest to be threatened in that area? British possessions in the Mediterranean after the Napoleonic wars were Gibraltar, Malta and the recent acquisition of the Ionian islands - the group of islands to the west coast of Greece. Beyond that lay the Ottoman Empire. The answer to that lies in one of the fundamental tenets of British Foreign policy namely the preservation of the Balance of power in Europe.

It has been accepted by many almost as an axiom that Britain has not definitely consistent Foreign policy. Because British policy appears always to be guided by what are considered to be immediate interests the underlying pattern which gives to those interests <sup>being woven</sup> ~~uniform~~ texture to reveal the picture has been ignored. It is argued that there is no logical pattern in British Foreign policy. Even Sir Edward Grey, a great British Foreign Secretary expressed the belief that British Foreign Ministers have "been guided by what seemed to them to be the immediate interests of Britain" without making elaborate calculations for the future". Superficially that is true. But fundamentally Britain has been pursuing a consistent and deep-laid policy of calculated interest for centuries.

~~that policy can be summarised briefly, under three headings.~~

A. Freedom of the seas and of maritime communications. By pursuing this principle Britain has conferred an invaluable blessing upon the world. She

has ensured the safe peaceful passage of the oceans to all peoples and even if she has gained control of practically all important sea-passages she has never used that control to selfish advantage.

B. That no power strong enough should arise in Europe sufficiently near to threaten British shores. Hence the ancient British interest in events in the low countries which were considered to be the British frontier on the continent for generations. Hence the artificial creation of Belgium which history nevertheless has justified. British security was anchored on the low countries. Lord Balfour extended British security frontier to the Rhine. Mr Walter Lippmann thinks that the American-British security boundary should be on the Elbe and Mr Bevin hints that it should be considered further east still. This presupposes that nothing should take place in these countries that fundamentally conflicts with British security. And as conflicts do not arise only from economic rivalry or territorial acquisition but also from fundamentally opposed ideological differences it means that no radical changes in social structure which might result to different political orientation can take place in those countries. Consequently imperial Britain - even under Labour administration - basic opposition to communism.

C. The Balance of Power of Europe. This policy can be a source of considerable good and of great ail. Its application in the past when Britain would always support the second strongest power in Europe resulted in saving Europe from falling under the domination of any single power but equally prevented the organic integration of Europe. From her geographical position secure behind her sea moat by her naval power Britain could play that role with almost complete immunity. She could swing and swing at any given moment, either to ensure that an overweening power is curbed or the supremacy of one ally is not substituted for the defeated enemy. Four times in 250 years Britain power had turned the scale in war. But from the time of the time of the settlement of Utrecht in 1713 when England and Holland supported by the German Emperor of Vienna defeated France and prevented the establishment of French hegemony in Europe, and England on the morrow of victory swinging completely round and against her allies, an action for which she earned the title of "Perfidious Albion", this variation

became a constant characteristic of British policy after every upheaval. The same happened in 1763, and in 1815 after the defeat of Napoleon. The same happened in 1920 and subsequently when Britain's weight was thrown on the scales against her ally France and in 1945 when once more Britain's weight is thrown against her ally <sup>the</sup> U.S.A. The doctrine of the Balance of Power is essentially a doctrine of instability; it presupposes a stalemate due to equal pressures. It is precarious because it can be so easily upset and its maintenance requires an uncommon measure of political dexterity which in itself produces disharmony, fluidity and interrupts progress. Perhaps the greatest criticism of the Balance of Power concept is that it promotes insecurity. To the Power that practices it or at least to the Power that shows this great swings in policy it brings certain momentary advantage. The facts of history and geography added to the other solid fact that Britain up to the present has emerged from every war with hardly impaired economy - at times with enormously strengthened economy - and without any devastation, the persistence of the policy of "Tension" has been beneficial to her. Of all the countries that actively participated in the second global war the U.S.A. was the one that suffered practically nothing and Britain the one that suffered less. Consequently as long as there is Tension and lack of confidence everywhere else which does not affect America, the U.S.A. can reconvert her industry and proceed with her export trade without fear of economic competition. Possibly the cancellation of Lend-Lease and the prolonged negotiation re the British loan were not unconnected with the fact of giving a breathing space to America's industry to be the first in the export drive. This policy has been practiced by Britain in the past and its application to day is hardly without interest. Britain suffered relatively less than any other European combatant country in this war. She is relatively immune from the cross-currents of uncertainty that have been flooding central and south-eastern Europe. And as long as that uncertainty persists and promoted by utterances or actions by Britain and/or the U.S.A. so long the devastated countries will devote much of their energy in looking after <sup>their</sup> security and not proceeding with the work of reconstruction, something which gives a breathing space for industrial reconversion and places Britain



in an advantageous position vis a vis Europe when the trade recommences as she already has the goods. Thus the application of the Balance of power policy can be used by countries which are socially stable and territorially secure, as Britain has been during the last 2 1/2 centuries to let other peoples, or even to assist in letting other peoples, stew in their own juice, and so to be in no position to wrest the economic advantage from the stable countries. To seek to place the stamp of truism to this definition is to reduce politics to disreputable cynicism and despair of world understanding but nevertheless one can hardly escape that conclusion ~~from~~ <sup>after</sup> the observing of historical facts. Once that "feverish" period with its resultant advantages passes, although Britain has <sup>assiduously</sup> ~~constantly~~ pursued her power politics <sup>in preserving European equilibrium</sup>, has been the first in recent foremost amongst nations in pursuing a policy of peace and not wanting that balance upset.

The logic of the Balance of Power concept is that it cannot be divorced from interference in the internal affairs of other peoples. That interference is implicit in the pursuance of the policy. It has been repeatedly demonstrated in the past from Palmerston in the 19th century down to Churchill in Greece in 1944. On global issues it has become crystallised round the sub-continent of China where America inheriting that policy of balance is interested in seeing established in power a Government of American persuasion. That the policy of the Balance of Power has worked in the past is only demonstrated by the fact that wars have become more or less regular and definitely more general in character. But to day the world has shrunk and whereas ever since in the past the deflection of that balance would be ultimately resolved by armed contest the same prospect attending ~~in~~ the future the efforts of our generation is chilling. Consequently if war is to be avoided the whole <sup>practices</sup> tradition of the balance of power <sup>and</sup> must be established amongst the powers. unity

With the collapse of Napoleonic France the two principal powers left in Europe were Britain and Russia, followed in order of importance by Austria, Prussia & France. The Balance of Power <sup>policy</sup> ~~concept~~ demonstrated that Britain should be the antagonist of Russia as the then

greatest European power. And the point where Russia could be more easily held in check was not the plain of Europe where the Holy Alliance - an unholy combination of Russia, Prussia and Austria to prevent revolutionary changes in Europe - precluded the <sup>exclusive</sup> ~~rising~~ of one Power against the other in Eastern Europe, but in the Balkans and the Middle East. Russia's cardinal policy was the destruction of the Ottoman Empire Britain's the support and maintenance of that Empire. From that opposition arose the "Eastern question" which has been defined as the problem of filling up the vacuum created by the gradual disappearance of the Turkish Empire.

<sup>two principal</sup> antagonists. The Greek revolution of 1821 provided the first skirmishes between the Alexander Ipsilanti's famous invasion of Moldavia at the head of "Sacred Battalion" to arouse the orthodox Christians against the Moslems ended in failure owing both to his own incompetence and the fact that Rumanian peasants were distrustful of the motives of this Greek aristocrat seeing him as the kith and kin of the Phanariote Greek despots sent by the sultan to administer the Danubian principalities on his behalf. Although Ipsilanti had long enjoyed the special favour of the Tsar and the Tsar's foreign Minister Capodistrias, himself a Greek was friendly to the revolutionaries nevertheless nothing was done by the Russians to save Ipsilanti who after his defeat ignominiously <sup>deserted</sup> ~~led~~ his followers and fled to Austria there to be put in jail by Metternich where he died. It was not difficult for the astute and unscrupulous Metternich to convince the deeply religious, almost mystic and fiercely anti-revolutionary Tsar Alexander that support of Ipsilanti and the Greek revolutionary committee called the "Philike Hetaeria" would explode the foundation of the Holy Alliance and encourage the forces of Jacobinism in Europe. Shortly after this affair the Greeks of Morea and of the Archipelago revolted against the Turks. This was not merely an uprising but a determined national revolution. The Greek guerrilla force undertook the task of liberating Greece. Sultan Mahmud answered with brutal reprisals and took a fearful vengeance by hanging the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople and three of his clergy in full canonicals <sup>in front of</sup> before the Greek cathedral (April 23rd 1821). This impressed the orthodox Russians. The warped mind of the Tsar was divided between opposing the Greeks who were no

less rebels against the monarchical divine authority than were the Italian Carbonari or the Spanish "serviles" whom the Tsar wanted extirpated, and supporting a Christian people suffering fearfully at the hands of the Moslems. Religion sympathy for the Greeks was very strong in Russia, Russia equally felt very sharply the challenge to her authority as protector of the orthodox Christians guaranteed to her by the treaty of Kutchuk Kainardji half a century earlier, and could not remain indifferent to the fate of the Greeks. Moreover assisting the Greeks meant weakening of the Ottoman Power and eventually the emergence of Russia into the Mediterranean. In August 1821 the Tsar, <sup>after</sup> ~~with~~ <sup>more</sup> blatant demonstration of Turkish brutality against the Greeks, withdrew his ambassador from Constantinople and war appeared imminent. Alexander allowed himself to be held back by the constant appeals of his allies the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia and by his disinclination to produce a rupture in relations with the western Power particularly Britain. ~~But~~ <sup>By</sup> the <sup>very</sup> nature of things <sup>war</sup> between Russia and Turkey was inevitable.

It is characteristic that the only state that showed any sympathy towards the revolting Greeks was autocratic Russia. The Greek cry of anguish found warm response in Russian hearts. Metternich the Austrian Chancellor, showed his inhuman attitude by writing that "beyond our eastern frontier, 300,000 or 400,000 hanged, strangled and impaled do not count much". England intervened to dissuade the Tsar from any action of behalf of the Greeks and save the Ottoman Empire. England was for the preservation of the status quo. Castlereagh, British Foreign Secretary, is trying to dissuade the Tsar from any warlike actions expresses almost the same feelings as Metternich: "Barbarous as it is - he assures the Tsar - Turkey forms in the system of Europe a necessary evil". And as for the Greeks "they form a branch of that organised spirit of insurrection which is systematically propagating itself through out Europe, and which explodes wherever the hand of the governing Power from whatever cause is enfeebled. If its symptoms are more destructive in Turkey, it is because, in that unhappy country, it finds all those passions and prejudices and above all those religious animosities, which give to civil commotion their most odious and afflicting colours". And further on he

state that it is impossible for him to reconcile to his sense of duty the embarking upon a scheme for remodelling the "position of the Greek population in those countries at the hazard of all the destructive confusion and disunion which such an attempt may lead to, not only within Turkey but in Europe" ... and the Greeks he suggested, must rely on the "hand of time and of Providence to achieve their aims." ~~But~~ <sup>It was left</sup> however to Metternich's representative in London to put the case more succinctly in a report to his chief. "The public here of course look on the question as one of liberalism, but they are not prepared to see the liberty of Greece bought at the price of Russian supremacy in the Mediterranean."

Russia in the Mediterranean - that has been the fear of Britain. Consequently the Greeks alone had to struggle on. Even after the massacre of Chios in April 1822 when practically the whole population of the island were chopped up by Turkish soldiers and the Powers condemned in no unmitigated terms "such hateful barbarism" not only nothing was done to save the Greeks, but Britain and Austria combined to hold the Tsar back. It was only with the emergence of Canning into the lime light as Foreign Secretary in Britain (September 1822) that a different outlook in foreign affairs became discernible. Canning was the first to lift foreign policy from the palace's backstairs and ballyards, from the fashionable drawing rooms and the exclusive coteries of professional diplomats and intriguers and put so to speak on the street. He wanted to see his policy approved and known by the people - he wanted in a way not a narrow policy of the oligarchy but a broad English policy. But for that to be effective the enunciation of principle to be acted upon and abide by is <sup>imperative</sup> ~~essential~~. But on the long range aims of British policy cannot be expressed and short range one are governed by a series of contingencies and situations that arise, no binding principles can be evoked or enunciated. Nevertheless Canning made his policy up to a point conform to the then general Trends of Liberalism throughout the world. He ~~firmly~~ <sup>firmly</sup> ~~unflinchingly~~ <sup>unflinchingly</sup> President Monroe's declaration re the American content by that Anglo-American concert saved Latin America from becoming an appendage to European imperialism and made possible the independence of the South American states. Canning opposed vigorously the French intervention to destroy the Spanish revolution and dissociated England from the ~~Italy~~ influences of the Holy Alliance.

and of Metternich and became the ~~leading~~ <sup>upholder</sup> of constitutional liberty against arbitrary despotism the upholder of <sup>overdeveloped</sup> constitutional administration against arbitrary despotism.

In a period of developing industrialism and expanding markets Canning was one of the first to see the great possibilities ~~of~~ and the value of British trade with ~~the~~ <sup>is a free</sup> South America free from Spanish domination. He urged upon his cabinet colleagues that the American questions were out of all proportion more important to Britain than the European ones and "if we do not seize and turn them to our advantage in time we shall run the loss of an opportunity never to be recovered." He ~~categorically~~ <sup>opposed</sup> denied any suggestion for acquiring Territory in South America and he was determined to prevent the colonies from falling into French hands or to be perpetuated as appendages of Spain by becoming petty Bourbon monarchies.

The United States a young expanding and rising nation whose revolutionary birth was ~~about~~ <sup>so</sup> near enough to affect policy found itself in complete sympathy with the struggling South American Colonies. But by identifying ~~to~~ <sup>itself</sup> with Latin America the U.S.A. automatically was drawing near its ex-enemy and oppressor Britain. They ~~were~~ met on the same highway of self-interest. Canning <sup>for his part</sup> strove to win Washington towards some kind of concerted action ~~in~~ order to keep the French out of America and promised the assistance of the British navy in support of the United States. In December 1823 President Monroe made his famous declaration known to history as the Monroe doctrine that the American continents "are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for colonisation by any European Powers" and that any such attempt will be considered hostile. American foreign policy was born. By one risky jump, but with

with the full knowledge that the British navy was behind it the U.S. entered the circle of great Powers and assumed commitments which as had been demonstrated forty years later by the affair of Maximilian could not singly discharge. At that stage the Monroe doctrine was, from the standpoint of world affairs of academic interest only. What mattered was this assertion of American fraternalism which was to develop in the following century into patronage, and <sup>which was</sup> directed against Spain, France, Austria and Russia had the <sup>naval</sup> powers of Britain behind it. The U.S.A. became the ~~transport~~ voice of South American emancipation. Canning strove to balance and he did succeed in balancing what he termed the "ultra-liberalism" of his "Yankee co-operators" and the "utter despotism" of the European Allies in which King George of England was included to forge ahead. Bowed by influential City merchants who were seeing great prospects for great wealth in South America he succeeded in laying the foundations of South American independence without substituting for Spanish domination U.S. Tutelage.

The "legitimist" Powers were absolutely opposed to these moves but could do nothing because in extra European questions where the navy could have a say they were at a disadvantage towards England. Monroe's doctrine, the ~~begin~~ first glimmer of Anglo-American friendship, meant also that Britain had nothing to fear from her north-American flank.

British policy in South America during the 1820's was forward looking, imaginative, courageous and firm. It was guided by self-interest but it was serving fair ends. It was not bedeviled by European balance-of-power concepts and fears neither was it weighed down by traditional enmities and prejudices.

But when we turn from the question of South America to the question of Greece - then in revolt - we find British policy, ~~groping~~ not clear and direct but groping, cautious, contradictory, using the yardstick of expediency to measure its principle and basing its decisions on the shifting sands of power relationship. Yet there was no gainsaying the justice of the Greek case. If it was right for the Spanish colonists, to demand their independence from their mother country how more right were the Greeks, an ancient and glorious nation, to fight for their liberty against their Turkish conquerors, who were their religious enemies, their political oppressors and their economic bloodsuckers.

Cynics like Metternich and his alter ego Gutzkow or narrow, <sup>so</sup> pedants like Castlereagh might deny the right of the Greeks to freedom revolt against their overlords but nobody could deny them the right to freedom.

British policy was confused. Castlereagh dovetailed his Greek policy to that of Metternich and although he made one or two tentative steps towards formulating a British policy towards Greece he did not succeed to do so. This was the more necessary for him to do as the Greek problem was assisting in the breakup of the Holy Alliance. Tsar Alexander found himself between the devil of his sympathies with the Orthodox Christians of the East and deep sea of his abhorrence for revolutions was hesitating. But the repressive savagery of the Turks against <sup>the Greeks</sup> compelled Alexander to break off diplomatic relations and he was prevented from marching against Turkey by the combined pressure of Britain and Austria. And the Tsar's 100,000 strong army along the banks of the Pruth and ready to invade the Ottoman Empire from <sup>the north</sup> remained idle.

Canning approached the Greek question from the standpoint that nothing can be done, irrespective of what the Greeks might have to go through that might assist the Russians by weakening the Ottoman Empire.

He remained inactive. But not <sup>for</sup> long. The tide of popular feeling consequently ~~was~~ decided to follow ~~rather than Russian policy~~ was turning in favour of Greeks. In Britain and France societies were formed in support of the Greek revolution. "Hellas" became fashionable. To be ~~against~~ It was the "thing" with British whigs and French intellectuals. The former detractors were shamed before the spectacle of a small nation battling courageously against the might of a great Empire inexorably determined to win freedom or perish. Byron sang his recantation. In 1813 he broadcast to the world "Tis Greece but living Greece no more! Ten years later he wrote "Where Greece was - No! she is still in Greece once more", and he went there to give his services and to die. The resurrection of "Hellas" was sung throughout civilised Europe. Civilised governments remained apathetic. The Greek committee in London led by such men as Lord Erskine, Sir James Mackintosh and Lord John Russell was very active.

But ~~the merits~~ of the Greek cause could not be viewed on its merits by the Government of Europe. It flowed into the general stream of European convulsions and disappeared in the muddy estuaries of bogged conflict. ~~Czar~~ Alexander and the Russians were all for saving the Greeks and curbing the barbarities of the ~~late~~ Sultan. A joint Anglo-Russian ~~demarche~~ ~~she~~ at Constantinople ~~showing~~ backed by a show of force would have been enough to save the situation and ensure freedom for the Greeks. But the Allies, more conscious of their divisions <sup>from their obligation to humanity</sup> could not agree to act in concert. And Greece was sacrificed on the altar of Anglo-Russian antagonism.

Canning went a bit further than his predecessors but not very far. He recognised the Greeks as belligerents which represented a great moral victory for the revolutionaries and on the practical side two loans one of £2,000,000 and the other of £800,000 at 5 per cent <sup>were</sup> subscribed. The



the first at 59 and the other at 55½ per cent. Thus Britain secured a stake in Greek affairs.

That was all at one moment. Just a premium for future security. Few months later in January 1824 the Tsar Alexander was active on behalf of the Greek Christians proposed a special congress for the settlement of Greek affairs. He suggested a plan which while it would have forbidden the Turks to rule over Christian people would have still kept the Greeks proposed autonomous Greek regions, which were to comprise Epirus, Thessaly, Attica, the Morea, Crete and the Aegean Archipelago, tributaries to the Sultan as full independence might serve as the basis for fresh revolutionary efforts. The Tsar's scheme had the drawback that it was not contemplating full independence, (but as <sup>the</sup> Cretan question proved at the close of the century autonomy could have been a big step to independence) but had the inestimable advantage of placing under Greek rule Greek areas that did not become parts of Greece till 1913. The Western powers, Britain and France saw in the Tsar's scheme only a trap, as a means of creating Russian vassals in the Balkans. Canning refused to take part in any negotiations over Greece in case his actions would be interpreted as hostile to the Ottoman <sup>Empire</sup> which British policy wanted strengthened as a barrier against Russia.

Canning although not ~~unfriendly~~ <sup>out of sympathy</sup> with the Greeks felt he could do nothing against the Turks.

And the tragedy moved on. The Greeks could not, by their own unaided efforts win <sup>their</sup> independence and the Turks could not reimpose their authority. The Greek revolution entered the stage of carnage.

The tortuous British policy of the following years was a dexterous compromise between <sup>the policy of</sup> not weakening Turkey and the fear of not appearing willing to abandon the Greeks to Total

extinction.

"I believe and fear - said the Duke of Wellington - that no power in Europe except ourselves and France can prevent the establishment of Greek independence"

Possibly no other case in history affords such eloquent condemnation of big power politics of balance practiced at the expense of small nations. And in this case the principal culprits were the western powers who wanted the preservation of Turkey, the only two powers according to Wellington who could prevent Greece from becoming free.

Thus Greece had to struggle on. The world heard of the siege and the hecatomb of Missolonghi. Of the total war waged by ~~Imbrahim's~~ Egyptian forces against the inhabitants of the Peloponnese and who aspire to repeat in Morea the salutary triumph of the Romans against the Carthaginians. But the world began to stir anew. The Americans and president Monroe showed their unmistakable sympathy for the Greeks. The French, feeling that <sup>nothing</sup> that could be done could reestablish the status quo <sup>in the Levant</sup> were ~~indirectly~~ changing their policy and began indirectly to assist the Greeks hoping to place a French prince on the Greek throne.

At last in England the prime-minister Liverpool was informed by his Foreign Secretary that the Turkish Empire in Europe is bound to break up and it "would be highly inexpedient that Russia, Austria and France should have a pretence to agree among themselves" as to what is going to happen replace it without Britain taking a part in it.

The alternative to upholding Turkey was its dismemberment. Facts and not principles led to this and eventually after prolonged negotiations some kind of concerted <sup>policy</sup> ~~action~~ was adopted among Great Britain France and Russia which eventually led to Navarino and the sinking of the entire Turco-Egyptian Fleet.

Navarino <sup>represented</sup> ~~was~~ a coup de grace to the Egyptian Fleet and general Turco-Egyptian power in the morea, but it did not