

no more than an appendage of the various general staffs of the world preparing for, or already participating in, the new slaughter now in progress.

Continental planning will not help either. It will only make it possible to really prepare for the struggle of continents against continents. A unified Europe does not mean a better world economy; it means only the opportunity for a capitalistic Europe to fight its American adversary efficiently. It means no more than the continuation of the present war or the initiation of another one. Those well-meaning people who today seem to see the solution of all the troubles of the world in a United States of Europe, under either German or English dominance, are only the first earnest advocates for the coming war of the hemispheres.

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Without this excursion into some of the fundamental capitalistic contradictions in their present-day appearance, most dramatically displayed by the opposition of Europe to America, it is not possible to understand the full meaning of the present European struggles.* On the verge of the present war two alternatives were given to England. One was to "betray" America and "democracy" and line up with Hitler for the co-ordination of European economy in the interest of strong industrial nations, and for a trade-war against America and the rest of the undominated world. Such a policy would sooner or later have evolved into a new world war, but not immediately. Such a policy, however, would most certainly have led to the co-ordination of the so-called Western hemisphere under the control of the United States, to the loss of the British possessions in this hemisphere, the sacrifice of Canada and possibly even Australia, and to the cutting down of English world trade to an extent that could not possibly be compensated for by the otherwise quite cherished friendship with Hitler.

Such a line of development would have meant the expansion of the Munich agreement. By sacrificing Czechoslovakia, England simultaneously sacrificed Poland, and consequently the whole of the little entente, the French security mechanism, and finally France itself. Under such conditions, Russia faced a war with Germany, unless it bowed down to the German demands, which certainly would have favored German rather than Russian interests. For England to continue Munich could lead only to the absolute German hegemony in continental Europe, which would transform England itself into Hitler's vassal. This course of development Hitler was aspiring to when he begged for English friendship.

This friendship he could not obtain, for all he could offer England was a lackey position within the new German Empire; with a Europe under

German control, the threat of invasion would always hang like the sword of Damocles over Britain's head. At least he could not offer more for a long time to come and nowadays political decisions have to be made for immediate purposes. In an unruly world the far-sightedness of the celebrated empire builders, their patience in consistently following planned lines of conquest is excluded for the present generation of politicians. The rush for the riches of the world no longer involves light-footed runners; it has been "democratized" and now resembles a general rush to the bargain counters of history.

There then remained the other alternative: To prevent in her own interest, and in conformity with America's need, the assembling of any kind of political-economic combination which could serve the urgently needed but unattainable capitalistic continental policy designated to postpone collapse. It is not only that America needs Britain because of the latter's navy (because America has not been able, nor has she found it necessary in view of her friendship with England, to construct a two-ocean fleet), that the collaboration of the two powers was possible and necessary, but that they also have identical interests in Europe proper. This collaboration with England is not forced upon, nor willingly accepted as a windfall, by the United States to serve her defense needs, but is adopted consciously as one method of imperialists interference in the affairs of Europe. Not only the fear that Hitler, after capturing the English fleet, will hurt American imperialistic interests — leaving aside the nonsense of an invasion in which only idiots believe — dictates the friendship between England and America; but much more so does the American policy of keeping down the possible European competition, which might take on dangerous proportions in the event of the realization of a centralized European economy, or a unified political activity.

It is often said that Wilson was extremely disappointed in the results of Versailles. But there was no reason for it. In politics one must always be two-faced; in bargaining as in poker one must not betray his own feelings. It is quite conceivable however that Wilson was not really aware of what he was doing when he proclaimed and insisted upon the right of small nations for their national independence. The principle of self-determination, of course, was never practised by America south of the Rio Grande, but for Europe to oppose it was a sin against the highest moral of democracy. Just as little as Wilson might have known what really was behind his abstract concepts did the Kaiser, letting others fight for the glory of the greater Germany, know in 1914 that in actuality the first world war was a struggle against American world-rule and for the reconstruction of Europe. The maintenance of an impotent, broken-up Europe, was the sole content of all American policy in Europe. The loan policy too was essentially an instrument to that end. And all the while centralization celebrated triumphs in North America, Dollar Imperialism penetrated deeper and deeper into South America, and millionaires seemed to grow on trees.

*As this article serves as a sort of continuation of the paper "The War is Permanent", in the spring issue of *Living Marxism*, it does not deal with all phases of the problems of the present war, but emphasizes those neglected or understated in the previous article, that is, the position of America in the present war panorama. We assume that our readers are aware of the first paper. If not, the spring issue should be read in connection with this article.