

Signor Mussolini. It has had two results; it has stimulated counter-arming, and has turned Italy to strengthening her position by diplomatic means. Understandings, perhaps even alliances, have already been entered with Hungary and Bulgaria, and overtures made to Roumania. More significantly, Mussolini within the past two years has reiterated again and again that the Peace Treaties are not eternal and that they must be revised in the interests of peace and justice—a position even the German Government dare not take openly. While Italy would not be averse to a new territorial deal, this is perhaps secondary to the purpose of securing the emotional support of the German people. Recently the rise of Hitlerism has tended to cement the two peoples.

And a new ogre, Russia, has appeared on the fringes of the German camp. Until 1927 Russia was generally content to play the role of Ishmael in League affairs. In that year the Soviets entered League activities by attending the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament at Geneva. The reasons were perhaps twofold—credits and security, the latter of which concerns us here. Bolshevik leaders seem generally convinced that war between Communism and Capitalism is inevitable. Marx predicted it; *ergo* it must be. Yet despite such superficial preparation as a well-drilled and equipped army, the Bolshevik Government knows well that at present war with any of the Great Powers would be disastrous, because of the immature industrial organization of Soviet Russia as compared with other industrialized countries. War might, indeed, mean revolution at home, hence their desire to stave off the “inevitable” war as long as possible. Yet the armed ring of French allies along the borders of Russia and their anti-Communist policies seem a menace to Russian security, the more so in Russian eyes because these states are satellites of capitalistic, bourgeois France. And on many points Russia finds herself in opposition to the French system of Europe and in substantial agreement with Germany and Italy. Indeed, a *rapprochement* between Russia and Germany was part of Stresemann’s policy of advancing diplomatically on both fronts at the same time. Thus Locarno was balanced by a trade agreement with Russia, and the entry of Germany into the League by a security pact with Russia, which was supplemented in 1929 by provision for settling peaceably all disputes between the two countries.

Nor is Italy outside the picture. A trade agreement between Russia and Italy has been in existence since 1924, and a Russian Naval Mission actually visited Italy in 1930. Omens of a probable German-Russian-Italian *bloc* are becoming increasingly evident.