

the Soviet Government would seem to have learnt the lesson from this war that Anglo-Soviet relations are not a party question in Britain and that it is not therefore necessary nor indeed advisable for them to play at the dangerous game of interference in our internal politics in order to ensure a Government well-disposed to the Soviet Union.

13. As regards the more distant future, the major question concerning the Soviet Union's world position is whether she will concentrate her energies primarily in the east or in the west, or whether, for the first time in Russian history, she has become sufficiently strong to look both ways at once. The experiences of this war provide no answer to this question, for although Russia has been saved by the development of her resources in Asia she was placed in mortal danger by the fact that she had not sufficiently assured her position in Europe. By recovering and, indeed, in places extending, the western frontiers of Tsarist Russia, by developing a system of friendly allied States on her western borders, and finally by eliminating Germany as a potential aggressor, the Soviet Union can reasonably count upon preventing any repetition of the dangers of 1941. She has certainly come back as a major European Power, and incidentally as a European Power no longer balanced by a strong Germany, nor even by the old Austro-Hungarian empire. She is unlikely, on grounds of security and ideology alike, to disinterest herself in anything which goes on in Europe, even as far afield as Portugal. All the present indications are, indeed, that she is almost exclusively preoccupied with European affairs. But the whole logic of Russian history, the great industrial development which is proceeding apace beyond the Urals, the success of Russia, and of Soviet Russia in particular, in handling the more backward Asiatic races, and finally the general shift of world power from the Atlantic to the Pacific, will compel the Soviet Union to look more and more to the east. It therefore seems probable that, although Russia is stronger than at any previous period in her history, and is therefore perhaps capable, as she has never been before, of conducting at one and the same time an eastern and a western policy, she will increasingly concentrate on the east, provided that she is satisfied regarding the future security of her western frontiers.

14. This brings us back, as always, to the immediate problem of Germany. It is the German menace which brought together Britain and the Soviet Union, and made possible the Anglo-Soviet alliance. Despite all our disappointments and setbacks, the alliance has more than justified itself in the military sense. It was also specially framed to prevent any revival of the German menace. Therefore, despite the complete defeat of Germany, the German problem will either remain a bond of unity or become the main bone of contention between our two countries. If the Soviet Government were confident that the German menace had been finally removed, they might set less store upon their relations with Britain in the future. But there are no signs that the Soviet rulers regard the German problem as a thing of the past. Russia has suffered too much and too recently to take any risks. Her present interest in Allied policy towards Germany in all its aspects, her determination that war criminals and all Germans who have had any association with the Nazi régime shall be punished, and that not only Germany but the whole of Europe shall be completely cleansed of fascism, are sufficient evidence of continued Russian preoccupation with the German problem. It is, therefore, on the handling of this problem that our future relations will primarily depend. It is fortunately a problem where British and Russian interests are fundamentally the same.

15. The Anglo-Soviet alliance is, however, more than a simple reinsurance treaty against Germany. It is also the only diplomatic instrument directly affecting the relationships between the three major Powers. As such it is at present the main guarantee of the Soviet Union's relations with the western democratic world. There is little doubt that the Soviet Union desires to maintain the present system of three-Power consultations and hegemony at all events until she has been satisfied by practical experience that the new world organisation will prove more reliable than the old League. In fact, one of the few cheerful features of international affairs in recent weeks has been the importance attributed in the Soviet Union to M. Molotov's consultations in the United States of America with you and with Mr. Stettinius, and the genuine interest taken in the proceedings at San Francisco. Her relations with the United States of America undoubtedly cause the Soviet Union more anxious thought than those with Britain. She hopes for American assistance and fears the strength and possible hostility of America. She certainly does not intend to allow Britain to act as an intermediary between her and the United States of America. Nor does she expect any early loosening in the intimate ties uniting us with America. But