

# The “Great Game”: Eurasia and the History of War

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## The History of War

History is often self-repeating. Those who are oblivious to the lessons of history are, by virtue of ignorance, doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Samuel P. Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations,” is an outright camouflage, an ideological instrument used to reach geo-political objectives. This “conflict notion” is part of a broad strategy which has been used throughout history to divide, conquer, and rule.

By Huntington’s definitions, nine diverse civilizations co-inhabit Eurasia; establishing conflict between them is a means towards controlling them and eventually absorbing them in the Spencerian sense of war and the social evolution of nation-states and societies, as defined by British sociologist Herbert Spencer.

Is humanity witness once again to a gradual march towards a large-scale international war like the Second World War, as Vladimir Putin has warned the Russian people? Or is fear being used to push forward otherwise unacceptable global economic policies?

If the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the dual-thrones of Austria and Hungary (the Austro-Hungarian Empire), on June 28, 1914 was the cause of the First World War why then was there talk of a major war throughout Europe in 1905?

It was on the eve of the First World War that radical changes were made to the banking system in the U.S. and on the eve of the Second World War that otherwise unpopular economic reforms were implemented in Britain. War allows otherwise unpopular measures to be accepted by domestic populations or gives them stealthy means for execution.

### **Mackinder’s Warnings: Divide the Continentals (Eurasians)**

Mackinder warned British strategists about preventing Eurasian unification:

“What if the Great Continent, the whole World-Island [Africa and Eurasia] or a large part of it [e.g., Russia, China, Iran, and India] were at some future time to become a single and united base of sea-power? Would not the other insular bases [e.g., Britain, the U.S., and Japan] be outbuilt [*sic*] as regards [to] ships and outmanned as regards [to] seamen?” [1]

Mackinder also went on to instruct Britain to prevent this unification from ever happening: a policy of balkanization was adopted by London, with a strategic aim of preventing Eurasian unification.

In addition, Mackinder also warned about the large populations of Eurasia. Mackinder argued that lasting empires were based on manpower:

“[The] vast Saracen [Arab] design of a northward and southward Dominion of Camel-men crossed by a westward and eastward Dominion of Shipmen was vitiated by one fatal defect; it lacked in its Arabian base the necessary man-power to make it good. But no student of the realities about which must turn the strategical thought of any government aspiring to world-power can afford to lose sight of the warning thus given by History.” [2]

Mackinder also makes the same observation about the short-lived empires of the peoples' of the Eurasian steppes, such as the Mongols:

“When the Russian Cossacks first policed the steppes at the close of the Middle Ages, a great revolution was effected, for the Tartars, like the Arabs, had lacked the necessary man-power upon which to found a lasting Empire, but behind the Cossacks were the Russian ploughman, who have to-day [1905] grown to be a people of a hundred millions on the fertile plains of the Black and Baltic Seas.” [3]

Population is clearly an important geo-strategic issue. Under this scheme Russia, China, and India are viewed as threats. This is also why the U.S. will never give up its nuclear weapons. Aside from military superiority and nuclear weapons, how can the generally less populated NATO states keep a balance of power with such heavily populated states? It should also be noted that one of the reasons for European conquests and colonial expansion was also the fact that, at the time, European countries had (in relative terms) large populations.

Dividing, balkanizing, and finlandizing Eurasia, from Eastern Europe and the former U.S.S.R. to the Middle East and India, is consistent with these historical objectives outlined by Britain prior to the First World War. This is one of the reasons why Britain, France, and America gave refuge prior to World War I to various separatist movements from within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and Czarist Russia. Today, the U.S. and Britain are harbouring similar political groups against Iran, Sudan, Turkey, Russia, Serbia, China, and India. Nothing has changed. Only today Zbigniew Brzezinski makes these warnings and not Halford Mackinder.

### **Learning from History: The Prevention of the German Ostbewegung**

In 1848, at St. Paul's Church in Frankfurt there was an attempt to create a single and large Central-Eastern European, German-dominated nation. This project did not move forward until half a century later, because of the opposition of the Habsburg Dynasty and the rivalry between Prussia and Austria.

Britain feared the German *Drang nach Osten*, the “drive to the East,” or the *Ostbewegung* or “eastward movement.”

For the most part this eastward movement, which started in 1200 with the extension of long distance trade, was not part of any German imperial ambitions. [4] The fear in British circles was that some form of unification between the two dominant powers in the Eurasian Heartland, namely Germany and Russia would occur. The fear in the Twenty-First Century is the unification of Russia, China, India, and Iran.

Before the First World War, British strategists believed that Germany was making important inroads towards becoming a global superpower. All that was required to elevate Germany

was industrial control over Russia and the Ottoman Empire, which was well underway. Germany was already taking over British markets and threatening the U.S. and Britain economically.

Historically, Eastern Europe has been sandwiched between two great nations, Germany and Russia. After the Napoleonic era and up until the First World War, Eastern Europe was dominated by the Russians and then the Germans. Historically, British strategy was aimed at weakening Czarist Russia until Germany replaced Russia as the dominant power in Eastern Europe. This is one of the reasons why Britain and France supported the Ottoman Turks in their wars against the Russians.

German influence in Eastern Europe was secured under a partnership between the Hungarians (Magyars) and Austrians. German influence had also been growing economically, politically, and industrially under the Ottoman Turks in the Middle East. In Czarist Russia, before the First World War, German influence was politically and economically significant. The Russian capital, St. Petersburg, was in a Germanized area of the Russian Czarism and many Russian aristocrats and nobles were Germanized and German speaking.

German industrial colonies or settlements were also established in the Ukraine and the Caucasus within the territory of Czarist Russia. Similarly German settlements were established in the Levant, within the territory of the Ottoman Turks. The *Ostbewegung* was more about economics and a united and strong Eurasian industrial base under the control of Germany than it was about the myth of German colonization of all Eurasia.

However, Germany's means of economic expansion did change about half a century later with the rise of Adolph Hitler in Berlin, who tried to force a German-driven form of globalization in Eurasia by military means. Is this being repeated by those who hold power in Washington, D.C. and London?

### **A Lesson from History: Playing the Russians and the Germans in War**

Economics and industrial competition was the real key behind the tensions that resulted in the First World War. Mackinder also states this. In reality the truth of the matter was that the Germans were from an economic standpoint expanding eastwards. The German demographic push to the East was also over exaggerated. Historically, in many cases Germans were invited as merchants and craftsmen by Eastern European states, such as Bohemia and Hungary, before the unification of Germany under Prince Otto von Bismarck the Prime Minister of Prussia.

Mackinder and others in Britain saw this all as part of a gradual trend that would unify the Eurasian Heartland under a single and powerful player.

The key to stopping the emergence of a single powerful player in the Heartland was to play the Germans against the Russians:

“In East Europe there are also two principle elements, the Teutonic [German] and the Slavonic, but no equilibrium has been established between them as between the Romance [Latin-based speaking] and Teutonic elements of West Europe. The key to the whole situation in East Europe — and it is a fact which cannot be laid to heart at the present moment — is the German claim to dominance over the Slavs. Vienna and Berlin, just beyond

the boundary of West Europe, stand already within territory that was Slav in the earlier Middle Ages; they represent the first step of the German out of his native country as a conqueror eastward.” [5]

In the eyes of Britain, playing the Russians and the Germans against one another was vital to keeping the Continentals from uniting.

### **The Roots of an Anglo-American Compact**

The British and the U.S. were clearly trying to weaken both Germany and Czarist Russia. This is evident from British and American support for the Japanese “when it [meaning Britain] kept the [naval] ring round the Russo-Japanese War,” in 1904 to 1905. [6]

By the time of the Russo-Japanese War the Anglo-American alliance had already formed between the U.S. and Britain as Mackinder notes:

“Those events began some twenty years ago [in 1898] with three great victories won by the British fleet without the firing of a gun. The first was at Manila [in the Philippines], in the Pacific Ocean, when a German squadron threatened to intervene to protect a Spanish squadron [in the Spanish-American War], which was defeated by an American squadron, and a British squadron stood by the Americans.”[7]

In Mackinder’s words “So was the first step taken towards the reconciliation of British and American hearts.” [8] This was also the point in history where the U.S. became a major imperialist power.

It should also be noted that the Spanish-American War is believed by some historians to have been started under a false pretext. The U.S. government started the war, blaming the Spanish for the sinking of the U.S.S. Maine in Cuba, from whence comes the quote that was used to build American public support against the Spanish: “*Remember the Maine!*”

### **The Second World War: Playing the Soviets against the Germans**

The strategy of playing the main players in Eurasia against one another continued into the Second World War. Germany, France, and the Soviet Union were played against one another just as Germany, Czarist Russia, and the Ottoman Empire were before the First World War.

This is evident from the fact that Britain and France only declared war on Germany when both Germany and the U.S.S.R. invaded Poland in 1939. The Locarno Pacts and Hoare-Laval Plan were used by the British government to push the Germans eastward to confront the Soviets by neutralizing France and allowing Germany to militarize, while appeasement under Neville Chamberlain was a calculated move aimed at liquidating any states between Germany and the Soviet Union and establishing a common German-Soviet border. [9]

Both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany were aware of Anglo-American policy. Both countries signed a non-aggression pact prior to the Second World War, largely in response to the Anglo-American stance. In the end it was because of Soviet and German distrust for one another that the Soviet-German alliance collapsed. Presently, the U.S. government is using the same strategies in regards to Russia, China, Iran, India, and other Eurasian players.

### **The Roots of Strategic Balkanization: Preventing the Unification of Eurasia**

Mackinder stipulated that the Eurasian Heartland started in Eastern Europe and on the frontiers of Germany. It was from Eastern Europe that a foothold could be established for entrance into the Eurasian interior.

London's greatest fear, until the division of Austria-Hungary and a creation of a buffer zone between the Germans and the Russians with the emergence of several new states after 1918, was the unification of the Germans and the Slavs as a single Eurasian entity.

British balkanization policy was a synergy of colonial policy, power politics, economics, and historical observation.

Strategic balkanization probably came to maturity when Italy and Germany became unified nation-states and the British realized the dangers that centralized and strong states in Europe could pose. Once again, economics was a driving force. Before this period balkanization was used for colonial means. After the formation, or rather unification, of Germany and Italy balkanization also became a means to neutralize potential British rivals.

František Palacký, the famous Czech historian, is quoted as stating: "If Austria [meaning the Habsburg or Austro-Hungarian Empire] did not exist, it would be necessary to create her, in the interests of humanity itself."

This is a noteworthy statement because Palacký was a Slav, who defended the Austro-Hungarian Empire due to its multi-ethnic characteristics.

The Habsburg Empire was a regional synthesis between the Germans, the Hungarians (Magyar), and the Slavs. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, like the former Yugoslavia that would spring from its ashes, was also religiously diverse. Christians, Jews, and Muslims lived within its borders and in 1912 Islam became a state religion, alongside the Roman Catholic denomination of Christianity. The British feared that this model under the leadership of German industrial might could be extended to Germany, Austria-Hungary and Czarist Russia, thereby creating a powerful German-Slavic political entity in the Eurasian Heartland. [10] The synthesis was already underway, with the inclusion of the Ottoman Empire, until the First World War stopped it. As already stated this process was part of a historical fusion. Austria-Hungary had to be dismantled in the eyes of London, with a view to obstructing any unification process between the Continentals.

For these reasons separatist nationalist movements were utilized and manipulated. Czechoslovak leaders, such as Milan Rastislav Štefánik, fought for the French and British during the First World War. It should also be noted that in September 1918, the U.S. government recognized Czechoslovakia before it was even created and that the Pittsburgh Agreement, which paved the way for breaking up the Austro-Hungarian Empire and creating Czechoslovakia, was signed in Pennsylvania with the support of the British and U.S. governments. Three "Czecho-Slovak" legions were also formed to fight Germany and the Austro-Hungarians by Britain and France in the First World War.

### **Redrawing Eastern Europe and the Middle East: The Template for Iraq**

Since the First World War instability has been continuously fueled from Kosovo in the Balkans to the province of Xinjiang, which constitutes China's Western frontier. This is an important fact that manifests itself from events such as the division of India to the division of Yugoslavia.

The rationale for establishing new states in Eastern Europe is also explained by Mackinder:

“Securely independent the Polish and Bohemian [the Czech and Slovak] nations cannot be unless as the apex of a broad wedge of independence, extending from the Adriatic and Black Seas to the Baltic; but seven independent States, with a total of more than sixty million people, traversed by railways linking them securely with one another, and having access through the Adriatic, Black, and Baltic Seas with the [Atlantic] Ocean, will together effectively balance the Germans of Prussia [meaning Germany] and Austria, and nothing less will suffice for that purpose.” [11]

Although Bohemia is properly a reference to the Czechs, in this case Mackinder is using it to mean both the Czechs and the Slovaks or Czechoslovakia.

By 1914, the Germans had already secured significant inroads into the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire had to be dismantled too. However, in the eyes of British strategists, Russia and Germany were the two main long-term opponents. To undermine the process of unification between the Germans and Russians, a shatter-belt region had to be created in Eastern Europe between Germany and Russia.

After the First World War, Anglo-American planners projected the replacement of Germany by the Soviet Union, the player that emerged from the ashes of Czarist Russia, as the most powerful player in Eurasia. Creating a shatter-belt zone around the western portion of the Soviet Union from the Baltic to the Balkans and the Persian Gulf became a strategic objective for the British. This is one of the reasons why so many new nations were created in Eastern Europe and the Middle East after the First World War and again in Eastern Europe and Central Asia after the Cold War.

As Anglo-American strategists started looking at global strategy in a holistic view they adopted the concept of trans-continental encirclement.

The Rimland is the concept of a geographic area adjacent or circling the Eurasian “Heartland.” Western Europe, Central Europe, the Middle East, the Indian sub-continent, Southeast Asia, and the Far East comprise this area from Western Eurasia to Eastern Eurasia. Nicholas Spykman’s Rimland helps give an objective and historical context to the present zones of conflict encircling Russia, China, and Iran that start from the Balkans, the Kurdish areas of the Middle East, Iraq, Caucasia, and go through NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan, Kashmir, Indo-China, and finish in the Korean Peninsula. The geographic locations of these areas say much as to which countries or players are disturbed.

Iraq is being redrawn in a step by step fashion, but firstly though its political landscape and a system of soft federalism. This holistic concept is also getting stronger and the existence of European and Asiatic missile shield projects are connected to this approach as is the brinkmanship to create an American-dominated global military alliance.

### **The Pirenne Thesis**

In his book, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, Belgian historian Henri Pirenne, states that Charlemagne and the Frankish Empire would never have existed if it were not for the period of Arab expansion in the Mediterranean region. Henri Pirenne became known for his thesis that the Germanic barbarians, such as the Franks and Goths, that were traditionally credited by historians for the fall of the Western Roman Empire in reality merged

themselves with the Western Roman Empire and that the economic and institutional templates of Western Rome continued and stayed intact. Pirenne challenged the traditional historic narrative that the Germanic barbarians were the reason for the decline of Western Rome.

Pirenne seems correct in the basis of his theory. In most cases Western Roman ways were maintained by the Germanic kingdoms. The facts that the Franks, a Germanic people, adopted Latin (which eventually evolved into French over time) as their language or that the Roman Church stayed intact as an important societal institution supports his observations and thesis.

The decline of Rome is more probably based on an end to an economy based on imperial expansion, slavery, over-militarization, and political corruption as its main factors. The decline of the Western European economy was not because the Arabs were unwilling to continue trade with Western Europe, but because of militarism and the de-centralization that went with it, hand-in-hand; the end result being European feudalism. Is this process repeating itself today?

To Pirenne, it was clear that the economic framework of the Roman Empire, Western and Eastern (Byzantine), was fixed around the economy and trade of the Mediterranean Sea. Western Rome only transformed from a politically centralized entity to a network of politically separate kingdoms and states, but with the same economic framework, fixed on the Mediterranean, intact.

Pirenne theorized that the real decline in the Western Roman entity was brought about by the rapid expansion of the Arabs. The Levant, Egypt, various Mediterranean islands, portions of Anatolia (Asia Minor), Spain, Portugal, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, which were all Mediterranean regions, were all incorporated within the vast cosmopolitan realm of the Arabs. According to Pirenne, the reason that this decline was brought about was the cut in ties between the integrated economies of most of the Mediterranean and Western Europe that was brought about by the Arabs. Western Europe effectively degenerated into a marginalized economic hinterland.

Another factor that should be added to Pirenne's theory about the economic decline of Western Europe after the fall of Rome was that Eastern Rome (Byzantium) also diverted its trade, or reduced its level, from Western Europe due to economic realities brought about by the Arab expansion in the Mediterranean. Also in part the dissolved economic links between Western Europe and the Byzantines was because of the differences and rivalry between the Western Christian Church and the Eastern Christian Church that developed with time. Animosity also existed between the authorities in Constantinople and Western Europe and further effected economic ties. These tensions were also in many cases economic in origin.

The Pirenne Thesis states that Western Europe was transformed into a series of farm-based economies, which slowly gave rise to European feudalism, due to Arab expansion. Raw resources were being exported outwards with little imports to Western Europe, whereas before items and resources such as valuable metals and Egyptian papyrus would enter Western Europe. This was because the economy of Western Europe was cut off from the rest of the globe. The European voyages of discovery that occur later can also be traced to this period as a means to reverse this process.

## **The Eurasians Strike Back: The New Silk Road**

Today, across Eurasia there is a renewed drive at economic and socio-political cooperation and integration. The Silk Road is being revived. Iran, Russia, and China are the most important forces in this project. Kazakhstan is also playing a very important role. Railway networks, transport corridors, electric grids, and various forms of infrastructure are being developed, linked, and built in an effort to integrate Eurasia.

Central Asia is set to become the mid-axis and the heartland of a series of north-south and west-east corridors. A strategic triangle between Russia, Iran, and China will set the border for a Eurasian trade zone that can eventually bring Africa and chunks of Europe into its orbit. Latin America has already anticipated this shift and is preparing to redirect part of its trade from the U.S. and E.U. towards this area.

China is a global centre of labour while Russia, Iran, and Central Asia hold 15% or more of global oil reserves and 50% of the world's reserves of natural gas. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) also holds half the planet's estimated population. Together these areas also have vast and important markets.

Eurasia is coming together in a wave of regional integration and cross-border trade. Russia and Kazakhstan have also made proposals for the eventual formation of a Eurasian Union. The customs union established between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan is a step towards this Eurasian Union. Iran has also made proposals for the formation of a so-called Islamic Union between nations with Muslim populations.

This is all effectively a re-introduction of the Pirenne Thesis in a modern context. In this second round of the Pirenne cycle it is the trade-dependent economies of Western Europe and the U.S., the players of the Eurasian periphery and the maritime realms, that are under threat of being marginalized like the former areas of Western Rome were during the Arab expansion in the Mediterranean. The Eurasians are striking back; they realize that it is not them who needs the U.S. or E.U., but the other way around.

### **A Mediterranean Union and an Islamic Union: The West versus the Eurasian Heartland**

Reflecting on the Pirenne Thesis, it is also not historically ironic that the E.U. is pushing for the establishment of a Mediterranean Union, which would economically merge the nations of the Mediterranean and E.U. together with both Israel and Turkey playing key roles. This is a Western answer to the growing strength and cohesion in the Eurasian Heartland between Russia, Iran, and China.

To counter this drive Russia, China, and Iran have been courting the nations of the Mediterranean. In fact after Nicholas Sarkozy's trip to Algeria, as part of a tour to promote the creation of a Mediterranean Union, an Iranian delegation led by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad arrived with a counter-proposal for the creation of an alternative bloc; this was what the Iranians called an Islamic Union.

The Islamic Union is essentially a rival economic project to the Mediterranean Union in the Mediterranean lands of North Africa and the Middle East, rather than the institutionalization of Islam within any of these states. Undoubtedly, the Iranian proposal must have had some backdoor support from Moscow. It is more than likely that the Islamic Union will be linked in some form to the Eurasian Union proposed by Russia and Kazakhstan. These regional blocs can be overlapping and countries like Iran can hypothetically belong to the Eurasian



Union and the Islamic Union, just as how France and Italy could belong to the E.U. and the proposed Mediterranean Union. This is also part of the brinkmanship of turning several regions into supranational entities and ultimately into super-national entities that would merge with like entities.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict and the so-called Mid-East Peace Process, essentially including the Arab Peace Initiative proposed by Saudi Arabia in 2002, are tied to the joint American-E.U. economic project that is the Mediterranean Union, which will see the integration of the economies of the Arab World with that of Israel in a network of regionalized economic relations that will ultimately merge the economies of Europe, Israel, Turkey, and the Arab World. The Mediterranean Union is a project that was drafted years before the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. The deep ties between Turkey and Israel have been a preparatory step towards eventually establishing this Mediterranean Union with the participation and full involvement of Israel as one of its pillars.

### **The Bloc Concept and Regionalization: Orwellian Showdown between Oceania and Eurasia?**

The players of the Eurasian Heartland realize what is happening. Moreover, France and Germany, like India, are being courted by the players of the Eurasian Heartland to encourage them to de-link themselves from the Anglo-American axis. This is probably why the euro is not being targeted on international currency markets by Iran, Russia, Venezuela, and China in the same way as the U.S. dollar. Or is this because America is the immediate threat to these countries?

The Eurasians are slowly prying the hold of Western financial centres on global transactions. The establishment of a petro-ruble system in Russia and the republics of the former U.S.S.R., as well as the establishment of an international Iranian energy bourse on Kish Island are part of this trend.

However, it seems too late to end the concord between the Franco-German and Anglo-American sides. Franco-German interests appear to have become entrenched with Anglo-American interests. A deal has been reached to eventually merge, with regard to trading systems, the economies of the E.U. and North America that will guarantee the interests of Britain, the U.S., France, and Germany.[12] This deal will also allow the four major powers within the so-called Western World to challenge the Eurasian Heartland as it merges into a single powerful bloc or player.

Whenever a dominate player has started to emerge in the Eurasian Heartland there have historically been wars fought — even the fear of the emergence of one has been the cause of conflict — to prevent the ascendancy of such a power or player. These different stages of regionalism and regionalized mergers mean several things, but what this can mean in Orwellian terms is that Oceania and Eurasia are preparing to challenge one another. [13]

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### **NOTES**

This article is a continuation of *The Sino-Russian Alliance: Challenging America's Ambitions in Eurasia* ([Nazemroaya, 26.08.2007](#)) and lightly touches on the concept of the Mediterranean Union, which is covered in an article yet to be released.

[1] Halford John Mackinder, Chap. 3 (*The Seaman's Point of View*), in *Democratic Ideals and Reality* (London, U.K.: *Constables and Company Ltd.*, 1919), p.91.

[2] *Ibid.*, Chap. 4 (*The Landman's Point of View*), p.121.

Note: This chapter in *Democratic Ideals and Reality* is based on an essay, *Man-power as a Measure of National and Imperial Strength*, that Mackinder wrote for the *National Review* (U.K.) in 1905. It should also be noted that Mackinder and various circles in London viewed the large populations of Germany, Austro-Hungary, and the Czarism of Russia as threats that should be addressed. If one reads the full works of Mackinder they will come to realize that he advocated for some form of Social Darwinism amongst nations, and saw democratic idealism as a subject that should be put aside to preserve the British imperial order. Mackinder even states that the commerce that the British enjoyed was due to the use of British guns and force (Chap. 5, pp.187-188).

[3] *Ibid.*, p.142.

[4] Lonnie R. Johnson, *Central Europe: Enemies, Neighbors, Friends*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, U.K.: *Oxford University Press*, 2002), pp. 37-42.

[5] Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals, Op. cit.*, Chap. 5 (*The Rivalry of Empires*), pp.160-161.

[6] *Ibid.*, Chap. 3, p.78.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp.77-78.

[8] *Ibid.*, p.78.

[9] Carroll Quigley, *The Anglo-American Establishment: From Rhodes to Cliveden* (San Pedro, California: *GSG & Associates Publishers*, 1981), pp. 233-235, 237-248, 253, 264-281, 285-302.

"...from 1920 to 1938 [the aims were] the same: to maintain the balance of power in Europe by building up Germany against France and [the Soviet Union]; to increase Britain's weight in that balance by aligning with her the Dominions [e.g., Australia and Canada] and the United States; to refuse any commitments (especially any commitments through the League of Nations, and above all any commitments to aid France) beyond those existing in 1919; to keep British freedom of action; to drive Germany eastward against [the Soviet Union] if either or both of these two powers became a threat to the peace [probably meaning economic strength] of Western Europe (p.240)."

"...the Locarno agreements guaranteed the frontier of Germany with France and Belgium with the powers of these three states plus Britain and Italy. In reality the agreements gave France nothing, while they gave Britain a veto over French fulfillment of her alliances with Poland and the Little Entente. The French accepted these deceptive documents for reason of internal politics (...) This trap [the Locarno agreements] consisted of several interlocking factors. In the first place, the agreements did not guarantee the German frontier and the demilitarized condition of the Rhineland against German actions, but against the actions of

either Germany or France. This, at one stroke, gave Britain the right to oppose any French action against Germany in support of her allies to the east of Germany. This meant that if Germany moved east against Czechoslovakia, Poland, and eventually [the Soviet Union], and if France attacked Germany's western frontier in support of Czechoslovakia or Poland, as her alliances bound her to do, Great Britain, Belgium, and Italy might be bound by the Locarno Pacts to come to the aid of Germany (p.264)."

"This event of March 1936, by which Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland, was the most crucial event in the whole history of appeasement. So long as the territory west of the Rhine and a strip fifty kilometers wide on the east bank of the river were demilitarized, as provided in the Treaty of Versailles and the Locarno Pacts, Hitler would never have dared to move against Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. He would not have dared because, with western Germany unfortified and denuded of German soldiers, France could have easily driven into the Ruhr industrial area and crippled Germany so that it would be impossible to go eastward. And by this date [1936], certain members of the Milner Group and of the British Conservative government had reached the fantastic idea that they could kill two birds with one stone by setting Germany and [the Soviet Union] against one another in Eastern Europe. In this way they felt that two enemies would stalemate one another, or that Germany would become satisfied with the oil of Rumania and the wheat of the Ukraine. It never occurred to anyone in a responsible position that Germany and [the Soviet Union] might make common cause, even temporarily, against the West. Even less did it occur to them that [the Soviet Union] might beat Germany and thus open all Central Europe to Bolshevism (p.265)."

"In order to carry out this plan of allowing Germany to drive eastward against [the Soviet Union], it was necessary to do three things: (1) to liquidate all the countries standing between Germany and Russia; (2) to prevent France from honoring her alliances with these countries [i.e., Czechoslovakia and Poland]; and (3) to hoodwink the [British] people into accepting this as a necessary, indeed, the only solution to the international problem. The Chamberlain group were so successful in all three of these things that they came within an ace of succeeding, and failed only because of the obstinacy of the Poles, the unseemly haste of Hitler, and the fact that at the eleventh hour the Milner Group realized the [geo-strategic] implications of their policy and tried to reverse it (p.266)."

"Four days later, Hitler announced Germany's rearmament, and ten days after that, Britain condoned the act by sending Sir John Simon on a state visit to Berlin. When France tried to counterbalance Germany's rearmament by bringing the Soviet Union into her eastern alliance system in May 1935, the British counteracted this by making the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 18 June 1935. This agreement, concluded by Simon, allowed Germany to build up to 35 percent of the size of the British Navy (and up to 100 percent in submarines). This was a deadly stab in the back of France, for it gave Germany a navy considerably larger than the French in the important categories of ships (capital ships and aircraft carriers), because France was bound by treaty to only 33 percent of Britain's; and France in addition, had a worldwide empire to protect and the unfriendly Italian Navy off her Mediterranean coast. This agreement put the French Atlantic coast so completely at the mercy of the German Navy that France became completely dependent on the British fleet for protection in this area (pp.269-270)."

"The liquidation of the countries between Germany and [the Soviet Union] could proceed as soon as the Rhineland was fortified, without fear on Germany's part that France would be able to attack her in the west while she was occupied in the east (p.272)."

“The countries marked for liquidation included Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, but did not include Greece and Turkey, since the [Milner] Group had no intention of allowing Germany to get down onto the Mediterranean ‘lifeline.’ Indeed, the purpose of the Hoare-Laval Plan of 1935, which wrecked the collective-security system by seeking to give most Ethiopia to Italy, was intended to bring an appeased Italy in position alongside [Britain], in order to block any movement of Germany southward rather than eastward [towards the Soviet Union] (p.273).”

[10] Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals*, *Op. cit.*, Chap. 5, pp.160-168.

[11] *Ibid.*, Chap. 6 (*The Freedom of Nations*), pp. 214-215.

[12] US and EU agree ‘single market,’ *British Broadcasting Corporation* (BBC), [April 30, 2007](#).

[13] Critical thinking should be applied to this last statement and the level of cooperation between both sides should be carefully examined.

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