

Great Britain's Foreign Policy To-day.

Bedales School
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What is Great Britain's policy in the Spanish affair; towards Italy, Germany, Russia, Japan today? What is its policy towards the League of Nations?

And so on.

In practical terms this means:

Why did Great Britain allow Japan to get hold of Manchuria?

Why did Great Britain not close the Suez Canal to Italy in order to prevent their invasion of Abyssinia?

propose

Why did Great Britain not ~~ANNOUNCE~~ an oil embargo against Mussolini?

Why did she allow Germany and Italy to intervene in Spain?

Why did she not back up the League? Stop Germany, Italy and Japan from making this globe an extremely unsafe place to live in?

Why, in a word, did she fail to do all the things she failed to do? And do the things she actually did? If there was a reason for it, what was the reason? And if there was n't, why did she do it?

I. ~~Matter~~ : Japan.

Here we are at once up against Great Britain's secret weakness; it lies in the Pacific Ocean. Great Britain is too weak to stand up against Japan in Japan's home waters. She is not strong enough, and cannot be strong enough by herself. But even a combination of other powers could have made hardly a difference. i.e. with the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.

England was not able to fight Japan in her home waters. The U.S.A. were neither able nor willing to do so. Russia had no fleet at all in the East. Besides she was entirely occupied with her own economic work.

Does this mean that Sir John Simon was right to let the League down as he did in 1931/32? NO, for he could have put a break, a powerful break, on Japan without going to war over it, forcing Japan to spend ever so much more money. In fact he could have bankrupted Japan over this affair, instead of allowing her to have Manchuria on the cheap.

Out of this Japanese side of the matter two facts about foreign policy become clear:

No war with the U.S.A. !!!

keeping in with Japan against Soviet-Russia.

This is where the trouble starts. WHY?

II. Germany.

Because Hitler's threat to France and Russia brought these two countries together.

Now Hitler made Great Britain choose between herself and Russia.

Incidentally, one cannot complain of lack of influence and of power politics at the same time. a great power must choose. Why? Because if it ~~does not~~ does not, it is disregarded. Thus England was to try to be in a position to be able to choose either, for then it chose neither. But if it cannot choose either, it is disregarded by both. ^{need}

Now, England was unable to choose.

It could not go with Russia, on account of Japan.

It could not go against Russia on account of France. (and also because it could not really side with Germany: she is out for endless wars).

Thus Great Britain was paralysed; she was disregarded by both. Italy's chance. since Spring 1935

III. Italy.

Italy took advantage of this.

First, in Abyssinia,

Secondly, in Spain.

a/ Abyssinia.

Why was the Suez Canal not closed?

France had not the full backing of England against Hitler. She had made a pact with Mussolini in January 1935. So England could not rely on France (nor on Russia) and so there was some risk involved ^{in war}.

Was this right? NO. If Great Britain had foreseen what was coming in Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean, she would have given at that time the assurances to France which she has given since. The League Policy ought to have been ~~resolved~~ resolved at the time, the Suez Canal closed, and Italy put in her place.

~~Oil sanctions~~ Oil sanctions were in the same category.

The U.S.A. were extremely helpful. France was hesitant, because the League policy of Great Britain was completely new, and though sincere as far as it went, it did not go far enough. England had been refusing to make sanctions effective ever since the War. The English public in fact hardly knew what it means in 1935.

Additional reason. The diehards may have hoped that Mussolini could be stopped without risking his personal defeat in Italy. They were a bit concerned for the future of Fascism.

Was this policy right. NO. Had ~~Gr. Br.~~ Gr. Br. foreseen what actually happened it would have acted in time. The Oil embargo was entirely practicable in late Autumn 1935. The League of Nations Report made that clear. IF there had been a War, Mussolini's chances were ~~not~~ not against England, France, Russia backed up by some 40 other nations, and supported by the U.S.A.

b/ Same in Spain.

Had the Spanish government been treated according to international law, there would have been ~~perhaps~~ not trouble at all. Italy had certainly promised arms ~~probably~~ to the Franco people but it would probably not have been ~~probably~~ given by them, if Great Britain had at once shown that she was keeping to international law.

The truth of the matter is that Russia was the difficulty.

Great Britain was afraid to side with Soviet Russia. Hitler was pressing for a renunciation of the Franco-Russian Pact. England was trying to mediate. She was afraid that she could not continue to mediate, if she came down against Italy and Germany in Spain.

Was this right. NO. Had England foreseen that there was ~~was~~ possibility of mediating ~~mediation~~ on the basis of France dropping her Treaty with Russia, Great Britain would not have taken this line. Things would have never come to the present pass.

Can this be otherwise?

IV. Russia.

- Whether an other policy towards Russia is possible depends on
- 1/ Russia's military force in the Far East; making it a serious risk to Japan strength to attack Russia.
 - 2/ on the stage and successfulness of economic reconstruction work in Russia.
 - 3/ on Russia's preparedness to accept a democratic line in Western Europe i.e. to support politically the government in the countries supporting her. Russia out for a Popular Front line i.e. Socialism is being established in Russia and all other countries will have to go on to it either as a consequence of war, or in order to avoid it. These are the reasons why England is slowly moving towards accepting cooperation with France and Russia.

V. League of Nations.

In speaking of an important country like England and after having registered England's policy in relation to the sign countries, it does not make sense to speak of the League as if she existed separately and apart from them.

The League is like a club. The club cannot really give orders to the members. It represents what England and some leading powers make it into. If you think of the League in the wrong way, you will never understand the real difficulty.

1/ You will wish to include all powers into the League; stand for universality at all costs. You will conclude that a universal League must be stronger than a restricted one.

That is entirely untrue. It all depends on whether the powers who actually form the League, really believe that it is in their interest in the long run to accept collective security. It is like a police force consisting of armed citizens. It is not necessarily stronger because it includes all the population including the bandits and gangsters themselves. you will believe that

2/ ~~the League is stronger~~ the League is stronger if it uses force. ~~nothing~~ at all. It is a police force and if it uses no force, it is nothing. That a universal League consisting of sincerely pacific states would need no force, is true. But then there would be no need for the League either.

3/ The great question is: Of whom should the League consist? If the central group, the kernel, is sound, it may, in time, establish the rule of law in the world. That is the end of War.

But that will happen only, if the democratic and socialist ~~countries~~ countries are the League. they must, of course pool all their resources and determination then, perhaps they may still achieve peace.

This may or may not be Great Britain's foreign Policy today, but ~~it~~, if it is not, it ought to be.

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