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September 18

SEPTEMBER 18 is commemorated throughout China as a day of grief and national humiliation. This year it will mark the eighth anniversary of the Mukden Incident when Japan first launched her campaign of aggression against China and entered upon a course of action which has led to the present hostilities. However, this year September 18 holds a special significance for the world at large, as Europe is today locked in a deadly war, that is likely to spread like a conflagration and envelop the entire globe. When Japan first tore up the Nine-Power Treaty, the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the Covenant of the League of Nations, people refused to take the matter seriously, particularly those persons entrusted with the foreign policies of the Great Powers. China's appeals before the League, when her delegates, with all the eloquence at their command, pleaded that Japan must be stopped, if the world were to be saved from a second Armageddon, fell on deaf ears. Only one statesman at that time recognized the danger of allowing Japan to pursue her course unmolested and realized the effects of such a precedent on international morality and the enforcement of law and order. That was the American Secretary of State, Col. Stimson, who made the most strenuous efforts to convince Sir John Simon, the British Foreign Secretary, to co-operate with him to put a stop to Japan's aggression. But Sir John could not or would not believe that some insignificant (as he thought) event in far off Manchuria affected in any way the interests of the British Empire and was worth troubling about, even if Japan had violated three treaties to which Great Britain was party. Sir John's indifference to the fate of that remote Chinese province is costing Great Britain today millions of pounds sterling for the provision of arms, munitions and all the necessities for the conduct of a modern war. It will cost her millions more before the war is finished. Moreover, she will have to pay with the lives of millions of her citizens, who will die fighting for the defence of those principles which she so lightly abandoned in 1931. However, when one contemplates the enormity of the crime committed against humanity by Japan's aggression and its condonement by those countries, which should have condemned it, one cannot but be impressed by the retribution that has overtaken Great Britain and France who are now being forced to pay such a terrible price for their folly. If Sir John Simon had followed the whisperings of his own conscience, rather than the dictates of selfish national interests, there would have been no invasion of China's northeastern provinces, there would have been no rape of Ethiopia, no Spanish War, no occupation of Austria, no Sino-Japanese hostilities, no dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, no seizure of Albania and Memel and no attack on Poland. And there would have been no European War today. But the worst is yet to come. Unless a miracle

occurs, it will be impossible to prevent the present conflagration from spreading to other countries and perhaps over the entire world. Where it will all lead, no one knows. When and where it will end, is even less predictable. But one thing we can say for certain and, that is, that it started neither on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland, nor two days later when Great Britain and France declared war on Germany, but on September 18, 1931, when Japan first embarked on a course of international lawlessness and brigandage, since when the world has ceased to live in peace.

Balkans Cannot Remain Neutral

WAR has started in Europe with the invasion of Poland by Germany and the rush made by both Great Britain and France to assist the former to honor their pledges guaranteeing her security. The other powers, great and small, are still maintaining an expectant attitude, either because they consider the time not yet ripe for them to enter into the armed conflict or because they wish to remain out of it for ever. Even Italy, although joined to Germany by a military alliance has freed herself from her commitments, by accusing Germany of violating the pact in taking action against Poland, and has declared that she will "maintain neutrality" for the time being." Thus the present hostilities have not yet degenerated into a general war. While the Scandinavian and Baltic states, namely Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland and Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, as well as Portugal and the Netherlands have already proclaimed their neutrality, the South East European states, such as Rumania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey have not yet done so, but are assuming a *de facto* neutral stand and at the same time are hastening preparations to meet the possible extension of the war into their territory. Although the Scandinavian and Baltic states and other countries may be fortunate enough to be left untouched by a generalisation of the present conflict, the Balkan states are doomed to be involved. Too many causes of dissension exist between these countries. As recently as the end of August, Rumania refused to give consideration to the Hungarian proposal for an agreement on the minorities question between the two countries, while Hungary rejected the Rumanian offer to conclude a non-aggression pact. Bulgaria is awaiting the first opportunity to drive to the Thracian Coast, while Greece, allied to the peace front through British guarantees, is not only in danger of a Bulgarian attack but also of naval blockade by Italy, should this country come into the war. For this reason, Greek troops have been sent to the Bulgarian and Albanian frontiers and the civil population has been evacuated from the northwest region. As to Yugoslavia, she may wish to remain neutral but her position makes her vulnerable on different fronts. Through Bulgaria and Hungary she may be threatened by Germany and through what was once Albania, the Adriatic coast or her north west frontier, she may easily be invaded by Italy. Should the present war not be terminated within a short time—

the hope of a speedy end of the conflict seems to be very slight—the Balkans will inevitably be involved in turmoil and no country in this part of Europe will be allowed to remain neutral. The Anglo-French blockade has already severed Germany from her South American markets and Germany is relying for the most part on her imports from Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary for her supplies of cereals and other foodstuffs. Since Great Britain and France will attempt to strengthen their economic warfare against Germany and Germany desires to assure the continuation of her supplies, the Balkan states will be faced with the choice of joining either Germany or Great Britain and France. The war which is still confined to Poland and to the Western Front will be extended to the Balkans. Turkey has already manifested her desire to remain faithful to the peace front. In view of her pivotal position not only in the Balkans but also in the Near East, much importance should be attached to the attitude of Turkey. The efforts of the German Ambassador in Ankara, Herr Franz von Papen, to alienate Turkey from Britain and France seem to have failed. Should Turkey continue to maintain her present attitude, it will undoubtedly influence the decision of many other countries in this part of Europe, which would be greatly to the advantage of the Peace Front.

What Will Russia Do?

EVER since the dramatic announcement of the conclusion of a Non-Aggression Pact between Soviet Russia and Germany, the world has been wondering exactly what part the Soviets intend to play in the present conflict. Will M. Stalin follow a policy of neutrality and isolation or will he throw his country's resources both military and economic on the side of Herr Hitler and fight the democracies? Or will he, secure in the assurance of freedom from danger on his western borders, turn his attention to the East and fight the long-heralded war against Japan? Or again, will he accomplish the "impossible" a second time and conclude a non-aggression pact with the latter? All these possibilities are being bandied about, as rumors fly thick and fast and observers anxiously speculate on Russia's probable course of action. While the strictest silence is being maintained in Soviet and German quarters, Japanese sources, particularly the news agency *Domei*, have carried numerous items on the subject. *Domei* persistently reports the impending conclusion of a military alliance between Russia and Germany, for the purpose of settling "various questions in connection with Bessarabia and the straits." Earlier information in this regard declared that Russia and Germany intended to confer with each other regarding their respective "spheres of influence." Whether this would involve the signing of a military pact between the two countries was not said. The recent order of the Soviet Military Commission in Moscow, calling up a large number of reserves, has given rise to a great deal of speculation. It is still unknown, however, whether this action means mobilization or is merely an application of the newly-passed Military Law. What is more probably the case is that the