

special interests, and declared against special interests generally. At the same time a new and powerful Ally joined the coalition whose special interest was the *general* defeat of Germany. Up to that time England occupied that position to a certain extent—her world-position being such as to make her somewhat indifferent as to where Germany was beaten as long as she was beaten somewhere. England, too, however, had her special interests in that regard, particularly because of her sensitiveness with respect to “the way to India.” But the position of the United States as a world-power is such that they have no such special interests whatever,—at least not in such proximity to any actual or potential “front” as to make their special interests develop into a special “strategy.”

Nevertheless, these two great events were unable in themselves, to eliminate all the special interests among the Allies that stood in the way of a really unified strategy. The Italian disaster in the fall of 1917 eliminated one of these obstacles, by eliminating Italy's special interests from immediate influence upon the Allies' possible plans of military operations and by demonstrating to the Allies, including Italy, the dangers of pursuing special interests. After the Italian disaster the demands for “unity of command,” at least on the “Western front,” began to make itself heard. But the old cast of ideas, as well as some of the old special interests which gave birth to the old ideas, still persisted. Lloyd George, yielding to necessity, agreed to the creation of the allied Supreme War Council.

The commotion which followed this step, which nearly resulted in the overthrow of the Lloyd-George government, shows how revolutionary a step “unity of command” really is for a coalition. But the setting up of the Supreme War Council was only the first step in effecting “unity of command”—it was not “unity of command” even for the allied armies operating in France.

The last object was accomplished during the present great offensive by the appointment of General Foch as Commander-in-Chief of those armies. And the manner of its accomplishment

testifies eloquently to the great reluctance with which it was done. It should be remembered that General Foch was only appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies operating in France on March 26,—*five days after the beginning of the great German offensive, and not until after the Germans had succeeded in breaking through the allied front before Amiens.* It required all that in order to make the Allies do what would seem the most obvious and the only sensible thing to do.

Much has been said about the “particularism” and “unadjustability” of English “professional soldiers” as the reason for the great opposition which prevailed in England against the “unity of command” which would place the English army under the direction of a non-English commander. That such particularism and unadjustability are prevalent in English army circles is undoubtedly true: they are prevalent wherever the nationalistic cast of ideas prevails. But the prejudices of professional soldiers could not possibly have been a determining factor in England, which has always known how to assign professional soldiers their proper place. The truth is that the opposition to that measure was more wide-spread and its causes were much more deeply rooted. The real cause of the opposition was the still existing divergence in the war-aims of some of the Allies at least. We have had a glimpse of this when Mr. Balfour told the House of Commons the other day that a “greater Alsace-Lorraine” was at least in the not far-distant past one of *France's* war aims *but not of the Allies.*

So long as there is no unity of war aims among the Allies there can be no real unity of command or of strategy, in the larger aspects of the war. Temporary unity may be achieved here or there under the stress of circumstances—usually *unfavorable circumstances.* But complete and lasting unity of strategy in planning the struggle of the Allies against Germany and unity of command in carrying out these plans can only follow upon a complete agreement on the war aims of the Allies.

This applies even to a greater extent to the so-called “political” phases of the struggle, the most important of which is the