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AFTER-THOUGHTS ON AMERICAN POLICY IN THE FAR EAST.

Some general considerations to be kept in mind:

1. The fact of Japan.

On the one hand.

The one country in the East that is a self-directing going concern.

The importance of one area that is governed in a continent of chaos.

The cultural values of Japanese civilization.

Perhaps one of the greatest misfortunes which could befall the East would be the destruction of that civilization through war and revolution. And a first class war drawn out over a long period or ending in Japan's overwhelming defeat would almost certainly destroy her civilization by plunging her into an equivalent of the Russian experience of 1917.....

On the other hand.

The mind of the Japanese people has been infected, perhaps incurably, with war fever. Can immunity be developed without experiencing the disease itself? I doubt it. The military clique that is directing policy knows that the maintenance of their power depends upon keeping the country in a perpetual state of neurotic fear, and if war finally comes it will probably come because this clique has played its last scare card except war itself, and decides to substitute the reality for its ghost.

If the 1927 Tanaka Memorial was a fabrication it was fabricated by someone who had a rare gift for accurate prophesy. The drive of Japanese policy is relentlessly towards the domination of Eastern Asia. For the moment the drive may seem to have been

arrested or diverted but what appears to be cessation is merely postponement of the public announcement of a fait accompli until the conditions have been fulfilled which make the realization of the next stage of the invasion possible. It becomes clear in retrospect that during the apparent interregnum the process of preparing for the next nibble has been going forward with unfaltering persistence.

2. The fact of Communism.

Realistic policy requires the recognition of the fact that the Russian Revolution has released ideas and principles of organization which are going to change human society during the twentieth century as much as the ideas and principles of the French Revolution changed society during the nineteenth century. The social forces let loose by that Revolution cannot be arrested once they have assumed the form of a social crusade in a land like China. An attempt to destroy them by force will prove in the end to be as suicidal there as it proved in Russia. The best that can be hoped for is that governments will recognize the good elements in those forces and attempt to canalize these good elements into the channels of existing authority.

3. The logic of the present situation in Eastern Asia.

If the trends of the past few years continue without outside interference strong enough to arrest them, isn't the result going to be?

- (1) Japanese political and military domination through "independent" "sovereign" states stretching southward to the Yellow River (and perhaps beyond) and westward through Inner Mongolia.
- (2) Communism over most of the interior of South and West China.
- (3) Japanese occupation of various additional areas along the coast (Foochow) and up the Yangtze on the pretext of defending civilization against communism.

- (4) Western powers hanging onto the coast but without the prospect of an interior market.
- (5) This is equivalent to saying that Japan will eventually dominate the Far East, and the Open Door will become such a small door that little or nothing from America can go through it.
- (6) I said above "without outside interference," but there is of course the possibility that interference might come from two sources: (1) Great Britain or (2) Russia, and interference from either of these would create a wholly new situation. It is interesting that at the present time the British in the Far East are much more nervous and excited than the Americans. Perhaps they are beginning to realize what a blunder they made in not associating themselves more vigorously with Stimson's 1931-1932 policy. Whether that is the case or not they are sufficiently alarmed over the Japanese invasion of their Asiatic markets (particularly India) to prepare for possible conflict in the Far East. Their supplies of munitions have recently been doubled at Hongkong and a British government official from the Malay States told me that during the autumn a quiet concentration of air, naval and military forces had been taking place at Singapore.

## 2. American and Japanese influences.

The expansion of the interests of the United States across the Pacific means that Americans have been equally responsible with Europeans for exposing the Far East to the revolutionary impact of Western civilization. We have had our share in producing both the renaissance of Japanese society and the collapse of Chinese society. In fact America's impact on some parts of the Far East (especially on China) has been more decisive than that of any European country. The arrival of Western civilization meant the release of powerful social forces in an environment entirely

alien to them and hence their ultimate influence was wholly unpredictable. The acids of modernity ate away "the old," and "the new" was put in its place, but there was no way of knowing what the new would be like after its transmutation had taken place in the Oriental mind.

For the most part the Western civilization which was offered to the Orient was a fair cross-section of life in America and Europe. It had its good elements and it had its vicious elements, and Americans as well as others imported both varieties. We have helped to teach Japan the value of modern armaments and we have contributed our share to the pollution of the port cities of China, but we have also introduced a few Chinese and Japanese to concepts of man and of human relations that are higher than anything their thought has hitherto known.

Though America is not a Christian country (there are no Christian countries) many Americans have ideals which they have inherited, usually without knowing it, from the Christian tradition in the West. Anyone who as a child has become familiar with the Sermon on the Mount and the story of the good Samaritan can never entirely forget them even if he would like to. It is the influence of the Christian tradition more than anything else which has modified in us to some extent the latent north European paganism of our ancestors. We know that persuasion is better than force even if we usually act on the contrary assumption.

Oriental civilizations have immense cultural values, but they have not developed that reverence for human life which is characteristic of the Christian tradition at its best. In fact there are as yet relatively few people in the Far East whose mentality has been appreciably influenced by the teachings of the New Testament. As far as Japan is concerned the very completeness of her success in adopting the modern forms of Western civilization has tended to immunize her against the influence of this minority tradition in Western society, of this paradoxical element in our

civilization which is always calling in question the value of the other elements, and particularly of those elements which Japan has been most eager to appropriate.

Consequently the total impact of Japan on the Asiatic mainland is a very different thing from the total impact of the United States. Each country is motivated by quite definite "interests." But the "interests" of one are rarely qualified by any moderating factor, while the "interests" of the other are specifically qualified by a certain amount of disinterestedness and desire to help. The Peiping Union Medical College or Yenching University or Ginling College are certainly not typical of America's total impact on the East, but they do represent one authentic type of American interest. There is no parallel to the spirit symbolized by these institutions in Japan's impact on China. When trying to think of an authentic Japanese interest on the Asiatic Mainland it is difficult to dismiss from one's mind the Fortress-Barracks and the Shinto Shrine on North Szechwan Road, Shanghai.

The peace and orderly development of the Far East are essential both to world recovery and to the realization of the legitimate interests of the United States. By orderly development I mean the establishment of free and effective institutions of government as well as the organization of industry and commerce and the cultivation of markets. Such development will not take place if Japan becomes the over-lord of Asia. It is much more apt to take place if the Chinese people remain exposed to American influences. The aim of American policy should be to insure that a situation is maintained in which those influences can continue to operate freely and effectively.

If the New Deal is put through in America, and is put through without recourse to violence the lessons of this achievement will be far more

important for the East than the lessons of the Russian Revolution. And the most valuable lesson will be the demonstration that vast social changes can be effected more satisfactorily by communal cooperation than by mass slaughter.

The crux of the problem of American policy in the Far East as I understand it is: What is meant by the Open Door? And if it appears that the Door is slowly swinging to, is its remaining Open sufficiently important to us and to the world to warrant our taking steps to keep it Open? In principle we adhere to the policy of the Open Door, but over large sections of China a situation does not exist in which American influence can operate freely and effectively. Japan has ingeniously evolved a technique (the technique of the "independent-sovereign-state") which from the standpoint of legal theory seems to leave the door wide open, but which in actual fact closes it to a crack (note the rapid disappearance of American business in Mukden). The next move of this technique would seem to be preparation for the creation of another such state in North China. In other words, if the present trend in the Far East continues the time will come when further official repetition of the Open Door policy can only be interpreted as a sign of uncertainty and weakness since that policy will no longer correspond to realities.

The sole guarantee of the Open Door is a government in China strong enough to maintain the integrity of Chinese territory and to keep the doors of trade open for the commerce of friendly nations. Consequently American policy should be directed towards strengthening the Nanking government in order that it may be able to put its own house in order. American assistance should take the form of successive government loans accompanied by experts, and should be given on condition that the Nanking government:

(1) Agrees to concentrate the resources at its disposal upon a program of national social reconstruction which shall have first charge on the budget.

(2) Pledges itself to the maintenance of the Open Door.

Suppose that before the constructive effects of such a policy could be felt the much-advertised war in the Far East breaks out, what attitude should America take towards the conflict? An answer to that can of course only be given in terms of what war, and what issues. If Japan must have a war, she can only have it when someone is willing to fight her. Who might be willing? Doubtless the answer "Russia" is as good as any. And, supposing a conflict could not be avoided, wouldn't it be infinitely preferable for the land forces opposed to the Japanese to be Russian rather than British or American. In that eventuality it would seem that American policy should aim at:

Preventing either side from securing an overwhelming victory.

If Japan secured such a victory the situation in Asia for years to come would be intolerable for nationals of Western countries.

If Russia secured such a victory the whole interior of China would be added to the Federation of Soviet Republics, while Japanese society would collapse and enter upon an indeterminate period of revolution and chaos.

What would this mean in terms of action:

(1) Since the odds at the outset would be in favor of Japan, American moral, financial and if necessary material support should be thrown behind Russia on condition that she pledge herself to support the Open Door policy as the basis of peace. Since China would almost inevitably be drawn into the conflict she should be similarly assisted.

- (2) Before the collapse of either side we should force a settlement of the Far Eastern question which would involve general disarmament and the renunciation by Japan of her plans for the political and military domination of the Far East.

What should we do in the interval before it becomes clear whether there will be war in the Far East or not?

1. Build our fleet up to Treaty strength and keep it in the highest possible state of efficiency. An American pacifist in Japan told me with dry humor that there had been a marked improvement in the attitude of the Japanese towards America since Mr. Swanson announced his naval building program.
2. Use the whole weight of our influence to get reductions in total tonnage when the Treaty comes up for revision.
3. Refuse to alter our ratio with Japan.
4. If Japan goes out for unlimited building then build against her until she breaks under the financial strain.
5. Encourage the liberal elements in Japan by applying the "quota" in place of complete exclusion.
6. Adhere rigidly to the Stimson policy of non-recognition, and "view with alarm" through diplomatic channels every fresh sign of Japanese aggression in China.
7. Adopt the positive policy of supporting through loans and experts the Soong program for social reconstruction in China.
8. In the interim keep in mind the possibility if war clouds gather of "putting the world on notice" by a joint declaration with Great Britain that we intend to use the forces at our disposal for the preservation of peace and the restraint of the aggressor.
9. Make a real World Society of Nations the eventual aim of all

policy and be prepared to seize the moment that will eventually come for moving in that direction.

This new World Society should be based on the idea of equal responsibility rather than of equal representation. We have assumed too readily that all inter-national questions are world questions. They are not. There are, for example, many purely European questions which can be handled much more satisfactorily by a European League than by a World League. Furthermore the world is still too large and complicated for small and relatively irresponsible states to be able to participate helpfully in the settlement of such world questions as lie beyond the field of their responsibility or competence. Two types of international agencies are needed; a world agency composed of a limited number of states with world interests to deal with the major world questions for which they have direct responsibility, and area or continental agencies to deal with questions which primarily concern a group of nations within a given area.

The aim of a Society of Nations so conceived would not be to deal with all international questions, but would rather be to achieve a few specific and concrete ends, such as:

1. General disarmament.
2. The development of a World Economic Council.
3. The organization of a World Police Force.

Working together, the United States and Great Britain could in the course of time create such a Society of Nations. The present League will doubtless continue to function effectively in the realm of humanitarian and social activity, and a natural division of labor between the League and the new Society would inevitably evolve out of the differences in their membership and agenda.

From the standpoint of potential political achievement, I am convinced

that Europe is the least suitable continent on which to locate the offices of a World Society of Nations. When we get around to organizing the new Society my nomination for its seat is Peiping!

The above suggestions regarding American policy are derived from the following assumptions:

1. America's destiny is a world destiny. It is absurd to suppose that the racial energy which expressed itself in the occupation of this continent has been exhausted by that effort or can be bottled up within the continent. The same urge that made men drive their covered wagons across the Western prairies will make them sail their commercial ships and fly their commercial planes to the end of the earth. They will push the frontiers of their interests across the seas and accept the consequences.

2. We are not going to build a territorial Empire in the traditional sense, but we are going to build an Empire just the same--an Empire of interests--of trade interests, educational interests, cultural interests, scientific interests, and even of political interests. And we ought to prepare ourselves for it.

3. The fact that for the past four or five years we have turned our back on this destiny is irrelevant. The "Self-containers" are provincials who think that the logic of a few national arguments is all that is necessary to turn Americans into stay-at-home shop-keepers. It can't be done. Historic forces are more powerful than logic. The world is our destined field of activity and national economies will only be sound when adjusted to that inevitability. Our Foreign Policy will necessarily evolve with the evolution of our national life. This means the gradual development of a positive in place of a negative Far Eastern policy.

4. Eastern Asia is the part of the world where the most important economic and political developments will take place during the next century, and consequently the Pacific is the area in which the expanding energy of the American people is most likely to express itself.