

I

Present developments in the Pacific can be best understood against the historical background of our relations in that area.

Throughout the entire period of our official relations with the Pacific area the people of the United States and their responsible officials have recognized that the best interests of the United States and the traditional respect of this country for freedom coincided with dealings looking toward respect for the sovereign rights of the countries of the Far East. This country has espoused the principle of equal treatment. During the entire period of our relations with Japan, when there were indications that various nations were inclined to encroach on her integrity, the United States used its influence against any such tendency, no matter what nation was involved. At those times, and at all later times, the United States has done the same when action was threatened against the integrity of China.

A new phase opened at the end of the nineteenth century. Sovereignty of the Philippine Islands passed from Spain to this country; and this country pledged

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itself to equip the Philippines to become a free and independent nation.

What was known as the "scramble for concessions" was going on at that time in China. There was talk about a possible partitioning of that country. It was then that the American Government took its stand in favor of the principle of the "open door"; then also it declared that its policy was to "seek a solution which may bring about permanent peace to China... protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire". We have made good our pledge to the Philippine Islands. We have consistently and unflinchingly advocated the principle of the open door.

In the year 1908 the Government of the United States and the Government of Japan concluded an agreement by an exchange of notes. The two Governments jointly declared that not only were they determined to support "by all pacific means at their disposal the independence and integrity of China and the principle of equal opportunity

for commerce and industry of all nations in that empire" but also that it was "the wish of the two Governments to encourage the free and peaceful development of their commerce on the Pacific Ocean", and that "the policy of both Governments" was "directed to the maintenance of the existing status quo" in that region.

The United States has constantly practised and supported these principles.

Following the close of the first world war nine powers having interests in the Western Pacific met in conference in Washington in 1921. China, Japan and the United States were among them. One great objective of this conference was the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. This was to be achieved by reduction of armament and by regulation of competition in the Pacific and Far Eastern areas. Treaties and agreements which interlocked and were dependent one upon another were concluded at that conference. One of these was the Nine Power Treaty which contained pledges to respect the sovereignty of China and the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations

throughout China. There was likewise a treaty between the United States, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan providing for limitation of naval armament.

The course of events which have led to the present crisis may be taken as having begun ten years ago. In 1931 Japan undertook on a large scale the policy of conquest in China by commencing its seizure of Manchuria.

The Council and Assembly of the League of Nations endeavored to induce Japan to revert to peaceful procedures. The United States supported that effort. While the occupation of Manchuria by Japanese armed forces was going forward, the Government of the United States on January 7, 1932 sent identic notes to the Japanese and Chinese Governments declaring that the United States did not intend to recognize any situation, treaty or agreement brought about by means contrary to the provisions of the Pact of Paris on which we have firmly stood.

Areas outside the Pacific were soon to experience the death-fear of aggression. In 1933 Hitler assumed power in Germany. It promptly became evident that,

once re-armed, Germany would under take a policy of conquest in Europe. She had, as it presently developed, the support and concurrence of Italy whose Government had resolved on a policy of conquest in Africa and in the Mediterranean. If the various steps taken by Germany, Italy and Japan were timed together, they would gain effectiveness. It gradually became apparent through the following years that Germany, Italy and Japan had reached an understanding to time their moves of aggression to their common advantage.

In 1934, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs sent a friendly note to the United States stating that he firmly believed that no question existed between the two Governments that was fundamentally incapable of friendly solution and that Japan had "no intention whatever to provoke or make trouble with any other power". Our Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, replied that he appreciated and reciprocated these cordial sentiments.

But almost immediately the acts of the Japanese Government proved to be wholly inconsistent with these assurances so far as the rights and interests of

other nations in China were concerned.

Through our Ambassador in Tokyo our Government stated that in the opinion of the American people, and of the American Government, no nation can, without the assent of the other nations concerned, rightfully override the rights, obligations and legitimate interests of other sovereign states. The structure of peace set up by the treaties of 1921 was, in fact, being discarded by Japan. In December of 1934 the Japanese Government gave notice of its intention to terminate the Naval Treaty of February 6, 1922, which had limited competition in naval armament.

Japan thereafter intensified her rearmament program. Increasingly she took measures obviously directed toward extending her domination over neighboring areas, and destroying the lawful rights and interests in those areas of other countries including the United States.

In 1936 the Government of Japan openly associated itself with Germany by entering the anti-Comintern Pact.

The stage was now set for an unlimited campaign of conquest. In July, 1937, feeling themselves ready, the armed forces of Japan opened large scale military operations

against China. Soon her leaders publicly declared their intention to achieve and maintain for Japan a dominant position in the entire region of Eastern Asia, the Western Pacific, and the Southern Pacific. This, if achieved, would make them masters of a region containing almost one-half the population of the earth. It would likewise give them complete control of sea lanes and trade routes of importance to the entire world. The military operations which followed flagrantly disregarded American rights. Japanese armed forces killed Americans, and wounded or otherwise physically abused American men, women and children. They sank American vessels - including a naval vessel - and imperiled others. They bombed American hospitals, churches, and schools. They destroyed American property, ruined American business, crippled American trade, and in general showed utter disregard of our rights both in law and under treaties. This was over and above the incalculable damage done to China, the ghastly suffering inflicted upon the Chinese people; the wholesale injuries done to other nations, to civilization, and to the cause of peace and good will among men.

III

Meanwhile, brute conquest was also being let loose in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Hitler and Mussolini embarked upon a scheme of unlimited conquest. Since 1936 they have without provocation or excuse attacked, conquered, and reduced to economic and political slavery some sixteen other countries. Their conquests have been carried out in utter ruthlessness and with the most revolting brutality. The machinery set up for unlimited conquest included and still includes not only armed forces but also organizations for carrying on plots, intrigue, intimidation, and propaganda. This machine has world-wide ramifications, and with it the Japanese operations have been steadily interlocked.

In 1940 Hitler and Mussolini concluded with Japan a treaty of alliance avowedly aimed at the United States.

We are confronted today in the Pacific with a repetition of the strategy pursued by Hitler in Europe. Methods used by Hitler with temporary success are being faithfully imitated by Japan. They consist of steadily seizing power

and control over neighboring peoples by infiltration, encirclement, and finally armed attack -- all carefully planned and executed.

IV

After this fashion, and pursuing this policy of conquest, Japan has worked her way into and has finally seized Manchuria. She has invaded and has sought for the past four and one half years to subjugate China. Japanese armed forces passing through the China Sea close to the Philippine Islands, have step by step invaded and taken possession of Indochina. They are today openly attempting extension of this conquest into the territory of Thailand. These conquests have borne and continue to bear a constant and hideous fruit of rapine, torture, massacre and destruction.

To the eastward of the Philippines Japan extended her threatening activities through the Caroline and Marshall Islands in violation of the mandate under which she received the custody of these islands. Japanese spokesmen have not hesitated to threaten extension of their conquest to the Philippine Islands, Dutch East Indies, the British

outpost of Singapore, and even Australia.

Japan by its course of aggression has made it necessary for various countries including our own to keep in the Pacific in self-defense large armed forces and a vast amount of material which might otherwise have been used by all of these powers in self-defense against Hitler. The threat set up by Japan has forced peace loving nations to establish and maintain a huge eastern front - unless they were willing to surrender their lifelines of commerce, ^{their} ~~af~~ peaceful civilization, and their capacity of self-defense.

V

It became abundantly clear that unless the course of affairs in the Far East were halted, and unless considerations of justice, humanity and fair dealing once more became dominant, the Pacific area was doomed to experience the same horrors which walk unchecked in the continental limits of Europe. These horrors have already begun. But in an endeavor to halt and end this process by peaceful means, while there seemed still to be a chance, the United States entered into discussions with Japan.

For nine months conversations have been carried on between the Secretary of State and the President on behalf of the United States, and the Foreign Minister and the Premier of Japan, for the purpose of arriving if possible at some understanding acceptable to both countries.

In entering these conversations we took into account not only the interests fundamental to the United States which have been set forth, but also considerations of the legitimate interests of Japan.

The Government of the United States throughout the conversations steadfastly supported certain basic principles which should govern international relations. The principles for which we stood in these discussions may be summarized as follows:-- The principle of inviolability of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each and all nations; the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; the principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity and treatment; and the principle of reliance upon international cooperation and conciliation for the prevention and pacific

settlement of controversies and for improvement of international conditions by peaceful methods and processes.

Basically these are the essential principles of peace, law and order and fair dealing among nations.

During the course of the conversations, the Japanese Government offered in succession various formulas for its basic terms, all of which included qualified statements of pacific intent. It became clear as each proposal was explored that Japan did not intend to budge one iota from the fundamental tenets of Japan's present position.

Japan manifested no disposition to renounce its association with Hitlerism and insisted that its obligations under the tripartite alliance -- a direct threat to this country -- would be fulfilled by Japan.

Japan was willing to affirm its adherence to the principle of nondiscrimination in international commercial relations, but refused to relinquish in practice the preferential position which it had arrogated to itself in all areas under Japanese occupation.

With regard to China, Japan insisted upon obtaining

a victor's peace and on having our assent thereto. Japan insisted upon continuing to maintain its armed forces in large areas of China for an indefinite period -- a clear indication of intention to effectuate a permanent control over that country.

In July the Japanese Government forced from the Vichy Government of France an agreement permitting the placing of Japanese armed forces in southern Indochina, and began sending troops and equipment into that area.

The conversations between this Government and the Japanese Government were thereupon suspended -- naturally.

But during the following month, at the urgent and insistent request of the Japanese Government, which made emphatic profession of peaceful intent, the conversations were resumed. Thereafter, although several formulae were offered and discussed, the Japanese Government gave no indication of desire or intention to desist from courses of conquest and to pursue courses of peace. In consequence, no progress was made toward achievement of an agreement. Finally, on November 20, the Japanese Government presented a narrow proposal containing suggested provisions of a modus vivendi. The plan thus offered called for supplying by the United States to Japan as much oil as Japan might require, suspension of freezing measures, and discontinuance by the United States of aid

to China. It contained no provision for reversion by Japan to peaceful courses. Such a proposal offered no basis for a peaceful settlement or even for a temporary adjustment. At that point the American Government in order to clarify the issues felt called upon to offer and it presented to the Japanese Government on November 26 a clear-cut plan for a broad but simple settlement. In presenting that plan, it stated that what it was offering was a practical example of a program such as this Government felt susceptible of being made the basis for further discussion.

During the final phases of these conversations, the Government of the United States learned beyond possibility of doubt that large new contingents of Japanese armed forces and masses of equipment were moving into Indochina. Toward the end of November these movements were intensified. Within the past few days the disposition of Japanese forces and the dispatch of added expeditions made it clear that under cover of the negotiations Japanese forces were being mobilized for an attack on unspecified objectives--objectives which, it presently developed, consisted of the

taking of strategic positions in the Gulf of Thailand.

The operations were obviously designed not merely to intimidate or assault Thailand but also to set up bases for later attacks southward against Singapore and northward against the Burma Road.

We promptly asked of the Japanese Government a frank statement as to the intent of its adding to its forces in Indochina, and we promptly were given an utterly evasive reply. Simultaneously, the Japanese expeditions went forward with increased tempo.

I was determined to exhaust every conceivable effort for peace. With this in mind I addressed, on the evening of December 6, a personal message to the Emperor of Japan, of which the Congress and the public already have knowledge. You are aware of the fact that Japanese armed forces were at that very moment moving for attack upon Hawaii and upon the Philippines, and that yesterday they struck--at both points.

Japanese armed forces have now attacked us.

We are fighting in self-defense; in defense of our freedom, of our liberties, and of our rights.

The Japanese Government has declared war upon the United States. I ask that the Congress recognize the existence of a state of war.