

Japan Cuts to Pattern

But while following her imperialist blueprint, Nippon is confronted by changes in China which may alter the scene

By Theodore Draper

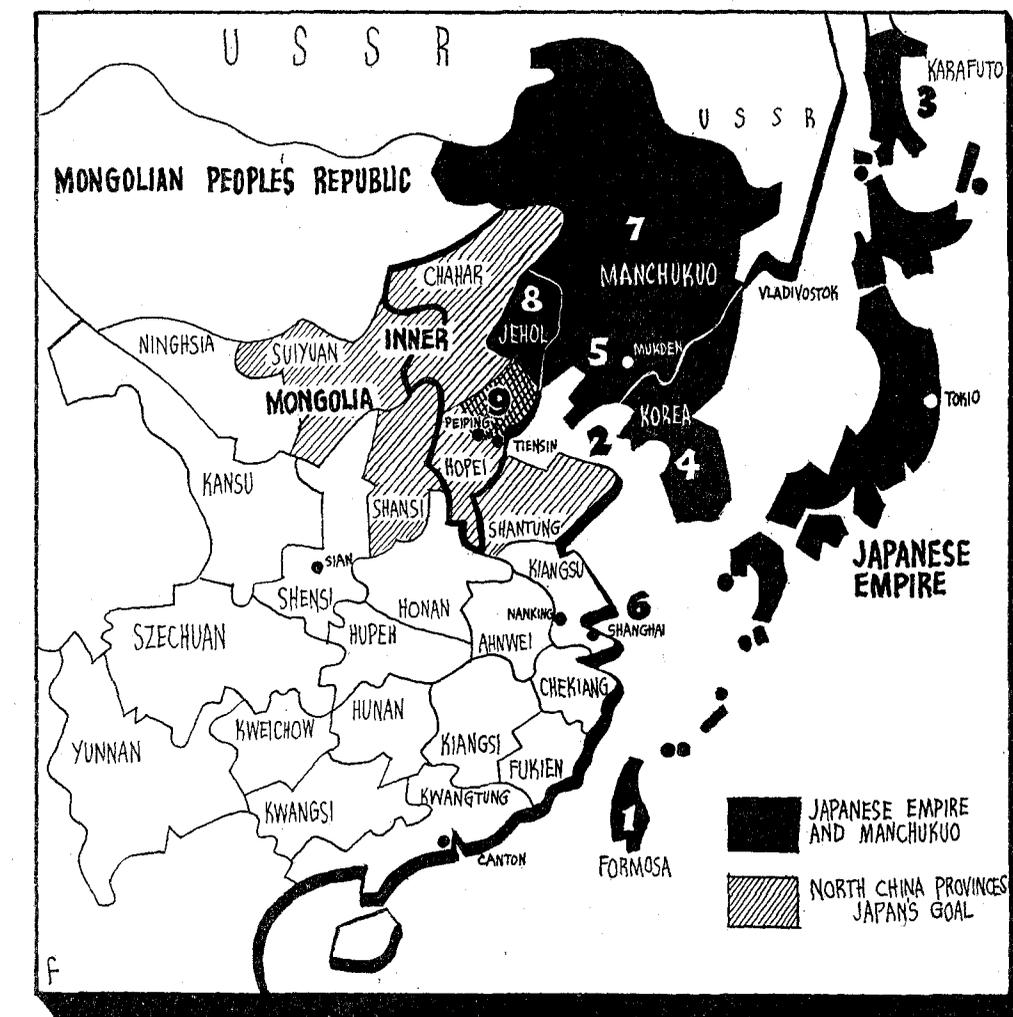
"Morality and sincerity do not govern a country's diplomacy, which is guided by selfishness, pure and simple. It is considered the secret of diplomacy to forestall rivals by every crafty means available."—From the published papers of Count Okuma, one-time premier of Japan and one of Japan's original elder statesmen.

A DEFINITE pattern can be traced in Japan's method of conquest in China. This pattern fits the Manchurian aggression in 1931 as well as the present penetration into North China. The advantage in understanding the workings of the Japanese imperialist machine is that it makes possible a correct appraisal of the frequently confused press reports which come out of the Far East during such crises.

Certain prerequisites have to be met before the Japanese army command begins to issue demands for the virtual abdication of Chinese authority within some specified territory. First, the international situation must give promise of little or no effective resistance by the other imperialist powers, especially by Great Britain and the United States. Second, the political situation within Japan is usually characterized by a certain strain between conflicting social forces; the army extremists, their prestige on the wane, resort to aggression in order to ride into power on the back of a "national emergency." Third, the ground will have been prepared within the coveted region itself through the establishment of some "independent" zone nominally headed by native underlings in defiance of the national government.

The present war in North China is in these important aspects remarkably similar to that in Manchuria six years ago. This is not to say that the two situations are completely identical. Most important of all, the internal situation within China as a whole is decisively different. But this does not concern Japan's method so much as China's reception. This latter aspect will be dealt with in a succeeding article.

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION: From the very beginning of Japan's inroads upon Chinese sovereignty, Tokyo has unfailingly first assured herself of London's support. The first Japanese attack on China in 1894-5 was immediately preceded by an Anglo-Japanese agreement. The Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5 was prepared by another Anglo-Japanese treaty, that of 1902. After the World War, Britain put pressure on China for the cession of Shantung Peninsula to Japan. Only later was it revealed that Great Britain had, in 1917, signed a secret treaty with Japan, giving the latter just this German-leased ter-



Darryl Frederick

Japan's march in China: 1: Formosa ceded to Japan in 1895. 2: Port Arthur and Kwantung Peninsula leased by Japan in 1905. 3: Karafuto ceded to Japan in 1905 by czarist Russia. 4: Korea annexed by Japan in 1910. 5: Mukden seized by Japan in 1931. 6: Shanghai bombarded by Japan in 1932. 7: Manchuria annexed by Japan as puppet state of "Manchukuo" in 1933. 8: Jehol province annexed by Manchukuo in 1933. 9: "East Hopei Autonomous Anti-Comintern Government" formed by Japan in 1935. The present invasion by Japan seeks to conquer the North China provinces of Hopei and Chahar, shown by the heavy black line. The Hopei-Chahar Political Council was formed in 1935 comprising Hopei province, except the twenty-two provinces held by the East Hopei "government," and part of Chahar, except that under de facto Japanese control. The shaded portion shows the five northern provinces, Hopei, Chahar, Shantung, Suiyuan, and Shansi, Japan's next goal.

ritory in the event of an allied victory. In 1931, the British consistently sabotaged the efforts of the United States to invoke the Nine-Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact against Japanese aggression in Manchuria.

The United States has pursued a quite different policy. In principle, it has been irreconcilably opposed to any impairment of China's territorial integrity and independence. In practice, however, it has never yet offered genuine resistance to Japan's repeated aggressions. American support of China's territorial

integrity follows logically from its traditional Open Door policy which would grant all countries an equal opportunity to make investments and engage in commerce in China. Such equal opportunity is, of course, incompatible with political control by one country. American business interests recognize China as the greatest potential field for the investment of "unemployed" capital and as the largest untapped market in the world.

Japan has taken advantage of this deep-rooted antagonism between Great Britain and the United States at every point in its con-

quest of China. It has also acted with a nice regard for the crises of its ally, Great Britain. In 1915, Japan presented China with twenty-one demands which would have turned China into a virtual protectorate; Great Britain was then engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Germany. When Japan annexed Manchuria in 1931, Great Britain was neutralized by the world economic crisis. Today, when Japan reaches out for North China, Great Britain finds herself confronted with an extremely critical situation in Europe, in the Mediterranean, and in Spain.

The United States also is today in a less favorable position for action. The recent Neutrality Act is of tremendous assistance to just such aggressors as Japan. The act bars war materials to aggressor and victim alike—but the aggressor in this case does not need our war materials while the victim does. The “cash-and-carry” provision provides that belligerent powers must transport goods from this country on their own vessels—but the aggressor in this case has a large navy and merchant marine while the victim has not.

To top this objectively favorable international situation comes the well-founded report that an Anglo-Japanese agreement was reached during the recent coronation. The British press has stated that the agreement gives Japan a free hand in North China in exchange for which the British will continue to have the upper hand in South China, chief sphere of British investments.

On July 27, Foreign Minister Koki Hirota rose in the Imperial Diet and, in words which could have been addressed only to the United States, said:

While it has always been the consistent policy of the government to promote Anglo-Japanese friendship, more recently the two governments have come to an agreement of views regarding the advisability of entering into frank conversations with the object of adjusting the relations of the two countries. We hope to bring about an early fulfillment of that aim.

The State Department at Washington could hardly have misunderstood that statement. But London has been more cautious. Foreign Secretary Eden took care to announce that negotiations with Japan were off pending settlement of the North China crisis. It must be remembered that Great Britain, more than any other power, has most to lose by the Japanese northern conquest.

If Hirota's confidence is justified, if the reports in the British press are authentic, then it means that Great Britain will repeat in 1937 what she did in 1894, 1902, 1917, and 1931. But it is still possible that the peace sentiment of the British people and the resentment of those British interests immediately threatened by the Japanese advance in North China may yet reverse Britain's traditional policy in the Far East.

INTERNAL JAPANESE POLITICS: What connection does the recent cabinet change in Japan have with the events in North China?

When Prince Konoe succeeded General Hayashi as premier, it was generally felt that

a more “liberal” administration was in power. Under this interpretation, the North China crisis comes as a surprise. Both are incorrect. The Konoe cabinet is in no sense liberal or moderate. All the extremists in the former ministry, except Hayashi, were carried over

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For Heinrich Mann

“I feel myself so alone.”—*Mediterranean letter.*

Must you say
you are alone—
you have the sea.
The Greeks sailed it
and the Greeks were free,
they sowed the cities
for Athene's face,
to make a garden for her,
a free place;
neither with slaves they worked nor pain
but with proud hands,
to cut white steps from black Sicilian lands,
to hollow harbors, vase-like, from red Spain.

I could write,
I am here.
What use is one,
so separate, strange of tongue,
while your familiar, living things are
barred?

When no reward
gives back the disinherited small things,
just the particular memory some street said,
or sky that was the color of a sword,
sharp and so clear, cut by the searchlight
(I saw it once) and you, opening a door,
swinging,
we nearly spoke, but words were shy, being
new.

Some cities die and some
supplant the cactus and the flowering plum
equally native here, brought by the sailors.
Torn from a sudden freedom long ago
to face traditions that despised the mind,
on a hot school lawn, I was saying over and
over,
*everything loses, all they have taught
me goes,*

everything loses, saving the will to know.
But a forgotten German took my hand,
a forgotten German whispered, “in my land
we think the scholar higher than the game,
but the life is hard, with us there are many
falder.”

I saw the sweeping, masterful Baltic sea,
thought, there's a way out somewhere;
I was one
caught with the many against me.
Like you, I do know what a life can be
chased between walls,
everyday should-be-a-shelter windows,
while the calls
echo the corner is no flight, but end.

BRYHER. (Vevey, Switzerland.)

into the present cabinet, with one addition, Foreign Minister Hirota.

The crisis in North China has been precipitated by the same army extremists who initiated and led the Manchurian adventure. The Japanese army is completely independent of the civil government, can prevent the formation of a government not to its liking, and can force the government's resignation at any time. In both crises, the army extremists resorted to aggression in order to restore the waning prestige and authority of the army officer caste. Once a “national emergency” is declared, the political parties and other moderate elements unfailingly rush to the support of the army's “honor.” For it must not be forgotten that there is no difference in principle between moderates and extremists. One does cautiously what the other does rashly. But both agree that China must be dominated by Japan.

Here is how the Manchurian explosion was set off. The moderate Hamaguchi cabinet came into office in July 1929. Its program included disarmament, budgetary retrenchment, and conciliation with China. It signed the London naval limitation treaty and a tariff agreement with China. The army extremists were on the defensive. A number of very dubious “incidents” were then provoked by army agents in Manchuria, and a war scare swept the country. The army demanded additional troops. The cabinet demurred. Premier Hamaguchi was mortally wounded in 1930. In September 1931, the Japanese army occupied Mukden, Manchuria. Thus began the conquest of China's three tremendous northeastern provinces. The Manchurian aggression swiftly reversed the relationship of forces between moderates and extremists.

Consider the similarity of the North China crisis. Japan's army leaders have suffered increasing loss of prestige since the coup of February 26, 1936, when several ministers in the Okada cabinet were assassinated by a group of young army officers. Hirota then formed a cabinet, but he fell after an adverse election. General Ugaki, leader of the army “moderates,” was appointed Hirota's successor, but he failed to form a ministry because the army refused to supply a minister of war. General Hayashi, more extreme, succeeded where Ugaki failed, but Hayashi was in turn repudiated by an election. Hayashi tried to resist the popular opposition to extremism, but finally gave way to Prince Konoe. The Konoe cabinet itself is not without inner antagonisms; but it was sufficiently weighted in favor of the extremists to precipitate this crisis. If the present crisis develops into a major war, it is altogether likely that the army leaders will sweep it aside or reorganize it in favor of a completely military-fascist government.

The North China crisis, like the Manchurian crisis before it, was deliberately and artificially provoked by the army extremists in order that they might reassert their extraordinary power and privileges. These elements sought to break the political deadlock which has resulted in the rapid succession of gov-