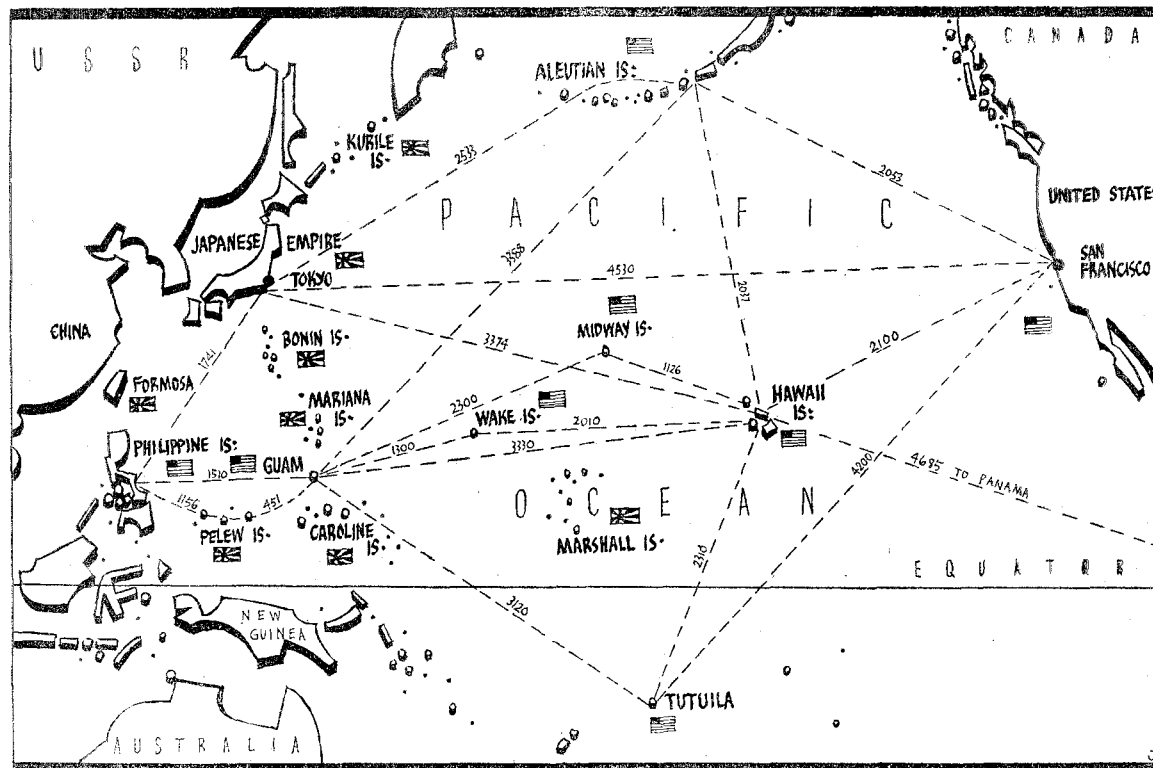


NEW MASSES

SEPTEMBER 14, 1937



Darryl Frederick

The focal points of possible conflict between Japan and the United States are shown in the above map. America's chief outposts in the Pacific extend along the route of the Pan-American Airways line from San Francisco to Hong-kong: Hawaii, Midway Island, Wake Island, Guam, and Manila (Philippine Islands). Other strategic American bases are the Aleutian Islands in the north and Tutuila

in the south, the latter one of the Samoan Islands. The chief Japanese bases are Formosa, Pelew Islands, Mariana Islands, Caroline Islands, Bonin Islands, Kurile Islands, and Marshall Islands. Some indication of the significance of the distances between the various points may be gained from a comparison between them and the 6262 miles traversed by the last Soviet record flight over the Arctic.

America's Stake in China

Whether the United States will convert abstract promises into concrete actions is the main question in U. S. policy

By Theodore Draper

IN THE last twenty years the Far Eastern policy of the United States has been characterized by its impeccable abstract principles and impotent positive activity. We have retreated every time in the face of Japanese aggression, though we have retreated most reluctantly. We have continually postponed coming to grips with the real issues, but at the same time we have done our utmost to keep the record clear and our powder dry. Any consideration of the present emergency must begin with an acknowledgment of our strangely contradictory past course.

For example, the State Department denounced the Manchurian conquest as a betrayal of international trust and vowed never to give it recognition. But it put no practical obstacle in the way of that conquest. Throughout 1931 to 1933, American exporters continued to feed Japan's military and industrial machine, thereby enabling her to consummate an aggression thoroughly at variance with the public principles of this government.

Soon after the last war, the United States scored a diplomatic triumph with the so-called Nine-Power Treaty at the Washington Conference of 1921-22. The treaty explicitly guaranteed China's territorial integrity and national independence as well as equal opportunity for all nations in trade and investment. But the treaty set up no machinery to settle or curb violations of the agreement. Without some concrete method of enforcement, the treaty was doomed to failure at the first test—Manchuria.

Unlike Great Britain, this country has rarely tried to put a happy face on this obviously disagreeable state of affairs. Our diplomatic relations with Japan have been correct, but far from benevolent. Great Britain, on the contrary, has traditionally regarded an alliance or understanding with Japan as one of the main pillars of its world politics. Yet, in seeming contradiction to this, Britain has far more to lose in sheer economic interest every time Japan establishes a political mon-

opoly over another portion of Chinese territory.

The Roosevelt administration, like its predecessors, is still hamstrung by this gap between promise and achievement. The Japanese themselves are keenly aware of our unsatisfactory role in the Far East and they are counting upon it to continue. They fear the United States as an ever-present threat to their thrust for monopoly in Asia, but they will go ahead so long as the threat remains merely imminent, never actual. The Roosevelt administration, however, is probably faced with a choice far graver than that confronted by previous administrations. The question arises: how much longer is it possible to postpone concrete action to restore peace and China's sovereignty in the Far East?

A GOOD DEAL of our indecisive policy may be traced to basic economic factors. Our economic stakes in China and Japan are such that various business interests are bound to exert different pressures on the government. This

is not the whole story, but it is a sound beginning.

For several years, the United States has out-distanced both Great Britain and Japan in total trade with China. The latest figures at hand are for January-April, 1937. China's imports were: United States—\$76,131,000; Japan—\$70,423,000; Germany—\$55,390,000; Great Britain—\$45,191,000. Her exports were: United States—\$103,095,000; Great Britain (and Hongkong)—\$65,847,000; Japan—\$44,968,000; Germany—\$26,004,000.

The situation is reversed with capital investments. Until about 1933, Great Britain still held the lead. Since then, Japan is believed to have forged far ahead, although reliable figures are unobtainable. One authority places the relative investments in China in 1931 as follows: Great Britain—\$1,189,200,000; Japan—\$1,136,900,000; United States—\$196,800,000. America's portion at this time was only 6.1 percent compared to Britain's 36.7 percent and Japan's 35.1 percent.

Here is an important clue to the basic factors behind America's tenacious support of the Open Door in China. It stands to reason that a country whose economic interest is mainly commercial will be interested in commercial equality. Experience has shown that every Japanese conquest is followed by virtual economic monopoly. Hence, the United States continues its staunch support of Chinese independence and territorial integrity.

Great Britain, on the other hand, has pursued another policy, partially in line with other economic interests. When Japan moved into Manchuria, Great Britain was little moved because its enterprise is mainly in Central and South China. Most American investments were in Manchuria. Aggression in North China worried the British a good deal more, though it is likely that they would eventually countenance it in exchange for an assurance of safety in the South. Now that the war area reaches from Peiping clear down to Canton, British interests are becoming more jeopardized, though Britain is still less interested in maintaining the Open Door than in safeguarding its investments by coming to terms with whatever power is dominant.

Now this factor is further complicated by America's economic stake in Japan. Our trade with Japan is three times that with China. In fact, Japan ranks third in United States exports while China is fifteenth, and Japan ranks second in United States imports while China is but eighth. Furthermore, certain American industries depend on the Japanese market. Japan buys about 50 percent of America's cotton crop and scrap steel and iron. The House of Morgan is deeply involved in the finances of the big Japanese trusts. Certain economic pressure groups in the United States, especially the cotton, automobile, and silk interests, are actively backing Japan.

True, American policy has not been molded by these interests. But it has, in part, been emasculated. These pressure groups have not succeeded primarily because American interests



John Holiker

"What kind of attorney did Tommy Manville finally get? A blond one?"

in the long run lie with China rather than Japan, relative trade figures notwithstanding. The Japanese market will contract sharply just as soon as Japan succeeds in finding other sources for her most vital imports—raw cotton, iron, steel, oil, and machinery. The conquest of China is just what will materially lessen this dependence. It is good business for the United States to keep China's vast but undeveloped resources out of Japanese control, despite the short-sighted attitude, from the viewpoint of their own self-interest, of some big business men in this country. Secondly, China remains the greatest potential market and source of capital investment in the world. Its industrialization can be said to have barely begun. The chief obstacle to its industrialization has been lack of national stability. Our present stake in China is but a tiny fraction of our potential stake in a unified and revived China. Political friendship would be a first-rate business asset.

JAPAN hates and fears the United States. Some time ago, a naval officer, Ikedzaki Tyuko, wrote a book entitled *A Japano-American War Is Inevitable*. The work is studded with passages such as this:

War between Japan and America—that is an inevitable fate. And even the efforts of both nations cannot avert it. . . . Although both countries see the dangerous abyss before them, they are compelled to advance toward it. . . . The Japanese empire and the Japanese people must remember the fatal inevitability of the outbreak of a Japano-American war which has been on the order of the day for many years.

An army man, Lieutenant-General Sato, published another book entitled *The Immi-*

nence of a Japano-American War, in which he committed himself as follows:

A Japano-American war is inevitable, and our government cannot avert it. . . . We will not speak about America diplomatically as about an imaginary opponent. No. We emphatically declare that America is our open and immediate enemy. We must regard America as our determined enemy who has heaped insult upon us more than once.

These are the opinions of the extreme "younger" militarists, but they exaggerate only what is in the back of the minds of the most "moderate" Japanese politicians and diplomats. More important is the fact that the extremists are now in actual control of Japanese policy.

What lies at the basis of this bitter hostility? Japan occupies a most anomalous economic position. It depends upon its chief rivals even while it struggles to oust those rivals from positions of power. Japan lacks such basic raw materials as iron and steel, raw cotton, ores, wood pulp, and oil, as well as machinery, and automobiles. The percentages supplied by the United States in 1936, according to recent Department of Commerce figures, were:

Iron and steel (including scrap steel)	52.0
Oil	76.6
Raw cotton	43.8
Machinery	42.3
Automobiles	94.3
Wood pulp	47.3

Now Japanese industry in large part rests on these imports. Without raw cotton, no cheap cotton goods. Without wood pulp, no rayon goods. Without oil, iron, steel, and machinery, no heavy industry and no arma-

ments. In addition to this, the United States alone buys 85 percent (in 1936) of Japan's raw silk. Without this export of raw silk, Japan would have no funds with which to buy raw cotton here. It is true that Japan, in part, could shift its purchases elsewhere. But then it would have to depend on the British empire for most of these very products, and the price would become prohibitive. In the case of raw cotton, for example, the United States and British India between them supplied 80.8 percent of Japan's needs in 1936.

It would be altogether wrong to assume that the American government has not been keenly conscious of this hostility. In his recent book, former Secretary of State Stimson went so far as to claim that it is almost "instinctive" for Americans to seek "stability and fair play in the Far East" despite "the volume of our trade." In other words, it is almost "instinctive" for America to oppose Japan's repeated assaults upon "stability and fair play in the Far East."

Little do our people realize how delicate is the balance of power in the Pacific. The chief restraining influence is the vast distance between the continents, but even that has noticeably contracted in recent years.

With the lapse of the London Naval Treaty, which set a 5:5:3 ratio for the navies of Great Britain, United States, and Japan, respectively, an ominous naval race has shattered the *status quo* in the Pacific. As early as March 1934, nine months before Japan's denunciation of the treaty, Congress authorized the Navy Department to build up this country's fleet to the maximum allowed by the treaty. Since 1936, the London agreement has been officially inoperative. Since 1934, our naval expenditures have increased as follows: 1934—\$297,000,000; 1935—\$436,000,000; 1936—\$564,000,000; 1937—(estimated) \$609,000,000. Our navy is now permanently stationed in the Pacific. The last large-scale naval maneuvers were held west of Hawaii. The lapse of the treaty also opened the way to the fortification of key Pacific islands, hitherto forbidden. Great Britain hastened to fortify Hongkong, and Japan, Formosa.

It now takes only six days to fly from San Francisco to Hongkong in the comfortable clipper ships of the Pan-American Airways. The stops are San Francisco, Honolulu, Midway Island, Wake Island, Guam, Manila, and Hongkong. In 1934, Wake Island was placed under the jurisdiction of the Navy Department, and Guam, Midway, and Wake Islands were provided with landing facilities for planes largely under the direction of the Navy Department.

A third indication of administration awareness to the Pacific problem is the national defense program launched in the Philippines under the supervision of an American military mission headed by General Douglas MacArthur. It is planned to build a huge military machine of 400,000 reservists by 1946, by which time the Philippines are supposed to get their independence. Until that year, however,

the Philippine army will be an integral part of America's military forces.

YET, despite these indications, American policy remains a bundle of confusing and conflicting tendencies. The action taken by Secretary of State Hull in the present conflict falls considerably short of that taken by Secretary Stimson at the outbreak of the Manchurian crisis. Less than three weeks after Mukden had been taken by Japan, Stimson dispatched a telegram to the secretary-general of the League of Nations to the effect that the American government, "acting independently," would "endeavor to reinforce what the League does," for it "is not oblivious to the obligations which the disputants have assumed to their fellow signatories in the pact of Paris [outlawing war] as well as in the Nine-Power Treaty." Shortly afterwards, Stimson had authorized Prentiss Gilbert, American consul at Geneva, to participate in the deliberations of the League Council.

Two months have already passed since the outbreak of the present aggression and the state department has not yet committed itself to coöperation with any of the other powers. Two formal declarations have been issued by Secretary Hull to date. On July 16, a statement of policy was issued in which this country repeated its advocacy of faithful observance to international agreements and "international self-restraint." But no mention was made either of the actual war in the Far East, or anywhere else for that matter, or of China, Japan, the Nine-Power Treaty, or the Kellogg peace pact. Secretary Hull subsequently issued another statement on August 23 in which the Kellogg pact and the Washington Conference treaties came in for specific mention, but still no mention of concrete activity except for withdrawal of American civilians from the war zones.

These steps are certainly in the right direction, but they dare not stop short on pain of practical impotence. The chief obstacle toward more effective action continues to be the Neutrality Act. Administration spokesmen, like Senator Pittman, are making a desperate attempt to shake themselves free of the act's plain implications. It now appears that the administration gave little heed to the Far Eastern situation during its agitation for the act. Whether the act will shortly be invoked or not, is not essential for an understanding of the administration's attitude. The very delay in putting the act into operation, compared with the speed in respect to Spain, and the numerous alibis, all pitiful in their logic and respect for facts, found necessary to justify the delay, definitely show that the administration recognizes that the Neutrality Act is most un-neutral in its actual effect. If the Neutrality Act should be invoked, then inclu-

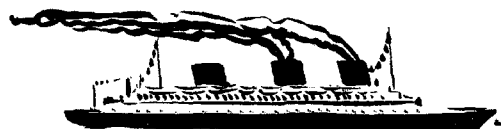
sion of raw materials as well as munitions might somewhat equalize its effect.

War in the Far East cannot ultimately be avoided by ostrich diplomacy in the present crisis. In the first place, the German-Japanese alliance directly links the Far Eastern emergency with the European crisis. America is caught in the cross-fire of two continents. In the second place, Japan's essential problems and hostility for this country would not lessen even as a result of a victorious war in China. There is every indication that Japan would simply become a less satisfied customer and a more formidable foe. The Japanese economic system is so vulnerable that the joint task of subduing China and then exploiting it is quite beyond it. A victorious war will increase Japan's already critical unfavorable balance of trade, force a rise in taxes, lower the already miserable living conditions of the Japanese masses, and give the Japanese military extremists greater freedom of movement than ever. It is extremely significant that a "hypothetical" study of a future war between Japan and the United States by Hector C. Bywater, noted British naval expert, begins with a deliberate Japanese provocation to sidetrack internal disaffection. Bywater's *The Great Pacific War* was written in 1925, and the impending war was placed between 1931 and 1933, but it is well worth reading today.

The upshot of any Japanese conquest is not the solution of any basic problems but rather their more acute development. That is what happened after Manchuria, and that is what is bound to happen again. Under these circumstances, America is in a strategic position to coöperate in the restoration of peace in the Pacific. It possesses a strangle-hold on the bottle-neck of Japanese industry. American economic sanctions against Japan would in no respect upset our economic life to any great extent, while they would materially shorten Japan's ability to fight a protracted war. Should this coöperation take the form of joint embargos by Great Britain and the Soviet Union, it is hard to see how Japan could avoid an internal debacle.

There is nothing in the Neutrality Act which could prevent this country from avowing its anti-war intentions in the Far East as did the Soviet Union. The recent Sino-Soviet non-aggression pact is a model of its kind. It obliges the signatories "to refrain from any kind of attack upon each other" and "not to render any assistance whatsoever, either directly or indirectly" to the aggressor. Such a statement by this country would give tremendous encouragement to the Chinese people. It would make clear that the United States will not again permit one hand to arm Japan, while the other sends verbal denunciations.

Time is of the essence, as President Roosevelt likes to say. For delay will not withdraw us from eventual conflict in the Pacific. It will only drag us into an ever-growing catastrophe. At the bottom, the problem resolves itself into the simple fact that the restoration of peace in the Far East is demanded by our interests both as a people and a nation.



George Zaetz

You're in the Army Now!

And if you think it's fun, read (and weep) this story by a man who got out

By Joseph W. Mitchell

A PECULIARLY satisfying sense of revenge is gained at least once a day by substituting pages torn from army regulations for scraps of discarded Sears, Roebuck catalogues used in the same practical manner as when I was an irregular tenant of Chic Sale's architectural masterpiece. But that is not sufficient retaliation for spending fourteen months as a dogface in our peacetime army. Nothing is, that I can think of now, but this inside story of an enlisted man's life squirming under shavetails' shiny boots and licking them for less money than he would get on relief, will have to do for the present.

Having gained from the army only a smallpox vaccination, sergeant's chevrons, and money, I will attempt to redeem myself with the following story. On a Wednesday, November 16, 1932, to be exact, I swore away my birthright and enlisted at Memphis. After going through two weeks' recruit drill at the Fort Benning, Ga., officers' training post, I was assigned as clerk under the judge advocate, officers' legal advisor.

As a clerk I was supposed to be only a small fiber in the nervous system—line soldiers who carry the rifles are considered the backbone of the army. The effect is essentially the same; most of us come out with about as positive and improved a personality as a mashed bar of laundry soap on a Tuesday morning.

After the first month the routine becomes as drab and commonplace as the uniform, so in reporting the four hundred and forty days I spent as "a John," I shall describe a typical day's activity and identify myself as John.

The time is Tuesday, the last day of July, during a first enlistment. The infantry school detachment, composed of clerks and skilled laborers, is quartered in four 100-yard rows of numbered tents. In Tent No. 40 John is sleeping soundly. Suddenly he is virtually jarred from bed by the reveille gun, which blasts forth each day about thirty minutes before dawn. While bugles echo and the flag is raised, John throws on his uniform, spending most of his time in wrapping the woolen leggings. In all history of dress man has not devised a more cumbersome, ridiculous piece of costume to cover the limbs of man. The war department has yet to show a true photograph of any soldier wearing a pair of perfectly wrapped army leggings. Anyway, after wrapping several yards to further bring out the shapelessness of his legs, John has another problem—what to do with the yards of canvas strip at the end. He wraps and tucks it underneath, secretly convinced it is just another of those daily irritations intended to remind

him he is a soldier. Yes, John has learned to growl, like a good soldier.

Before breakfast John and his buddies line up at the end of the company street, answer roll call, and begin policing up. "Policing up" is the military term for cleaning up, anywhere, anything in sight that is untidy. The men are divided into squads and patrol the streets under orders of a burly sergeant who yells, "Spread out and get all them —." Right here we could stir up a lively guessing game among civilians—and still hold the prize, for it would go to the one who guessed "match stems."

John swears again. He muffles his growls, after noting men with twenty-five years' experience stooping for burnt match sticks, and asks a passing K.P. (kitchen police) how they're cooking the eggs this morning.

The match-stem patrol washes up in the latrine and strolls to the mess hall. John is five minutes late because several other "Johns" were ahead of him at the wash trough. The chow line now numbers about a hundred. This is a great time to figure how much his pay will be, how many times he can go to Columbus (nearest town), how much he lost in the last rummy bout, and how much time he spends in line. John figures he is in line about one month each year. He lines up for ball games, laundry issues, canteen checks, practically everything. If John is not doping things out, he will merely wait in line—unless he is in the mood for "shootin' the bull." (The soldier's term is less ornate, but, I might say, more truly descriptive even if more odorous.)

After breakfast John returns to tidy his tent and make up his bunk. The head fold must be turned down exactly fourteen inches from the end, the four corners tucked according to rule, and the pillow done just so. There are several pages of army regulations covering this. Just another militarism you have to see to believe.

Next, John will walk another hundred yards to the latrine to shave. Army regulations order a soldier to shave daily. Formerly

the order read "clean shaved," but unfortunately it was revised.

This is the "cotton period" of khaki shirts, breeches, leggings, campaign hat, and black tie, so John throws on a hat, tucks his tie in beneath the second shirt button *always*, puffs his pipe airily, and shuffles off toward post headquarters. He looks very much like the soldier on enlistment posters, except for the bulging leggings, and feels his existence becoming just about as flat, asinine, and unchanging.

While crossing the parade ground, he automatically salutes four officers, trying to tell himself he is paying respect to the insignia representing the United States but, seeing the suffused pomp with which the salutes are returned, doesn't feel he is successful. So he revels in getting by with any unsoldierly attitude he can, slumping into a plowboy gait after passing the officers.

At eight o'clock sharp John sits down at his desk. Sets of court-martial charges are awaiting routine indorsements. He is not shocked to see that a friend is being "confined at hard labor for six months and forfeit two-thirds of his pay for a like period" for walking across officers' quarters, a restricted area. John shudders as he pictures his friend in the stockade (barbed wire city, it's called). Add army discipline to the prison routine at Alcatraz and throw in the humiliating tasks of street-cleaner and latrine orderly, and you will still be paying a compliment to life in the guardhouse.

John spends the morning hammering out letters and gossiping with the office force, a welcome escape from the strained alertness outside.

AT NOON John returns to his company area and reads the bulletin board: "Laundry from eleven-thirty to one" and "Pay at four-thirty." Beside his own name he reads: "Barracks bag not on bunk." A reprimand from his commanding officer and one night's charge of quarters awaits him after he reports to the major at eight-thirty the next morning.

John is not hungry but he has never yet allowed loss of appetite or anything short of a death in the family to deter him from developments toward becoming a chow sot. Mere eating has established itself as a sort of escape, in addition to mollifying certain aversions about army life in general, keeping him alive and killing time. Yet, he frequently dreads the atmosphere of the mess hall. He knows precisely how each dish will be burnt into sloppy submission, where each man will sit, and the pinched expression each carries, as an



Charles Martin