

TWO LITTLE NIGGER BOYS ... But Now There Are Three Power Politics Come To The Pacific

Power Politics have come at last in all their reality to the Pacific Ocean. Here is a summary of events of the last few months. It tells the story:

IN October Japan announced her ultimate incorporation within the Axis, and a wag observed caustically that it only remained for Stalin to make the fourth member of an Axis which started as an Anti-Comintern Pact.

America made it clear that she viewed this alliance as a threat against herself and Japanese publicists were not slow to make the hint more obvious.

To support American embargoes Canada and Australia came in with embargoes on the export of minerals, etc. Australia announced her embargo on the export of steel and scrap iron on November 27.

On November 28, the Australian Minister for External Affairs made the Commonwealth's first direct statement on policy towards Japan. He said that Japan's intention to create a new order in the Pacific and her alignment with the Axis was "causing the Commonwealth Government serious concern."

On November 30, when the time limit of her ultimatum to Chiang Kai-Shek's Free Chinese Government had expired, Japan formally recognised the puppet Nanking Government by signing a treaty with Wang Ching-Wei. One of the clauses provided for the retention of Japanese troops on the North Chinese Border and in Inner Mongolia.

Russia inquired about these troops, and then informed Japan (December 4) that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recognised the Government of Chiang Kai-Shek in Chungking.

Two days before then Japan had received another answer to her treaty with Wang. President Roosevelt and Mr. Cordell Hull announced (November 30) that America was making a loan of 50,000,000 dollars to the Chungking Government, that a further 50,000,000 dollars might shortly be made available to support Free Chinese currency, and that America was purchasing 60,000,000 dollars worth of different metals from Free China.

Japan Out of Luck

And, almost at the same time, the cables announced, obscurely, that Russia had agreed during friendly diplomatic talks with the U.S.A. to receive an American consul at Vladivostok.

Japan was out of luck. Offensives against Chinese forces, made along fronts from Indo-China, failed badly, and last week Chungking was reported to be preparing to hit back. The Burma Road had been reopened some weeks, and supplies were flowing into Chungking. Oil companies in the Dutch East Indies announced their intention of maintaining supplies as provided in existing contracts (with the Allies).

Japanese industrialists resigned when the embargoes began to create shortages in the raw material supplies.

The Japanese Army newspaper said: "We hate the United States more than we hate Chungking. The time must come when either we must swallow the United States, or they will swallow us."

Two Viewpoints

Just which swallower would first get indigestion was not clear. We present here two views of the Pacific situation. One from the English "New Statesman and Nation." The other from the American news-magazine, "Time." They both anticipated last month's news by several weeks:

Consistent with their attitude towards the appeasing tactics that cut that lifeline of China for three months, was the attitude of the "New Statesman's" editors to Japan's alliance with the Axis. "The pact was from the first as inevitable as it was intelligible," they said. "This alliance means that the three totalitarian Great Powers will work together to dismember the British, French, and Dutch Empires."

"The alliance had, however, a more immediate purpose. It was designed to intimidate the United States and prevent her eventual entry into the war as a belligerent. Should she come in, it binds Japan to fight in the ranks of the Axis."

How far this process of intimidation might actually affect America's policy seemed to be shown by reviews of the strategical situation in both the "New Statesman" and in "Time," although each took a slightly different view.

They agreed in discussing Japan as an enemy. "Time" talked in practical terms of the naval situation. The "New Statesman" talked in practical terms of the political, diplomatic and economic situation. Both seemed to say, in effect, that whom Japan tries to frighten she

Canadians Try Out New Radio Device

Facsimile transmission, the latest scientific device for sending printed material by radio, is being tried out by the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals.

"Machines have been built and sent overseas for trial," a spokesman in the Department of National Defence stated.

The new device enables a written message or a map to be received in identical printed form at another station. It is small enough for a receiving and sending set to be transported on a lightweight lorry, which can also carry the power unit.

makes more bold. What each said was interesting.

The Economic Weapon

These are extracts; the first from "The New Statesman":

"Japan's strength is already taxed beyond her resources by the dragging land-war in China. That indomitable Republic would become the ally of the two Western Democracies. But even without direct aid to China, the United States and British Empire have it within their power, if the Dutch colonies joined them to cripple Japan within a few months by the passive use of the economic weapon. She depends upon them for 85 per cent of her supplies of oil, for all her rubber, tin, nickel and aluminium, most of her copper and scrap-iron, and about half her supplies of iron ore."

"The problem that now faces the American peoples is perhaps the gravest in their history. If they temporise they must face the risk that both we in Europe and the Chinese in Asia may be crushed. They would confront three enemies without an ally. They would possess no base of operations either in Europe or—since Manila is too vulnerable to be much use for this purpose—in Asia. On this problem they will doubtless spend some months in reflection. We venture no guess."

"In the meantime we would urge that the policy of both Great Britain and of the United States should conform itself to the fact that Japan is now their declared, if non-belligerent, enemy. To strengthen her by trading with her would be suicidal. Our motto should be 'every impediment short of war.'"

Naval Strength Compared

As a reason for quick action, "Time" compares the naval strengths of America and Japan:

"To-day the U.S. Fleet in the Pacific, in gun power and tonnage, is conservatively 15 per cent. bigger than the Japanese Navy. Within two years that decisive margin will be pared perilously thin. The U.S. building programme was only recently begun. The Japanese programme, begun two or three years earlier, will begin producing on a big scale very soon. In her busy navy yards Japan to-day has on the stocks eight new battleships (including four fast, super-powerful 40 to 45,000 tonners), two aircraft-carriers, four fast, hard-hitting 22,000-ton battle cruisers, four light cruisers, four destroyers, nine big submarines. Four of the big (nine 16-in. guns) battleships will be commissioned in 1942; the other four, barring accidents, in 1943. These, added to her present ten battleships, will give Japan 18 capital ships. The U.S. to-day has twelve capital ships in the Pacific (plus three of ancient vintage in the Atlantic). It will get two more in 1941 (the 16-in.-gunned Washington and North Carolina) will have to wait until 1943 for its next capital additions — six battleships, including two 45,000-tonners."

A strategy demanded by the situation of bases in the Pacific is given by "Time" as another reason for action by the U.S.A. while British and Dutch-owned harbours are available:

"Naval experts have long faced the fact that it is unsafe for a fleet to fight too far from its base. . . War, if it comes, would probably be set off by a Japanese attack on the Indies. This would move the action some distance from Japanese as well as from U.S. bases. . . It would provide the U.S. with the use of other bases—particularly the first-class British base at Singapore, secondarily the Dutch bases at Sourabaya and Amboina, and the Australian base at Port Darwin."

The opinion is expressed that the Allies have enough naval craft to hold any Japanese action long enough for the American Fleet to sail from Pearl Harbour and start operating from these new bases.

Obviously, the Americans are beginning to take a decidedly practical view of their second ocean. In Britain, the "New Statesman" sums up a point that is gathering weight: "Every previous attempt to appeasement has only stimulated the Japanese to aggression. However heavy the odds may seem against us, we gain nothing by a conscious display of weakness."

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