

War Clouds in the East

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It would seem then, that from the point of view of world economy, if China could not properly exploit her own territory she should grant concessions to other nations to do so, and allow them facilities for the safeguarding of their own interests. For many years this has been the attitude of the Western industrial nations, and Japan, towards China. In that respect the Manchurian situation does not differ very much from the general situation involving China with the Western Powers.

Japan's interest in Manchuria dates from 1895 when, at the close of the Sino-Japanese war, she claimed among the spoils of war the territory of the Liaotung Peninsula. This brought about a threat from Russia, Germany and France, and Japan was forced to retrocede the territory to China in consideration of a certain indemnity. The war showed up the military inefficiency of China, and inaugurated a scramble for concessions, Russia taking the lead and getting, among other things, railway concessions in Manchuria and a 25-year lease of the Liaotung Peninsula. At the same time Germany got a lease of Kiaochow, and Britain a lease of Wei-hai-wei.

In 1900, during the time of the Boxer rising, Russia occupied Manchuria. Attempts by other powers to persuade Russia to withdraw were unsuccessful, and in 1905, Japan, who looked upon the Russian occupation of Manchuria as a particular menace to herself, declared war.

The outcome was, as you know, a victory for Japan, who demanded a transfer of the leased territory of Liaotung and what is now called the South Manchurian railway.

In 1914 the Great War broke out and in 1915, Japan, as an ally of Britain, drove Germany out of Kiaochow. On being asked by China to withdraw her troops, Japan presented China with what have been called the Twenty-One Demands. Included in these were an extension of the term of the Manchurian leases to 99 years, and certain terms giving to Japanese business men a practical monopoly of railway and other investments in Manchuria.

The Chinese revolution was then in its early stages and government was in a chaotic state. Nominally Yuan Shih Kai was President, and he, either because he could not help himself, or because he hoped by conceding something to Japan, to further his own ambitions, agreed to the main conditions. They were manifestly not conditions which a self-respecting State could agree to, except under pressure, and they have ever since constituted a grievance on the part of China.

Japan is not, as many people imagine, interested in Manchuria as an outlet for her surplus population. In 25 years only 225,000 Japanese have settled in Manchuria—less than one per cent. of the population—and of these only 3000 are farmers. The country interested in Manchuria as a field for land occupation and settlement is China, who to-day has 27,000,000 people settled in the territory. That, I think, helps to show the real line-up in the present conflict, viz.: the Chinese Government and people

Australian Broadcasting Commission to Control Programmes

AFTER a meeting of the Federal Cabinet, the Prime Minister (Mr. Lyons) announced that there had been a long discussion on the question of broadcasting policy, and that the Cabinet had reached the following decisions:

1. That a commission to control broadcasting programmes be appointed.
2. That control of the technical side of broadcasting be left with the Postmaster-General's Department for the present.
3. That the question of the complete control of broadcasting, both programme and technical, be the subject of a report by the commission at a later date.

Mr. Lyons explained that the Post Office now exercised control over broadcasting activities generally, and in addition undertook the actual provision of all technical services. Its activities covered administration, finance, provision of buildings for studio and station purposes, and engineering. The Australian Broadcasting Co. was responsible to the department for the provision of the programme service, including the arrangements to be made for the use of copyright. The Post Office already had on its permanent staff many highly-trained engineers having a specialised knowledge of all phases of communication services. In their research section, also, they had much valuable apparatus.

"For these reasons, therefore, the Cabinet has decided to leave control of the technical aspects of broadcasting for the time being with the Postal Department," Mr. Lyons added, "and to allow the new commission to investigate the whole position."

The commission will assume its duties when the contract with the Australian Broadcasting Company expires in June.

Servicemen's Examination Entries Close in April: Exam. in May

IN connection with the second examination for Radio Servicemen, we are able to advise that entries for this examination close with the registrar on April 11, and it is contemplated that the examination will be held on Monday, May 2.

In connection with the examination the technical staff of the "Radio Record" is preparing, in conjunction with the Examination Board, information dealing with the regulations and embracing interpretations of those regulations up to date. Copies of these interpretations will be supplied to candidates by application being made to the registrar, and for the information of the general reader and others interested in the trade we are happy to state that these interpretations will be published in the news columns of the "Radio Times" in two parts in the issues of March and April.

Further information dealing with the radio side of the second examination will also be incorporated in our columns.

Successful candidates in the first exam. have been notified that they are entitled to registration on the payment of 17/6 and on declaring they have had three years' experience in the radio trade and are over 19 years of age. They can then instal and service radio apparatus.

versus Japanese business concerns.

Another aspect of these special interests is that they have been acquired under treaties and agreements forced upon a weak nation by a strong one, and without, as a general rule, any quid pro quo. Japan admits this, of course, but naively points out that this is the way of the Western nations with China.

Now that China is beginning to develop her own territory in Manchuria by building railways and so on, she finds herself seriously embarrassed by monopolistic rights conceded to Japan. China claims that her sovereign rights over her territory stand in danger not merely of temporary segregation, but of perpetual alienation. Under treaty conditions she cannot purchase the Japanese-owned railways in Manchuria, nor build others, without the sanction of Japan, nor recover the leased territory before the expiration of the term of 99 years.

But Japan claims that she has other interests in Manchuria that are vital and essential to the nation. She has no outlet for her rapidly growing population. Therefore she must industrialise. To industrialise she must have raw products and coal for her factories, must import food supplies, and must find a market for her manufactured goods. In the solution of these problems Manchuria and other parts of China are the natural suppliers and the natural markets. Today 21 per cent. of Japan's trade is with China, including Manchuria.

Without supplies coming in regularly from Manchuria and a ready market throughout China, the industrial life of Japan would break down and her people starve. That is why so many earnest men in Japan are saying, as I have heard them say, "We must have Manchuria."

This is indeed a very strong claim and one that the world must sym-

pathise with, up to a point. But its great weakness lies in the assumption that it is necessary for a trading country to exercise political control, or even business management, over its suppliers or its markets.

So it would appear that much of this claim to special interests is dictated by the owners of railways, shipping concerns, mines, and factories established on Chinese soil and employing Chinese labour. Ruling these out, it is difficult to see wherein lies the vital interest of the Japanese people in Manchuria.

But this trade relationship really brings us close to the real occasion of hostilities. China, especially Manchuria, supplies Japan with food, raw products for the mills, iron, and coal. Japan sells to China mainly the products of its mills and factories. China can, if its people choose, get its manufactured goods elsewhere, and sell its raw products in other markets. The Japanese business concerns, factories, railways and shipping companies, on the other hand, are not so independent. In an economic war between the Chinese populace on the one hand and the Japanese business concerns on the other, the former hold the strategic advantage. That is precisely what has happened.

The aggressive tactics of Japan, inspired by business interests are resented by the Chinese people, who counter with a boycott. It would appear that the Japanese cannot win unless the contest is shifted from the economic arena to the political and military arena. That, I think, is the real clue to the present situation.

In conclusion I might suggest that there are several possible explanations for the Shanghai fighting as distinct from the Manchurian operations.

(1) It may be in the nature of a punitive expedition, Shanghai being the centre of the boycott movement.

(2) It may serve to divert attention from Manchuria, where Japan is consolidating her position in occupation of the territory.

(3) It may be designed to create a Japanese Concession in Shanghai similar to the French Concession and the International Settlement.

(4) It may even aim at the political disruption of China, with the possibility of more effective Japanese control of the provinces north of the Yangtse.

But (5) It is most probably simply an attempt to force the issue off the economic arena in which Japan fears to lose on to the military and political arena, where she is confident she can win.

If I might say one final word, it is this: Surely this conflict in the East is symbolic, symptomatic rather of the sickness that afflicts our civilisation. Old ideas, well entrenched and fortified by confidence in past victories are being countered by new, raw, and crude ideas. In this instance, militant, aggressive Japan stands for the old, while the vociferous revolutionary element of China that clamours for retaliatory measures stands for the new. A decided victory for either would be disastrous. Surely there can be an amicable compromise. And that is what the responsible element in China through the mouthpiece of its Government has asked for. Is the League of Nations great enough or are the nations of the League disinterested enough to discharge the responsibility placed upon them?