FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT AND THE FAR EAST: 1913 - 1941

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

ROBERT L. BURKE

1969

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ABSTRACT

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT AND THE
FAR EAST: 1913-1941

By

Robert L. Burke

Since his death in April 1945 President Franklin D. Roosevelt has been both praised and maligned for his handling of American-Asian relations during his eight and one-half years in office prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In retrospect it appears as if many of the conclusions of both the supporters and the critics of the 32nd President were in error. The errors committed were the result of an apparent lack of understanding and/or consideration of Roosevelt's personal characteristics as well as his techniques, methods and goals in formulating Far Eastern policy. It was to contribute to a greater understanding of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his goals in Asia that this study was undertaken.

From the time of his youth Roosevelt expressed a fondness for China and the Chinese and an antipathy toward the Japanese. During his tenure as Assistant Secretary of the Navy these twin feelings, sympathy for the Chinese, antipathy for the Japanese, influenced his actions. In

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1913 when Japanese-American relations grew tense, F.D.R. was ready to fight. The crisis quickly passed, but surrounded by those in the Navy Department who viewed Japan as America's Number 1 antagonist of the future his suspicions remained.

There occurred in the 1920's a dramatic alteration in Roosevelt's attitude toward the Japanese. The change was a product of the spirit of the 1920's which was, as expressed in the Washington Treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, one of cooperation between nations in international relations. In 1923 the future president went so far as to suggest that a redefinition of American interests was required. He alleged that there existed a need for the United States to alter or abandon the "Open Door" policy.

Before the suggested redefinition was made the Japanese began to expand their area of influence in Manchuria following the "Mukden Incident" and Roosevelt was elected President of the United States. In his opinion, Japan, by its actions in Manchuria, represented again as it had in 1913 that type of aggressive nation that had to be resisted. Although, determined to resist Japanese expansion he was convinced that American interests in China were not sufficient to justify direct military intervention. Also, the evidence indicates that the President sincerely hoped that through Japanese-American negotiations a solution to Asian problems could be found. From

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the Japanese point of view, however, the bases for compromise offered by the administration were less than attractive. The nucleus of all Roosevelt's compromise proposals was a western treaty system which had little applicability to the Far East.

Why did the President rest negotiations on these terms? The reason is simple. He never understood the Japanese opposition to them. He failed to realize that his terms were so unrealistic. To have understood this fact it would have been necessary for him to have clearly defined United States and Japanese interests in the South Pacific. There is no evidence to indicate that he ever developed a clear and precise definition of American, much less Japanese, stakes in Asia.

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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT AND THE FAR EAST: 1913-1941

By

Robert L. Burke

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for the degree of

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Department of History

1969

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Especial gratitude is extended to my family. The contributions of my wife, Ann, and my two children, Robyn and Rhaygen, are to numerous to list. Without their many sacrifices this study could never have been completed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER I

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT AND THE BASIS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

Since his death in April 1945 President Franklin D. Roosevelt has been both praised and maligned for his handling of American-Asian relations during his eight and one-half years in office previous to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The President's supporters have claimed that he did all that was possible to ease Japanese-American tensions and to find a solution to the difficulties separating the two Pacific powers. It was Japanese aggression, they claim, that originally created the Pacific problems and it was Japan's refusal to agree to compromise solutions that made a diplomatic settlement impossible. When it was discovered that the United States was willing to discuss the terms for a compromise they proposed, the Japanese Government withdrew those terms which made discussion possible and left only those which would give American support to Japan in carrying out its imperialist program.[1]

The President's critics have reversed this argument. They profess that it was Roosevelt, not the Japanese, who

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was being dishonest in claiming a desire to negotiate. The American terms for compromise, they explain, were stated in such a way so as to make it impossible for the Japanese to agree to them. To have agreed to these terms would have been contrary to their national interests and would have meant total capitulation. Left in the position of choosing between total surrender and war, Japan chose the most drastic solution available, a direct attack on the United States Pacific fleet. As Premier Hideki Tojo once phrased it, "sometimes man has to jump with his eyes closed . . . into the ravine below."[2]

Evidence uncovered since the end of World War II suggests that many of the conclusions of both the supporters and the critics of the President were in error. The errors committed were the result of an apparent lack of understanding and/or consideration of the President's personal characteristics as well as his techniques, methods, and goals in formulating Far Eastern policy.[3] It was to contribute to a greater understanding of Franklin Roosevelt and his goals in Asia that this study was undertaken.

Most every writer who has undertaken a study of Franklin Roosevelt has characterized him as an individual with a very complex personality and one whose objectives, motivations, and ideals were extremely difficult to determine. William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason wrote that it was well-nigh impossible to penetrate beyond broad generalities and determine or demonstrate the President's outlook,

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reasoning and attitude on specific questions or policies. Cabinet officers who were close to him, like Francis Perkins and Henry Morgenthau, have described him "as a most complicated human being--a man of bewildering variety of moods and motives."[5] Franklin Roosevelt's was, indeed, a very complex personality. However, in order to understand his foreign policy and his techniques, methods, and goals in formulating this policy, it is necessary to understand the man. In making an analysis of the President several prominent characteristics are immediately observed.

It is apparent that he thought of himself as a "man of action" rather than as an "intellectual." He had a constant yearning for something new, different and exciting to occupy his thoughts. As Louis Howe once explained; the "Boss" never liked to deal with any one problem for very long. Everyday he wanted something new and exciting to think about and it was my (Howe's) job to provide it.[6] As a result F.D.R. devoted very little of his time to consideration of the details of policy. He wanted to make the big decisions; someone else could take care of the details. Also, he spent little time contemplating and defining new policies or writing down explanations of past actions.[7] In fact, he seldom pondered deeply about anything. This characteristic, Eleanor Roosevelt found very annoying. She reported that on one occasion she tried to start a discussion of the religious training of their children: "He looked at me with his amused and quizzical smile, and said that he thought they had better

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go to church and learn what he had learned." Heatedly, I replied: "But are you sure that you believe everything you learned?" He answered: "I really never thought about it. I think it is just as well not to think about things like that too much."[8]

Roosevelt was conscious of the fact that he gave precious little of his attention to details and considered only major policy questions. But, he contended in a commencement address at the United States Military Academy at West Point, this practice was necessary in order to be an effective commander-in-chief. The President told the West Point graduates that in 1918 he visited the headquarters of Marshall Foch in France. While he was there Foch received the daily reports from his commanders in the field. All the reports were extremely brief. Roosevelt stated that he marveled at the simplicity of his organization and the lack of detail the Marshall received from his field commanders. Thereupon Foch remarked:

> If I concerned myself with details, I could not win the war. I can consider only major advances or major retirements. The knowledge of the movements of two or three kilometers here and there would confuse me by diverting my attention from the great objective. Only major results and major strategy concern the major objectives of a commander-in-chief.

The President concluded by suggesting that this story had a "good deal of application to anybody who is in a position of command, great or small."[9]

An additional characteristic which must be emphasized if one is to understand Roosevelt and his policies is that

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he was above all else a politician. Being a master of this craft he was cognizant of the fact that if one was to be elected and sit in the seat of power, it was necessary to please a good percentage of the people much of the time. Political considerations circumscribed his actions at various times and made it difficult for him to maintain consistency in foreign policy. William Phillips, a long-time friend and valued foreign policy adviser, wrote that he never fully trusted the President. He had an incessant desire to please everyone, Phillips explained. This desire often led him to appear enthusiastic about a suggestion, when all the time he knew there existed political considerations to which he would have to give preference. "For at his heart," Phillips wrote, "he was a politician, with many of the unstable characteristics of the profession."[10]

This brief sketch of the President leads to the conclusion that he was a man who wished to deal only with the "big," "important," and "exciting" questions. Even when considering the "big" questions he did not wish to think deeply about them. Rather, he was prone to act on the basis of his first impulse or to accept with little criticism the advice of those who offered something new and different. But, always tempering his actions were political considerations and an incessant desire to please everyone.

The President's personal characteristics and habits had a tremendous influence on the course of American

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foreign relations during his tenure in office. His proclivity for impulsive actions often led to inconsistencies and caused his major foreign policy advisers, Cordell Hull, Sumner Welles, Norman Davis, Stanley K. Hornbeck, and others, many anxious moments. More important, because of his reluctance to ponder deeply about anything for any length of time, he failed to initiate new approaches, formulate new goals, or fully define American interests and responsibilities in foreign relations.

One of Roosevelt's contemporaries, Harold Laski, noted, shortly after the election of 1932, his failure to formulate new approaches to deal with international problems. In an article published in January 1933, Laski presented a survey of the contemporary world scene and suggested that the new President should set out on his adventure with "humility and foreboding." Roosevelt, Laski reported, inherited a terrible situation; the World War I debt settlement yet to be made, the London Economic Conference already destroyed, the Disarmament Conference wrecked, and a Far Eastern crisis from which little comfort could be drawn. The critic suggested that there was a need for new approaches to world problems. However, he lamented that during the campaign the candidate had said nothing to reveal a creative attitude on foreign policy; and "there was a good deal of vacillation where one might have hoped for a clear stand."[11]

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The lack of a "creative attitude," to which Laski referred, continued after Inauguration Day. For two months Roosevelt carefully avoided public discussion of foreign policy. During this period he concentrated his efforts on shaping domestic policies in order to ease the strains of the economic depression. But, pressures were beginning to mount that would eventually require the President to explain the basis on which he planned to rest America's foreign relations. Since the first of the year the international situation had taken ominous turns. Once installed as chancellor, Hitler had, in a few weeks by terror and by decree, crushed all organized opposition, suppressed trade unions, outlawed other parties, and proceeded to erect a totalitarian regime in Germany. During the same period, on the other side of the globe, Japanese troops were swarming toward the Great Wall of China. Also, within the administration there were many, such as Cordell Hull, who still prized the internationalist position of Woodrow Wilson and urged the President to go before the American people and explain the basis of the new administration's foreign policy. Finally, on May 7, 1933, in his Second "Fireside Chat" he discussed international relations at length and set down for public consumption the principles which, he stated, would guide American action in the international sphere.

In this "Fireside Chat" Roosevelt discussed the relationship between domestic and foreign policies, the

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mistakes made by previous administrations in formulating foreign policy, and what was required for a successful future policy. He related that it was impossible to completely separate the "domestic situation" from the "world situation." He contended that domestic economic problems were "inevitably and deeply tied" to the economic conditions in other parts of the world. The new President declared that only by engendering a higher level of prosperity throughout the world could the United States hope to obtain permanent prosperity at home. To contribute to this higher level of prosperity, Roosevelt stated that he planned to alter the basic concepts of the nation's foreign policy in order to remove from it past "uncertainties." In foreign, even more than in domestic affairs, he contended, the nation needs a "basic and continuing policy." Only then could world peace be strengthened because only then could each nation rely permanently on the actions of its neighbors. He declared that in order to provide a fresh basis for policy he was determined to seek four great objectives. These embraced:

> . . . a general reduction of armaments and through this the removal of the fear of invasion and armed attack, and, at the same time, a reduction in armament costs, in order to help in balancing of Government budgets and in the reduction of taxation; cutting down trade barriers in order to restart the flow of exchange of crops and goods between nations; the stabilization of currencies, in order that trade can make contracts ahead; and the re-establishment of friendly relations and greater confidence between all nations.[12]

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These four principles as stated on May 7 were to serve as the basis for the administration's relations with other nations. The four included; a reduction of armaments, lowering of trade barriers, currency stabilization, and the re-establishment of friendly relations between nations. One of the four, currency stabilization, was disavowed by the President at the time of the London Economic Conference. To the other three he added three more principles including; the goal of greater cooperation among nations, the creation of a world-wide good-neighbor policy, and the necessity for greater international respect for the sanctity of treaties.

The Roosevelt concept of foreign policy was far from revolutionary. His six objectives or principles did nothing to alter the basic American concepts of foreign policy, a goal he had stated he would try to achieve. They were little more than a re-emphasis of the American desire for the maintenance of the status quo as based on the Treaty of Paris of 1919, the Washington Treaties of 1922, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The emphasis on the status quo and the method by which the six principles were to be used to maintain it were vividly portrayed in Roosevelt's public statements. In two major foreign policy addresses, delivered in the Fall of 1936, he was most emphatic.[13]

In the wake of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the previous October, and the German re-occupation of the Rhineland in March, Roosevelt journeyed to Chautauqua, New York, to deliver the first of these two addresses.

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There, on August 14, he noted the recent disruptions of the status quo and called upon all nations of the world to return to basic principles in order to assure the maintenance of international peace and tranquility.

The President told the people of Chautauqua and the world that for some time he had been contemplating how in times of crisis the United States could best serve the cause of peace. His conclusion was that the American role should be that of "setting an example." He reported that anticipation of this role was the reason he had declared in his first Inaugural Address that the United States was dedicated to the policy of the good neighbor. "The neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others--the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors." The good neighbor policy based on the respect for the sanctity of treaties and the inviolability of sovereign states has been, he stated, the major purpose and practice of American policy. The policy, Roosevelt judged, has worked well in the Western Hemisphere where there has been created a system in which all nations cooperate one with the other on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

"Peace, like charity," the President exclaimed, "begins at home; that is why we have begun at home. But peace in the western world is not all that we seek." He expressed the hope that the nations across the seas

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The United States, Roosevelt reported, intended to remain at peace with all nations of the world. But, recent events deeply concerned him. He explained that it was a bitter experience for all nations when the letter and spirit of international agreements were violated with impunity as they have been in recent years. "Permanent friendships between nations as between men can be sustained only by scrupulous respect for the pledged word." If all nations of the world would return to the ways of peace and respect for international law, he pledged that the United States would cooperate with them toward the reduction of armaments and in all other "social and humanitarian work." He also offered to liberalize American trade practices so the resources of the world could pass more easily between nations. More liberal trade practices, he suggested, would lessen the pressure on those nations not possessing great stores of natural resources to try to obtain them through war.[14]

In his Chautauqua Address, Roosevelt spoke of peace. There is no doubt that he was honest in his expression of a desire for the maintenance of peace throughout the world. However, his remarks make it clear that the type of peace he contemplated was one based on the status quo, a status quo which was to be protected by scrupulous respect for the international agreements of 1919, 1922, and 1928.

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Four months after the New York speech Roosevelt journeyed to Buenos Aires and there delivered the opening address of the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace. Once again he emphasized the necessity of adhering to basic and respected principles if world peace was to be maintained.

He opened his address with a survey of the American scene and applauded the governments of the Western Hemisphere for their determination to work toward greater hemispheric solidarity and cooperation. He emphasized again that the American experience could serve as the model for the entire world. While the Western Hemisphere was at peace, Roosevelt remarked, other continents were being rent asunder by old hatreds and new fanaticisms. Other governments were demanding that injustice and equality be corrected by resorting to the sword. These same governments were suggesting that new markets could be achieved only through conquest. They would tell us, he exclaimed, that international obligations and treaties should be disregarded.

The President advised that the threat of war was building in various parts of the world. The American nations had no intention of becoming involved in any war, but, he contended, the "madness of a great war in other parts of the world would affect us and threaten our good in a hundred ways." It was for this reason the responsibility of all American republics to work to avert the great

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catastrophe of international conflict. As to the method of averting war, the President challenged his American colleagues to strive for: the adoption of democratic principles throughout the world, a reduction in armaments, a liberalization of trade, greater world cooperation in humanitarian and social areas, and greater respect for the sanctity of the pledged word. Through the implementation of these programs, he concluded, the Western Hemispheric nations could assist in eradicating the causes of war.[15]

In these two addresses as well as in other public statements, private conferences with foreign leaders, discussions with members of his administration and friends; Roosevelt emphasized that the major goal of his foreign policy was the attainment of peace. A condition of peace wherein, as he once phrased it, men in all nations would be "truly safe to work out their own destiny," a time when "the sword shall not follow on the heels of the merchant," when the burden of increasing armaments could be lifted from the shoulders of the world already staggering under the weight of taxation.[16] The President was a man of peace. There was nothing sinister in his goals. The type of peace he contemplated was to be based on the perpetuation of the status quo. He asked the governments of the world to rededicate themselves to the principle of respect for the sanctity of international agreements. The international agreements he made reference to were: the Treaty of Paris

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of 1919, the Washington Treaties of 1922, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. However, it was exactly these treaties that Germany, Italy, and Japan were protesting against. It was the solidification of the status quo by these agreements which they saw as a denial of their national interests.

The President was sincere in his efforts to create conditions wherein international peace could be assured. However, because of his inability to find new approaches to peace, and because of his failure to define American interests throughout the world so new approaches might be possible, he fell back on the maintenance of the status quo as the basis of his foreign policy. This basis and the principles which evolved from it contained little to encourage compromise on the part of the expanding nations of Europe and Asia.

The maintenance of the status quo was the primary goal of Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policy. It was also the bulwark on which he rested his relations with Asia. It must always be remembered when discussing the President's Far Eastern policy that this area was seldom his main interest and never his only interest. Far Eastern policy was only a segment of American foreign policy as a whole and had to be determined with respect to analogous situations elsewhere.

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[4]William
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FOOTNOTES

[1]For the views of those who defended Roosevelt and/or condemned the Japanese see: Joseph W. Ballantine, "Mukden to Pearl Harbor," Foreign Affairs, XXVII (July, 1919), 651-664; James M. Burns, The Lion and the Fox (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1956), pp. 459-462; Herbert Feis, The Road to Pearl Harbor (New York: Atheneum, 1963); Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (2 Vols; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1948), II, 1067-1105; William L. Neumann,"F.D.R. and Japan, 1913-1933," Pacific Historical Review, XXII (May, 1953), 143-153; Basil Rauch, Roosevelt: From Munich to Pearl Harbor (New York: Creature Age Press, 1950); Bernard Sternsher, "The Stimson Doctrine: F.D.R. versus Moley and Tugwell," Pacific Historical Review, XXXI (August, 1962), 281-289; Rexford G. Tugwell, The Democratic Roosevelt (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1957), pp. 560-589.

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[4]William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Challenge to Isolation, 1937-1940 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 2.

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[6]Reporte
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[7]Ibid.,

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[9]"Addres
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[6]Reported in George Creel, Rebel at Large, Recollections of Fifty Crowded Years (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1947), p. 332.

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[9]"Address to the Graduating Class at West Point," June 12, 1935, Samuel I. Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (13 vols; New York: Random House, 1938-1950), IV, 251.

[10]William Phillips, Ventures in Diplomacy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952), p. 187. See also: James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story: The Roosevelt Years (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948), p. 214.

[11]Harold Laski, "Roosevelt, the Fighter," Living Age (January, 1933), vol. 343, 386.

[12]"Second Fireside Chat: What We Have Been Doing and What We Are Planning to Do," May 7, 1933, Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, II, 160-168.

[13]The two addresses referred to were chosen for analysis because they were both considered, by the President, to be major foreign policy statements. Also, both were lengthy and contained clear expressions of his ideas. Other addresses could be analyzed and the conclusions would remain the same. See, for example: "An Appeal to the Nations of the World for Peace by Disarmament and for the End of Economic Chaos," May 5, 1933, Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, II, 185; "From Now On, War By Governments Shall be Changed to Peace By Peoples," Address before the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, December 28, 1933, Ibid., p. 545; "To Maintain Principles by Means of Peace Rather Than by Means of War," Address at San Jacinto, Texas, June 11, 1936, Ibid., V., 206; "The Treaties Adopted at the Inter-American Conference at Buenos Aires Are Submitted to the Senate for Ratification," May 26, 1937, Ibid., VI, 228; "A Letter on the Problem of Maintaining World Peace," Franklin Roosevelt to Dr. Charles Gilmore Maphis, June 29, 1937, Ibid., 284; "Annual Message to Congress," January 3, 1938, Ibid., VII, 1; "Our Ideal is Democratic Liberty. . . . Our Method is Increased Understanding. . . . Our Basis Is Confidence," Address to the Pan American Union, April 14, 1938, Ibid., VII, 219; "It

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[14]"I Have Seen War . . . I Hate War," Address at Chautauqua, New York, August 14, 1936, Ibid., 285-292.

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CHAPTER II

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Franklin Roosevelt's association with the Far East was not, like his Uncle Theodore's, shaped by feelings of racial chauvinism, nor based, like Herbert Hoover's, on the experience of overlordship. He had a romantic view of the area, drawn mainly from the fact that his mother's family, the Delanos, were merchants in the China trade and the Roosevelt family lore was full of the familiar glamor of that calling, as apparently he never tired of telling callers whenever the subject of China was apropos and often when it was not.

After he became President, he and Mrs. Roosevelt received on numerous occasions gifts from Chinese friends and acquaintances. Dr. H. H. Kung, Chinese Finance Minister, sent him a gift of several boxes of Chinese tea in December 1934. Thanking Kung for the gift he wrote that he and the family were truly enjoying it as they had been brought up on "really good Chinese tea."[1] A month later Kung sent him a small Chinese rug as a New Year's gift. In a note of thanks he again made reference to his ancestral

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Quite often the President used his ancestral association to turn aside embarrassing questions. At the Cairo meeting during World War II "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell sought instructions on how to meet a sharp and unexpected change in China policy. The President, according to Stilwell, replied:

> Well, now, we've been friends with China for a gr-e-e-at many years. I ascribe a part of this good feeling to missionaries. You know, I have a China history. My grandfather went out there, to Swatow and Canton, in 1829, and even went up to Hankow. He did what was every Americans ambition in those days,--he made a million dollars; and when he came back, he put it into western railroads. And in 8 years he lost every dollar--Ha! Ha! Ha! Then in 1856 he went out again . . . and made another million. This time he put it into coal mines, and they didn't pay a dividend till two years after he died. Ha! Ha! Ha![3]

Charged with this family relationship Roosevelt as a boy exhibited a keen interest in matters pertaining to the Pacific region. While a student at Groton School he participated on several occasions in debates on questions related to Far Eastern policy. In February 1899 he argued the "negative" side of the question: "Resolved, that the United States and England should guarantee the integrity of China." Though assigned to argue the "negative," his son Elliott, writing some years later, contended that he really believed in the "affirmative" position.[4]

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Sympathy for the Chinese was also suggested in a letter he sent to his "Mama" and "Papa" on May 17, 1899. He wrote that on the previous evening Professor Morse, a Groton instructor, gave the student body his third lecture; "it was on China, and most interesting, although I rather thought he ran down the poor Chinamen a little too much and thought too much of the Japs."[5]

Though indicating some disenchantment with the Japanese his overall fascination with the Far East included an interest in the island Empire. In the summer of 1905 he and Eleanor were married and they set out on a honeymoon cruise to Europe. During the passage the groom spent much of his time trying to communicate with a group of Japanese Naval Officers who were on their way to England to take charge of two battleships being constructed there. He wrote "Mama" of several interesting talks with them even though their English was not voluble, and "I find myself giving out more information than I receive."[6] That these talks were more than mere passing conversations and he was spending a great deal of time trying to communicate with the "six Japs" was indicated in a letter Eleanor penned to "Mama" two days later. She wrote somewhat peevishly that "Franklin . . . has spent most of his time <u>trying</u> to talk to the Japs."[7]

During his school days and the years immediately thereafter the young Roosevelt exhibited a real interest in topics related to the Far East. In the late 1890's,

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no doubt influenced by his parents, he began to display a definite concern for the Chinese and their quest for the independence and territorial integrity of their land.

As a Dutchess County Democrat, Roosevelt began his political career in 1910 when he was elected to the New York State Senate. Two years later, shortly after being sworn in for a second term in the State Senate, he was designated by Woodrow Wilson to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

F.D.R. became Assistant-Secretary at the age of thirty-one and held the office for more than seven years. He was the youngest of a long line of youthful Assistant Secretaries. He was twenty years the junior of Secretary Josephus Daniels and less than half the age of many of the naval officers with whom he did business. It was an important position for so young a man and in the ensuing seven years he gained invaluable experience. Through his experience and contacts in the Navy Department he solidified certain of his previously held attitudes and gained some new ones which he never relinquished.

Only a few weeks after the assumption of power by the Wilson Administration, relations between the United States and Japan became so tense that for a brief period war seemed imminent. Difficulties developed out of the enactment by the California Legislature of an alien land law. The Californians, ever sensitive to the "yellow peril," were disturbed by the high birthrate and unusual

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acquisitiveness of the Japanese. The statistics as to population and landholding now cause such fears to appear ridiculous, but alarmists of the time were convinced that the Japanese would elbow all whites into the ocean within a century or so. On May 19, 1913, Governor Hiram Johnson signed the Webb Act which provided that aliens eligible to citizenship could own property without limitation, but all other aliens (Japanese, Chinese, and other orientals) could own land only as specified in existing treaties.[8]

The bill brought forth an immediate protest from the Japanese. Ambassador Chinda alleged in protest that the bill was unfair, inequitable, discriminatory, prejudicial to the rights of Japanese in California, inconsistent with the American-Japanese Treaty of 1911, and inconsistent with the spirit of amity existing between the two nations.[9]

President Wilson was sympathetic to the Japanese protests. Though he was unable to convince the Californians to ameliorate their actions his well publicized sympathy did much to cool the Japanese ardor and tensions were quickly relaxed. However, during the month of May 1913 there were many people, including the President, who believed the United States and Japan to be dangerously near war.[10]

During the crisis Assistant Secretary Roosevelt's sympathies were fully with the American militants who counselled a firm stand against the Japanese and vigorous preparations for war.[11] Writing a little more than a year

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later he explained in a letter to Alfred T. Mahan that during the crisis he had urged that the Navy be assembled and made ready for action.[12] His position was quite similar to that of the Joint Army and Navy Board during the crisis. At a meeting of the Board held on May 13 it was unanimously decided to recommend that the fleet be assembled at Manila. It was also recommended that additional ships be sent to Hawaii and to Panama. Roosevelt agreed with these recommendations and urged that they be immediately carried out. Both Wilson and Daniels disapproved of them because they feared that any such action might precipitate war.[13]

On the same day that the Joint Board's recommendations were made public, Roosevelt received a long memorandum from Rear Admiral Bradley A. Fiske, the Aide to Operations. Fiske reported there was a great deal of pressure in Japan for annexation of the Philippine and Hawaiian Islands. It was believed by many influential groups in Japan that this action would solve the surplus population, social and economic problems of the home islands.

It would be very easy, Fiske advised, for the Japanese to occupy the Philippine and Hawaiian Islands. After placing 60,000 men in the Hawaiian and 150,000 in the Philippines they could withdraw their fleet to some protected area and "stand pat." In this case there would be little the United States could do but cut off most of her trade with the rest of the world by means of the fleet.

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This action would indeed put the Japanese in a very difficult position, however, they could probably stand it for a period of about two years. If the blockade were to be maintained around Japan for two years the entire fleet would have to be used. To do this would be enormously expensive; and even if no actual battleship battle was fought, it was probable that many ships would be lost through the agency of submarines, mines, and torpedoes. The ultimate outcome of the contest would depend on the state of mind of the people of the United States. It may be, Fiske advised, that the Japanese believed there were a large enough number of people in the United States "who would be glad to get rid of the Philippine Island, that they would easily come to terms with Japan after an inglorious and expensive war that lasted, say, two years."[14]

Roosevelt made no comment on the Fiske memorandum but that it and/or other similar reports influenced him is suggested by his participation in drawing up a secret plan "in anticipation of trouble with Japan. . . ." The plan listed certain steps that should be taken immediately. Among the steps were; the reassignment of retired officers to shore duty thereby relieving active officers who should be ready for sea service at once, the withdrawal of battleships and armored cruisers from safe waters and the assignment of gunboats and "least valuable cruisers" to replace them, increases in recruiting parties in order to fill the complement of enlisted men, organization of two

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squadrons of gunboats, cruisers, and revenue cutters for service in the Pacific. Roosevelt concluded that if these precautions were taken there would be less confusion "when an emergency threatens."[15]

The anticipation of a hypothetical situation was all the action the Assistant Secretary could take while serving under a chief who wished to do everything possible to avoid conflict. As the crisis continued Secretary Daniels left Washington and once more as in 1898 a Roosevelt was Acting Secretary. This time there were no secret orders sent to an admiral as in 1898. His one move was slight indeed compared to the previous actions of Uncle Teddy. He ignored Wilson's instructions against moving naval vessels in a manner that might appear as hostile to the Japanese and allowed secret orders to go to the Commander of the fleet. The next day he announced to the press:

> Without previous warning, emergency orders were issued yesterday from Washington, directing that the submarines be sent to sea with the greatest speed. The rapidity with which the crews were gathered together and the boats got under way is exceedingly gratifying to the Department.[16]

Though the action was insubordinate, apparently no one criticized the Assistant Secretary for it.[17]

After the crisis had passed and the military establishment began an examination of the operative policy during it, Admiral Fullam testified that only the Assistant Secretary and the General Board gave a "willing ear to the seriousness of the situation" and that the Navy Department

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proper was totally indifferent to the possibility of war "being forced upon us."[18]

Though suspicious of the Japanese and their aggressive intentions a second element pervaded Roosevelt's thoughts during the crisis. He visualized the possibility that the threat of the "yellow peril" might be used as justification for increased naval appropriations and the building of an independent Pacific fleet.

On May 10, 1913, Theodore Roosevelt wrote the Assistant Secretary concerning the needs of the American Navy. He reported that he did not personally anticipate trouble with Japan but it may develop, "and if it does it will come suddenly." In such a case it would be disastrous if the fleet were separated, half in the Atlantic and half in the Pacific. There should not be a single battleship in the Pacific unless the entire fleet is there, he advised. "Russia's fate ought to be a warning for all time as to the criminal folly of dividing the fleet if there is even the remotest chance of war."[19]

F.D.R. responded to Uncle Ted on July 17 asking him to publish articles urging that the fleet not be divided and to show "by historical retrospect the disastrous effects of division." He suggested that articles "by you and Admiral Mahan would bring more results than if a hundred other officers and men in public life were to say the same thing."[20]

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Some months later he wrote in a similar vein to Alfred Thayer Mahan. He urged the Admiral to undertake a vigorous propaganda campaign in the interest of building a substantial Pacific fleet. He wrote that when the Panama Canal was opened there would be substantial pressure to split the present fleet. This action, he believed, should be resisted and he asked Mahan to write some articles on the disadvantages of splitting the fleet.[21]

The New York Times on January 18, 1914, carried a report by Roosevelt explaining the need for additional ships in the Pacific in order to protect that coast. Though not suggesting the possibility of war with Japan, he did remark that the United States had 1800 miles of unprotected Pacific Coast. In order to adequately protect that coast the country needed a larger navy. "If I couldn't secretly land on this unprotected coast and I was Japanese I would commit Hari Kari."[22]

Shortly after the easing of the crisis in the Pacific new difficulties erupted in Europe. When hostilities commenced signaling the beginning of World War I Roosevelt was away from Washington on an inspection trip of West Coast naval facilities. He was called back to the Capitol immediately.

From the beginning of hostilities he contended that because of the nation's many interests in various parts of the world it would be impossible to remain neutral. During the period of neutrality he vigorously supported the

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activities of the interventionists, and, when the United States finally entered the conflict in April 1917 the Assistant Secretary worked long hours at his desk in order to make the navy an effective fighting unit. One of his major projects during the war was the espousal of a plan to close the English Channel and the North Sea against submarines by a mine barrage.[23]

During the war years F.D.R.'s major concern was with affairs European. However, he was exposed constantly during these years to the ideas of those men who continued to view Japan as America's number one antagonist of the future.

F.D.R. retained for his file a newspaper clipping published in April 1916 which reported that William Kent, Congressman from California, had abandoned his stand "as an ardent peace-at-any price" advocate, and joined those who were urging and voting for an adequate navy to enforce the nation's policies. There were many reasons for the change of mind, Kent reported. But, one of the more important reasons was this nations involvement in the "Eastern struggle" which had come about because of the acquisition of the Philippines. The Congressman suggested that trouble was brewing with the Japanese because of both their domestic and international policies and this nation had to be prepared to face this fact.[24] In April 1916 the Assistant Secretary also saved a report of an interview with L. W. Shaw, former Secretary of the Treasury, wherein

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Shaw cited facts that "spelled war" between the United States and Japan.[25]

Other reports of suspicious Japanese activities were also received, noted, and retained by the Assistant Secretary. One of these reports suggested that the Japanese in secret alliance with the Germans were busily engaged in conducting spy activities in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.[26] On July 8, 1919, Roosevelt received from W. L. Rogers, Vice Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet, a report on a different aspect of the Japanese threat to American interests. Writing from Shanghai, Rogers referred to the grasping, aggressive, and selfish national policy of Japan, "whose Asiatic version of the Monroe Doctrine is that Japan only is to rule in Eastern Asia." In order to thwart Japanese aims of taking over all of China, Rogers suggested that the American fleet be moved into the Pacific and the size of the fleet be decidedly increased.[27]

Shortly after the first of the new year the Assistant Secretary received a brief memorandum on "Evidence of Japan's Preparation for War." At the top of this memorandum he wrote "Secret--Destroy." The document detailed reasons why the Japanese might decide on war with the United States. It was suggested that they believed the solution to their population, economic, and political problems rested with the control of China. The greatest obstacle to the achievement of their goals was the United

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States. For this reason they had been making strenuous preparations for war during the past year.[28]

A second "Memorandum on Evidence of Japan's Preparation for War" was sent to the Assistant Secretary on May 24. The report contained evidence of Japanese designs for the creation of a "Monroe Doctrine" for the Far East which was aimed at destroying American prestige in the area. It was also observed that in China there was a unanimity of belief that an armed conflict between Japan and the United States was inevitable. The only question was whether it would come in time to save China or "whether by the time it comes, Japan will have so strengthened her hold over China as to be in a position to compel her to declare war against the United States as an ally of Japan." The conclusion offered in the memorandum was that the situation called for most careful consideration by both the United States and Great Britain, and if possible, "some measure of cooperation in combating this Japanese influence."[29]

Admiral W. L. Rogers proposed a strengthening of the Pacific Fleet in order to counter the aggressive intentions of the Japanese. Other advisers suggested cooperative efforts by the United States and Great Britain. One additional recommendation aimed at thwarting Japanese aggression was made early in 1920.

On January 21 Roosevelt received from the State Department what he described as a "Splendid Report" on "What America's Policy Should Be in China."[30] Evidence

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was cited that during recent years Japanese political, commercial, and military interests in China had been increasing with a corresponding decrease in Occidental influence. The ultimate aim of the "aggressors" was to establish a monopoly of control in all of China. The report suggested that the United States refuse to extend diplomatic recognition to Japanese territories acquired by force. "Because Japan . . . has seen fit to create a government according to her tastes is no reason why our diplomats should seek to give it 'face' and prestige by approaching it" diplomatically.

The writer continued with the observation that America's diplomats were prone to believe that there was nothing to be done but watch Japanese manoeuvers in China with folded hands, to get out, to drive the Japanese out, or to accept whatever they care to offer. It never seemed to occur to them that the United States might develop a policy consistent with its national ethics and above the standard set by the Japanese. The center of this new policy, it was suggested, should be the principle of non-recognition. In addition there should be included the positive program of doing all possible to aid China in the development of a strong independent and democratic system of government. A strong and independent government, the report continued, was America's best hope for the maintenance of the "Open Door" in China. A weak government was essential to Japan's imperialistic ambitions.

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During the first months of Roosevelt's service in the Navy Department Japanese-American relations were tense and many high-ranking members of the government, including Roosevelt, believed war to be a distinct possibility. The tensions relaxed and as they did America's attention shifted to Europe with the outbreak of hostilities of World War I. However, even during the war years influential members of the Navy Department continued to view the Japanese with suspicion, and there is much evidence to indicate that the general feeling in the Department was that a conflict with Japan was inevitable. Roosevelt was constantly exposed to this philosophy. Later, when he became President of the United States the influence of this seven year exposure remained. However, with the end of World War I the temper of the times was changing. With this change Roosevelt's view of the Japanese changed also.

After receiving the Democratic Party's nomination for Vice-President in the summer of 1920, Roosevelt resigned as Assistant Secretary. Between mid-August and Election Day he waged a vigorous campaign. He traveled almost ceaselessly, usually in a car attached to regular trains, sometimes by auto, and once by airplane. But all was for naught. In November the Democratic presidential candidate James M. Cox and his vice-presidential running mate went down to defeat before the Republican tide led by Warren G. Harding. The defeat meant a forced retirement from politics for Roosevelt and shortly after the first of the year he

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returned to the law firm of Emmet, Marvin and Roosevelt. At the same time he assumed the position of vice-president and director of the New York City office of the Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland. The period of the early Twenties was to be for the defeated candidate a period of vigorous business activity while at the same time he would keep his eyes focused on his major interest, politics.

Previous vice-presidential candidates had quickly disappeared from the public view after their defeats, but, Roosevelt had no intention of fading away. He remained constantly before the public eye. He became president of the Navy Club, chairman of the New York branch of the Boy Scouts of America, he raised money for the American Legion and played a leading role in organizing the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. This period was to be but an interlude in his political career. He would lie low for a while until "this bunch in Washington show either that they can make good or that they are hopeless failures," he wrote a friend. He told Stephen Early that he looked to him for many things in the days to come--"Thank the Lord we are both comparatively youthful!"[31]

Suddenly in the summer of 1921 both his business and political activities were brought to a sudden though only temporary halt. In late August after suffering for more than two weeks with an undefined illness it was determined that he had been stricken with an acute case of poliomyelitis. For most of the rest of the decade Roosevelt dedicated

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his efforts to trying to overcome the affects of the crippling disease. Only infrequently until 1928 when he was elected Governor of the State of New York did he participate in political activities. For the most part his political endeavors were limited to letter writing, a method he effectively used to stay in contact with leading political figures.

On several occasions he took pen in hand and with the assistance of close friends drafted letters and articles which were published in leading journals and newspapers. A few of these journalistic endeavors provide an insight as to his attitude toward Far Eastern policy during the Twenties. The thoughts characteristic of his writings during this decade are far different from those proclaimed during his earlier career as Assistant Secretary as well as those of his later presidency. His attitude on the Far East as represented by his published works are those of the average American during the period of "Normalcy." These were the types of attitudes which made possible the negotiation of the Washington Treaties of 1922 and the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928. The philosophy of trust, friendship, and mutual cooperation, which was prevalent in most nations during the decade, pervades the writing of the retired politician.

George Marvin, an associate since his years at Groton School, wrote on September 3, 1922, and asked if he would be interested in collaborating on an article on international

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relations for a future number of Our World.[32] Roosevelt responded that when asked to write anything, "be it a magazine article or a 12 volume history of the Navy," he always wanted to say yes. However, that was always providing that the writing was to be done "next week, or the week after." He explained that he was trying to stay out of print on controversial subjects, "and by all that is holy if I got started on any kind of article on international matters my remarks would most assuredly be controversial." He suggested that Marvin wait until he returned to New York City in October and then they would discuss the project at length. "I may get so mad in the meantime over something that is or is not being done in Washington that the grenade inside me may burst."[33]

On September 21 Marvin wrote again explaining he had been commissioned by Asia magazine "to run down some Big-Wigs" as contributors of future articles. He asked if he could not, "with his ancestral background of Cathay," do something on the Far East.[34] Apparently by this time the "grenade" had "burst" for Roosevelt replied in a very enthusiastic manner that an article in the October edition of Current History had greatly disturbed him. In the article, "Atlantic and Pacific Sea Power," the author suggested that Japan was attempting to gain complete control of the Pacific and discredit the United States in that area. The position taken was that America's agreement not

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to fortify the Philippines and Guam had removed one of the chief obstacles to Japan's supremacy in Asiatic waters.[35]

The former Assistant Secretary pointed out that using the Current History article as a basis he would explain that people were thinking in terms of war "rather than in terms of trying to remove the causes of war." He would also point out that since 1890 a serious military rivalry had been growing between the United States and Japan. And, for the last twenty years the nation's hold on the Philippines and Guam in the case of war "was not only problematical, but the odds were distinctly against us." With the recent developments in methods of naval warfare Japan's position in the western Pacific had become even stronger. From this basis he would then explain that it was in the best interests of the United States to abide by the terms of the Washington Treaties and thereby to encourage "Japan to do so also." ". . . I would end up with a general plea to accept the assurances of good faith on both sides."[36]

In the weeks that followed F.D.R. and Marvin began work on an article on Japan with Marvin doing most of the research and Roosevelt doing the initial drafting. In the early spring of 1923 the article was completed and submitted to Asia for publication in the July edition.

Entitling the article "Shall We Trust Japan?" Roosevelt began by asking why so many Americans, after witnessing the devastation of war, continued to think of Japan in terms of war?[37] A similar mental attitude existed

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on the other side of the Pacific, he reported. "Is this mutually apprehensive habit of mind, to whatever understandable origins it may be due, justified today?"

In summary fashion the author then traced the growth of tensions between the two nations from 1898 to 1920. To 1898, he wrote, relations between the United States and Japan had been largely sentimental. The people of this nation believed that they had been largely responsible for awakening Japan to Western Civilization and the Japanese appeared to be appropriately grateful for the more abundant life that had been opened to them.[38] Then in 1898 as a result of the Spanish-American war this nation obtained an empire in the Pacific. Immediately thereafter, Roosevelt contended, discussions as to defenses in the area began in the military and naval circles of both nations and spread to the newspapers, which gave the whole subject an exaggerated importance. For the next two decades both nations continued a policy of bolstering their military defenses in the western Pacific in order to meet the "taken-for-granted" aggressions of the other.

F.D.R. related that in 1908 and again in 1913 the United States and Japan hovered on the brink of war. The imminence of war between the two began to be taken for granted. Responsible journalists alluded to it as being merely a question of time. "Today, in 1923, although the much anticipated war is not even seriously considered,

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many people in both nations cling to the old habit of mind."[39]

F.D.R. contended the time had come for a change. The old feelings of hostility were largely the result of changing alignments and changing conditions in international affairs. They were the logical product of not any one cause, but of a series of almost inevitable causes based on new conditions, "which were practically forced on both governments." These conditions have now been removed so the people of both nations should henceforward base their thoughts of each other on the assumption of peace.[40]

One of the most important steps taken toward the development of mutual trust during the decade, the former Assistant Secretary suggested, was the negotiation of the Washington Treaties. These halted the race for naval supremacy and created a strategic deadlock in the Pacific. American military planners had long conceded that in case of war this nation's territories in the western Pacific could not be held. Nevertheless, so long as the race in naval armaments continued, responsible naval officers had to plan the best possible defenses for American possessions in the Far East. These efforts, Roosevelt reported, have been materially changed by the Washington Treaties. The establishment of a five to three naval ratio between the two countries and the agreement by the United States not to "add" any fortifications in the Philippines or Guam provided greater security for the area.[41]

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Still, Roosevelt related, the cry of the "yellow peril" was heard and jingo counsels prevailed in some centers. It was implied that the Japanese would not abide by the terms of the recently negotiated pact. However, he reported, the evidence showed that contrary to previous tactics Japan had lived up to both the letter and spirit of the treaty.[42] The major problem in current United States-Japanese relations, Roosevelt lamented, was that the American public had not been advised of this new military situation. "It seems a pity that our own government has failed to enlighten the ignorance of the nation on matters of such vital importance."[43]

Other important issues of Japanese-American relations were also discussed in the article. In regard to the question of Japanese and American interests in China, it was reported that the situation had improved. The Japanese had made several concessions to the Chinese since World War I that had tended to improve relations. At the same time, he contended, there was a need for the United States to alter or abandon its "old-fashioned habit of mind" in regard to the "Open Door" policy. It was of paramount importance for this nation to recognize the "real necessity to Japan of the market and the raw products of that part of the Chinese mainland contiguous to her island shores."[44]

As to the question of Japanese immigration and property-owning in the United States, Roosevelt suggested,

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that problem could be solved through the means of an honest adherence by both nations to the "Golden Rule." Neither nation desires "nonassimilable immigrants as citizens, nor do they desire any extensive proprietorship of land without citizenship."[45]

Commercial rivalry had also caused problems in the past. He judged that there was no reason to believe that these problems need be an issue in the future. Although Japanese and American interests would continue to overlap and perhaps clash in the development of commerce in the Pacific, Roosevelt predicted that the trade potential of the area would be adequate to satisfy both nations well into the indefinite future.[46]

The principal causes of friction between the two nations, Roosevelt concluded, had been removed or were on the road to eventual elimination. However, the elimination of the "old habit of mind" was not enough. Some new habit had to take its place. Many people and many nations of the world were destitute as a result of the Great War. He contended that it was the responsibility of the solvent nations to help rebuild the world. The United States and Japan came through the world war in better physical and economic condition than any of the other great powers. F.D.R. suggested that as a great and prosperous nation the Japanese should be asked to play their magnanimous part in rebuilding the world. "If instead of looking for causes of offense, we in all good faith confidently expect from

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Japan cooperation in world upbuilding, we shall go far toward insuring peace."[47]

Hector C. Bywater, London correspondent for the Baltimore Sun and author of Sea Power in the Pacific, wrote a critical review of Roosevelt's Asia article which was published in the Sun on July 21.[48] Bywater's view was that Japan could not be trusted and steps should be taken, as Great Britain and Holland had done, to strengthen America's military resources in the South Pacific.[49]

Three weeks later a Roosevelt rebuttal was published by the Sun.[50] Roosevelt declared that Bywater was still looking at Pacific relationships from the old point of view, and that was exactly the outlook he was trying to combat. "It is the old story of arming for defense because you see a threat of possible danger. The other fellow follows in order to keep up with your new armaments, and a competitive military and naval program results." The Washington Treaties provided a means of ending this type of competition. "No," Roosevelt wrote, "the millennium has not arrived, but the nations are using greater and greater efforts to prevent war and to prevent the causes of war." The writer concluded that the United States and Japan have not now and will not have any time in the near future a reason to fight each other. The people of America, he judged, feel that the Treaties of 1921 were a long step toward the establishment of "a rule of reason" in the Pacific. "We

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F.D.R.'s attitude concerning Japan is summarized nicely in a letter he sent to George Foster Peabody on September 26.[52] Peabody had written Roosevelt a few days earlier to offer congratulations on his Asia article. Roosevelt replied that his tenure as Assistant Secretary of the Navy had convinced him that a great deal of the suspicion between the two countries developed from the "perfectly natural attitude" of the military whose duty it was to prepare the country against the "most probable enemy." He conceded that while with the Navy Department and charged with the responsibility of preparing an adequate defense he found it easier to define "adequate defense" in terms of some definite nation. This practice naturally bred suspicion. The Washington Treaties he believed had "removed the greater part of the indefinable something which bred suspicion and competition first in the defense departments, then in Congress, and finally among a large body of people who followed the doings of the government."[53]

He commented that his only regret about his Asia article was that it would not be read by the "average citizen." He feared that magazines like Asia were read by the "sane" people who knew the general facts and did not need convincing. It was a pity, he believed, that chain newspapers such as Hearst would not make "sensational

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the fact that Japan and the United States have no reason for going to war with each other."[54]

In 1925 there was a mild disturbance in Japanese-American relations and some adverse criticism of the United States in Japan because of naval manoeuvers which were held in the Hawaiian region of the Pacific. Again, Roosevelt attempted to calm the public and counter the attempts by jingoes to revive the "yellow peril." He argued that there was not and would not be in the indefinite future any "sane" reason for conflict between the two powers.[55]

> The Japanese people and the American people do not want to invade each other's countries--there can be no quarrel there. The Japanese people and the American people both seek trade expansion in legitimate channels and under fair conditions of world wide competition--that is not a cause for war. The Japanese Navy is at perfect liberty to carry out so-called strategic problems involving the defense of their coast. We have the same right with respect to our own coasts.[56]

As the election of 1928 approached well-known Democrats were being sought as contributors to leading journals in order to present the party's view of American foreign policy. In July 1928 the former Assistant Secretary of the Navy and vice-presidential candidate published a systematic survey of the nation's foreign policy.[57]

The article was for the most part an indictment of the foreign policy of Presidents Harding and Coolidge. F.D.R. wrote that in American history there had been a few rare periods when the country's policy was characterized

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as negative and sterile and earned for the American people dislike, fear, and ridicule. "I believe many millions of citizens in the United States share my conviction that the past nine years must be counted on the debit side of the ledger."[58] Since 1919, he contended, America had contributed little to the solution of grave world problems except the Naval Conference of 1921. But, even in this case success was not lasting and complete. "The definite sacrifices we made were not productive because we assumed that a mere signature was enough; no machinery was set up to finish the work."[59]

The time had come, the writer charged, to undertake a wholly new approach in the field of international relations. It was time to redefine relations vis-a-vis the rest of the nations of the world. The United States had to quit its negative policy and make a commitment to world cooperation in order to solve the problems which might ultimately lead to war.

> We can point the way once more to the reducing of armaments; we can co-operate officially and wholeheartedly with every agency that studies and works to relieve the common ills of mankind; and we can for all time renounce the practice of arbitrary intervention in the home affairs of our neighbors.[60]

Writing in the same vein that characterized his earlier articles, Roosevelt urged a continuation of the policy of friendship and cooperation with the principal Far Eastern nations. In contrast to the European powers, he wrote, United States policy toward China and Japan had from its beginning been based on respect and peaceful

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He alleged that in China the "Open Door" policy of John Hay had been beneficial to both that nation and the United States. It firmly established the concept that this nation was to follow the principle of "moral leadership" not "money leadership" in the area.[62] Roosevelt contended that during the four years of President William Howard Taft's "Dollar Diplomacy" the nation temporarily retreated from this high moral plane. The Wilson Administration conceived this retreat to have been a mistake and from its first days determined to restore "high moral purpose to our international relationships." President Wilson, he explained, based his action on a wish to see China retain its independence and territorial integrity. The best interests of the United States, China, and the world, the writer implied, demanded a continuation of this policy.[63]

From the time of the publication of this article until he began his campaign for the presidency in the summer of 1932, Roosevelt was extremely hesitant about commenting on foreign affairs. It was during these four years that he served as Governor of New York and viewed his responsibilities as being of a domestic nature, not foreign. Also he feared that if he made any comments on international affairs he would be criticized for seeking national attention while

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governor. In the summer of 1931 Arthur Krock of the New York Times asked the Governor for his views on President Hoover's moratorium on war-debts and reparation payments. He replied to Krock that in the past New York newspapers had vigorously criticized him for making comments on national affairs and he sent the commentator a little fable.

> Once upon a time an unfortunate individual was elected Governor of the State and found there was Much To Do running the State without dipping into National Problems. One day he foolishly did discuss a National Problem because he thought it had something to do with the Progress and Prosperity of his own State. Thereupon, an All-Wise Press hopped all over him and said that he was obviously seeking national honors.
>
> Having learned his lesson he stayed within his State. A little later a great international problem arose and the Press and the President of his country made an excellent suggestion. The Governor, however, having learned his lesson, said nothing. Thereupon, an All-Wise Press chided the said Governor for not commenting on National and International Affairs.[64]

Krock replied that F.D.R. could gain fame as a political Aesop.[65] In January 1932 the editor of the London Graphic wired Roosevelt requesting his views on the Manchurian incident. Again he refused to comment on foreign affairs and replied that he had "very definite views but please read the Federal Constitution."[66]

During his tenure as Assistant Secretary of the Navy Roosevelt's attitude on Far Eastern policy was based on two fundamentals. First, he contended that it was in the best interest of the United States and the world to work for the maintenance of Chinese independence and territorial integrity; and second, he viewed Japan as an

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aggressive nation that was intent on disrupting the status quo in the Pacific region. When in 1913 a crisis developed between the United States and Japan, Roosevelt sided with the American military. He urged vigorous American action to protect the nation's Pacific possessions.

He continued in the 1920's to emphasize the necessity of maintaining the territorial integrity of China. However, there remained not a trace of his earlier suspicion of the Japanese. The reason for this change of view can be traced to the Washington Treaties of 1922. In Roosevelt's opinion the Japanese by signing these treaties became defenders of the status quo in the Pacific. Thereafter Roosevelt looked upon Japan as a nation with which the United States should cooperate. He urged the American people to disavow their old feelings of hostility against the Japanese and develop a new "habit of mind" based on the philosophy of mutual respect, trust and cooperation. "If instead of looking for causes of offense," he declared, "we in all good faith confidently expect from Japan cooperation in world upbuilding, we shall go far toward insuring peace."

Roosevelt's conciliatory attitude toward the Japanese, though conspicuous during the 1920's, did not long endure. When in the Fall of 1931 Japan shifted from a policy of peace to expansion in North China, the antipathies of the earlier period returned.

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[2]Ibid.,

[3]Joseph
by Theodore W
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[4]Elliot
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[5]Ibid.,

[6]Ibid.,

[7]Ibid.

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[10]Cable
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p. 161.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Franklin Roosevelt to H. H. Kung, December 28, 1934, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York (hereafter referred to as Roosevelt Files), President's Personal File 1178 (hereafter referred to as P.P.F.), Folder H. H. Kung.

[2]Ibid., January 16, 1935.

[3]Joseph W. Stilwell, The Stilwell Papers, compiled by Theodore White (New York: William Sloan Associates, 1948), p. 251.

[4]Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.F., His Personal Letters, Early Years, I, 273.

[5]Ibid., p. 310.

[6]Ibid., II, 7.

[7]Ibid.

[8]For an excellent discussion of Japanese-American relations and the California land law of 1913 see: Thomas A. Bailey, "California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation of 1913," Pacific Historical Review, I (March, 1932), 36-59.

[9]New York World, May 10, 1913, p. 1:3.

[10]Cable from Admiral Coontz to Navy Department, May 5, 1913, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 3; Bailey, "California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation of 1913," p. 54; Josephus Daniels, Wilson Era: Years of Peace 1910-1917 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 161.

[11] Ibid.

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

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[25] Roose
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[11]Ibid., p. 163; Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt, I, 223.

[12]Roosevelt to Admiral Alfred T. Mahan, June 16, 1914, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 157.

[13]Daniels, Wilson Era, p. 163.

[14]May 13, 1913, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 2.

[15]Undated Memorandum, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 2, Folder, Undated Papers of 1913.

[16]Quoted in Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt, I, 223.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid., p. 223.

[19]Theodore Roosevelt to Franklin Roosevelt, May 10, 1913, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 157.

[20]Franklin Roosevelt to Theodore Roosevelt, July 17, 1913, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 157.

[21]Franklin D. Roosevelt to Admiral Alfred Mahan, June 16, 1914, Group 10, Box 157.

[22]New York Times, January 18, 1914, p. 3:7.

[23]For information on Roosevelt's activities during World War I, see: Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 71; Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt, I, 237-372; Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, II, 238, 239, 344-365; Schlesinger, The Age of Roosevelt, I, 350-359.

[24]Roosevelt Files, Unidentified newspaper clipping, Group 10, Box 19.

[25]Roosevelt Files, Unidentified newspaper clipping, Group 10, Box 19.

[26]Report of Japanese Activities, June 9, 1916, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 21.

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[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid.

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[27]The Rogers report was sent to Secretary Daniels and then passed on to Roosevelt. July 8, 1919, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 11.

[28]Evidence of Japan's Preparation for War, January 13, 1920, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 8.

[29]Memorandum on Evidence of Japan's Preparation for War, May 24, 1920, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 8.

[30]What America's Policy Should Be In China, January 21, 1920, Roosevelt Files, Group 10, Box 8.

[31]Quoted in Burns, The Lion and the Fox, p. 86.

[32]Marvin to Roosevelt, September 3, 1922, Roosevelt Files, Group 14, F.D.R. as Author.

[33]Roosevelt to Marvin, September 12, 1922, Roosevelt Files, Group 14, F.D.F. as Author.

[34]Marvin to Roosevelt, September 21, 1922, Roosevelt Files, Group 14, F.D.R. as Author.

[35]William Howard Gardiner, "Atlantic and Pacific Sea Power," Current History, XVI (October, 1922), 11-19.

[36]Roosevelt to Marvin, October 10, 1922, Roosevelt Files, Group 14, F.D.R. as Author.

[37]Originally, F.D.R. entitled the article, "Japan, A Habit of Mind." The manuscript copy in the Roosevelt Library is filed under the original title. Roosevelt Files, Group 14, F.D.R. as Author. It was published as "Shall We Trust Japan?" in Asia: The American Magazine on the Orient (July, 1923), p. 475.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Roosevelt noted: "To say 'add' is perhaps a euphemism; for no fortifications now existing there can be,

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Ibid., p. 476

42 Ibid

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56 Ibid

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[42] Ibid., p. 477.

[43] Ibid., p. 478.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., p. 526.

[47] Ibid., p. 528.

[48] Hector C. Bywater, Sea Power in the Pacific; a Study of the American-Japanese Naval Problem (London: Constable and Co., 1934).

[49] A copy of Bywater's review is included in the Roosevelt Files, Group 14, F.D.R. as Author.

[50] The original draft of this "Letter to the Editor" is included in Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Roosevelt to Peabody, September 26, 1923, Roosevelt Files, Group 14, F.D.R. as Author.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55] "The Average American and the Average Japanese Have a Very Cloudy and Often Erroneous Points of View About Relations Between the Two Countries," The Macon Daily Telegraph, April 30, 1925. Included in Donald S. Carmichal, F.D.R. Columnist (Chicago: Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1947), pp. 56-60.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Our Foreign Policy: A Democratic View," Foreign Affairs, (July, 1928), p. 573.

[58] Ibid

[59] Ibid

[60] Ibid

[61] Ibid

[62] Ibid

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[64] Elli
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[65] Ibid

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[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., p. 586.

[61] Ibid., p. 574.

[62] Ibid., p. 575.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R., Personal Letters, III, 204-205.

[65] Ibid., p. 207.

[66] Roosevelt to Editor, London Graphic, January 29, 1932, Roosevelt Files, Governor's Personal File.

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CHAPTER III

THE RETURN OF THE "OLD HABIT OF MIND"

During the decade of the 1920's Franklin Roosevelt had vigorously defended the cause of peace in Asia based on the Washington Treaties. Yet, all the while, pressures were building toward a crisis in southern Manchuria which would undermine the basis of the Washington Treaties and threaten the stability of the entire Pacific region.

The history of southern Manchuria for most of the first half of the Twentieth Century is a tale of conflicts of interest between China and Japan. The legal basis for Japanese claims in Manchuria rested on the Treaty of Portsmouth and the Komura Treaty of 1905. Following the Russo-Japanese War, the Russian Government had ceded to Japan, subject to Chinese approval, the South Manchurian Railway as well as other economic privileges and concessions it had previously held. The Japanese wasted little time in obtaining Chinese assent to these terms. On December 22, 1905, Baron Komura concluded a treaty with the Peking Government whereby China acquiesed to the Portsmouth transfers, in return for Japan's agreement to fulfill "as far as circumstances permit" the same conditions that had

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obtained under Russian tenure.[1] As the years passed the Japanese followed a policy of protecting, exploiting, and whenever possible, expanding their rights in Manchuria. By the 1920's Manchuria had come to represent for that government a lifeline of empire and for the Japanese people a symbol of their destiny as a great power.[2]

A weak China had been unable to prevent the establishment of Japanese sovereignty over these northeastern provinces. But after 1927, as Chiang Kai-Shek's government grew in power, the Chinese prepared plans for regaining control over Manchuria. They undertook a vigorous program of railway and harbor construction, dissemination of anti-Japanese propaganda and wholesale colonization by Chinese settlers, the prime motive of which was to destroy the economic and political supremacy of Japan. As a result anti-Japanese feeling among Chinese in Manchuria had become so bitter by 1931 that incidents between them and the Japanese were common. Late in June a Japanese army officer on an intelligence mission in central Manchuria was secretly executed by Chinese soldiers, and a few weeks later fighting broke out between Chinese farmers and Japanese police along the Korean border.[3]

The Japanese had been anxiously watching the growth of nationalism in China. In their view it constituted an increasingly serious menace to the structure of special privileges they had built up over the past three decades. When news of the summer incidents reached Tokyo it stimulated

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a demand for immediate settlement of the whole complex Manchurian issue, by force if necessary. Aware of the sentiment at home, Japanese troops of the Kwantung army, citing an explosion on the South Manchurian Railway as provocation, seized Mukden, Changchun and several other Manchurian cities.[4]

News of the Japanese attack on Mukden reached Washington on September 19. Since President Hoover was devoting most of his time to the problems of the great depression, development of policy to meet the Manchurian crisis fell to Secretary of State Henry Stimson. The Secretary moved cautiously. He protested to the Japanese Ambassador in Washington on September 22 that Japan's actions were in violation of the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the Nine Power Treaty. Yet at the same time he was reluctant to make any commitment that might antagonize the Japanese and allow the military to gain complete control in Japan. Toward the League of Nations he adopted the policy of not participating but lending to it "all moral support that we can."[5]

It soon became apparent that neither United States nor League protests would have any effect on the Japanese. As a result Stimson concluded "we have got to take a firm . . . and aggressive stand toward Japan."[6] As he explained in a cabinet meeting on October 9, 1931, "these modern treaties initiated by Western nations, and especially designed to fit the exigencies of the industralized world

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of Europe and America, might not be taken very seriously in the Orient." But, he told his colleagues, they existed;

> . . . for better or for worse they represented the earnest hopes of our part of the world, and if we surrendered and permitted them to be treated like scraps of paper, the hope of peaceable development in the world would receive a blow from which it would not soon recover.[7]

The Secretary searched for some method of expressing the "moral disapproval" of the world against the breach of peace in Manchuria, "and if possible to put behind that expression a sanction." President Hoover opposed both economic and military sanctions, insisting that they "meant all the penalties of war except shooting," and could lead to war itself. The only sanction Hoover would support was that of public opinion.[8]

Still the Japanese army pressed forward and by January 1932 had most of Manchuria under its control. As a last effort to retard Japanese expansion the Secretary, on January 7, 1932, pronounced the doctrine of non-recognition. In identical notes to Japan and China, Stimson declared that the United States would not recognize any agreement or situation impairing American rights, the Open Door, or any gains made in violation of the Kellogg Pact.[9] For the remainder of his term as Secretary of State, Stimson made every effort to obtain support for his doctrine from the other signatories of the Nine Power Treaty, but with no success.

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had carefully avoided making any public statement on the issue. As he explained to the Editor of the London Graphic, he had "very definite views," but as the Governor of the State of New York he could not be responsible for foreign policy. During the election campaign of 1932, Far Eastern policy was not an issue. Confronted with the problems of the domestic depression, Roosevelt contended that it was best not to speak of foreign issues.[10] As a result, at the time of the November election he was still closely associated with the policy of friendship toward the Japanese, and they viewed his victory as a prelude to better Japanese-American relations. In Japan an English language newspaper recalled his Asia article of nine years before and quoted a few of its passages.[11] Some governmental officials predicted better trade relations with America as a result of the president-elect's support of reciprocal trade agreements. A few Japanese officials expressed the belief that F.D.R. would put an end to the Stimson Doctrine. Even those who were of the opinion that he would adhere to the Doctrine suggested the new administration would not follow so "imperialistic" a policy as the former one, but would assume a more liberal and conciliatory attitude toward Japan.[12] The first indication of a change in outlook toward the Japanese came in January 1933 when, through the intercession of Felix Frankfurter, Secretary of State Stimson was invited to Hyde Park to meet with the President-elect.[13]

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The Roosevelt-Stimson meeting took place on January 9 and lasted several hours. When Stimson finally emerged from the conference he refused comment to the press and circumvented the reporters' questions by remarking that he had a very enjoyable lunch.[14] Writing some years later, the former Secretary of State indicated that a substantial agreement had been concluded at the meeting. He reported the most important thing to him was Roosevelt's quick understanding and approval of his Manchurian policy.[15] Stimson had explained to the president-elect the possible necessity of a further clarification of policy as the League of Nations was approaching a final judgment on Manchuria and desired the assurance of continued support by the government. F.D.R. gave assurance of his full understanding of the situation and pledged he would do nothing to weaken the present administration's position.[16]

Two additional conversations were held between the two leaders during the month of January. On the 13th Stimson called Roosevelt and reported that he was about to call the United States Embassy in London. He was going to ask the American Ambassador to tell British Foreign Secretary Sir John Simon that there was no change in American policy on Manchuria and he did not anticipate a change when the new administration took office. The Secretary confessed his reluctance to make this commitment without Roosevelt's approval, which was promptly given.[17] An additional meeting was held in Washington on January 19. On this occasion

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Roosevelt laughingly remarked that they did "pretty good teamwork."[18]

At the time evidence as to the contents of these meetings became known only quite slowly. On January 11, in a statement issued from his New York City home, the president-elect endorsed Hoover's request of Congress for presidential authority to join with the other nations to embargo arms.[19] On the 16th Stimson sent a message to the League confirming the government's policy on Manchuria and added that he anticipated no change when the new administration took office.[20] The next day at a New York City press conference Roosevelt borrowed a pencil from a reporter and wrote:

> Any statement relating to any particular foreign situation must, of course, come from the Secretary of State of the United States.
>
> I am, however, wholly willing to make it clear that American foreign policies must uphold the sanctity of international treaties. That is the cornerstone on which all relations between nations rest.[21]

Since 1933 there have been several attempts to explain why Roosevelt made this commitment to the Stimson Doctrine. Raymond Moley, who along with Rexford Tugwell attempted to persuade Roosevelt to revoke the commitment, suggested that the reason for the agreement was quite simple. He concluded that the influence of Roosevelt's ancestral relationship was the determining factor. Moley explained that the day after the President-elect's press conference he and Tugwell spent several hours trying to convince him it was

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a tragic mistake to underwrite the Stimson Doctrine. Roosevelt, however, would not consider their arguments and concluded the conversation by stating that his ancestors had been involved in trade with China. "I have always had the deepest sympathy for the Chinese. . . . How could you expect me not to go along with Stimson on Japan."[22]

Rexford Tugwell and Basil Rauch presented a more comprehensive analysis of the reasoning behind the commitment by placing it within the larger scheme of Roosevelt's general foreign policy concepts. Rauch suggested that F.D.R. saw it as a minimum step and as a symbolic of the continuity in favor of collective security between the outgoing and incoming administrations.[23] Tugwell's analysis led him to the conclusion that the agreement was the first step in the development of a more general philosophy of opposition to dictators and their anti-democratic and aggressive policies.[24]

All these interpretations are partially correct. As Rauch suggested, it was a sign of "continuity" between the outgoing and incoming administrations. In formulating the doctrine of non-recognition Stimson had emphasized the necessity of maintaining the western treaty system. Roosevelt's statement of January 17 was based on the same principle. As he phrased it: "I am . . . willing to make it clear that American foreign policies must uphold the sanctity of international treaties." The President-elect's

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statement was merely the first in a long series of pledges to maintain the status quo in Asia.

Also, when considered in relation to his views on Far Eastern policy while Assistant Secretary of the Navy, the commitment takes on as well the appearance of a logical extension of this previous experience. During the 1913 dispute over the California land law, F.D.R. championed the cause of military preparedness and resistance to Japanese assertions. He was constantly surrounded during his remaining years in the Navy Department by those who viewed Japan as America's number one antagonist. During the 1920's Japan was, in Roosevelt's opinion, one of the defenders of the status quo in the East. However, the "Mukden Incident" signaled to him the beginning of a new period of Japanese assertiveness which could lead to gross violations of the "Open Door" policy, the Washington Treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. He had in his files an outline of a policy which had earlier been suggested as a possible response to just this type of Japanese aggression. As previously indicated, he had described as "excellent" this 1920 report outlining a policy which was in many ways identical to the Stimson Doctrine. Moley and Tugwell expressed surprise at Roosevelt's agreement to underwrite the Stimson Doctrine. However, the better judgment is, that, given the previous experience his support of the Doctrine is understandable. In retrospect, a refusal to support Stimson would have been cause for more surprise than his agreement to do so.

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During the first-quarter of 1933 the Japanese had broadened their area of expansion. In January their forces had driven beyond Manchuria's borders into China's province of Jehol, outside the Great Wall, and in March annexed it to Manchukuo. As a result, Cordell Hull wrote, once in office the President supported the contention that this government should do all possible to sustain the independence of the Chinese. The idea was not to create a strong China to wage war on Japan, but to help China unite for her own self-interest and that of the entire Far East. Chaos in China was a danger to peace in the Orient. China, united and contented, could be a vital element in bettering Pacific relations.[25]

Had it not been for domestic difficulties created by the economic depression, had it not been for the fear of adverse public opinion in America, and had it not been for the fear of Japanese reprisals which the United States could not counter because of an inadequate navy, there is every reason to believe that from the beginning of his administration the President would have extended more substantial financial aid to China. However, because of these restrictions the actual aid given to China was limited.[26]

From the day of Roosevelt's inauguration through the winter of 1933-1934 there were numerous discussions among administration officials as to the basis of United States policy in the Far East. The general consensus was that America had a vital interest in developments in the area.

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This interest, however, was not America's alone. Other powers had similar interests. In the view of the American people the western nation with the greatest stake in the area was Great Britain. If the administration were to take the lead in the Far East, the American public would view such action as evidence that this nation had once more assumed the responsibility for pulling "British chestnuts" from the fire. As a result of this circumstance the State Department advised the President to avoid taking any initiative in the area. Rather, "we should await the taking of an initiative by Great Britain."[27]

Specifically, in regard to the Sino-Japanese conflict Stanley K. Hornbeck suggested that the administration should take the position that both China and Japan had violated the rights of all signatories of the Pact of Paris by going to war. Immediate action to bring an end to the war by Great Britain and the League of Nations should be encouraged. Plans should be made, however, on the hypothesis that before the war could be concluded the United States might be drawn into it.[28]

James A. Farley, the Postmaster-General, reported that because of their aggression in North China, the possibility of war with Japan was discussed at the second cabinet meeting.[29] The consensus of the cabinet was that the United States should not take the initiative in any scheme to end the hostilities and every effort should be made to stay out of the war.[30]

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During the discussion the President voiced his personal opposition to direct involvement in the conflict. His position was based not on a lack of sufficient interest, but on the inability of the United States to successfully wage a war against Japan. F.D.R. advised that there was little doubt that the United States could blockade Japan and defeat her by starvation, but it would take from three to five years. Defeating Japan by direct military action would be more difficult because of the great distance between the two nations. He explained that it was his opinion that the navy could not operate efficiently over such a great distance. For every thousand miles the fleet moved away from its base it lost 10 per cent efficiency. By the time it reached Japan it would be able to operate at only about 50 per cent efficiency. In addition 30 per cent of the fleet would have to be diverted to furnish supplies and maintain communications. For this reason, he contended, not because of a lack of interest in China, war could not be considered as a possible response to Japanese aggression.[31]

The conclusion that a successful military adventure against Japan was impossible had a significant influence on the development of the administration's China policy. Cordell Hull counselled restraint on financial aid to China for fear that it might be objectionable to Japan. He warned that in response to extensive aid the Japanese might extend their area of aggression beyond North China and/or

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levy reprisals on the Chinese.[32] It would be impossible for the United States to take effective action in the event of such a response by Japan.[33]

Though war with Japan was undesirable Roosevelt still believed it was necessary to find some method of restricting Japanese policies which were contrary to the interests of the United States. Methods short of war for restricting their influence were prime topics of discussion within the upper echelons of the administration.

On March 11, four days after the cabinet meeting where war with Japan was discussed, Hull notified the League of American interest in actively participating with that body in deliberations on how best to deal with the Far Eastern situation.[34] At about the same time the President asked the State Department for advice as to the position the administration should take concerning the League mandates granted to Japan after World War I. The Japanese had withdrawn from the League and Roosevelt wished to know whether they retained authority over these Pacific islands, and if they did not, what posture should the United States assume in the case of their illegal retention?[35]

William Phillips and Stanley Hornbeck both sent memoranda to the President on this topic. They suggested that until the League considered the question and assumed the initiative the administration should give no sign of interest or concern in regard to it. The legal responsibility of a mandatory power upon withdrawal from the League

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was subject to several interpretations. Their advice was that the government should remain in the background because very little could be gained and a great deal lost "by a manifestation by the American Government at this time of interest or concern with regard to the matter."[36]

The Ambassador to Japan, Joseph C. Grew, reported to Hull from Tokyo on May 11 of the possibility of a clash between the United States and Japan. Hull forwarded this letter to Roosevelt with the notation that he had found it "so exceedingly interesting that I feel sure you will desire to read it."[37] Grew reported that the Japanese fighting forces considered the United States as a potential enemy and at times directed naval manoeuvers against a hypothetical American attack by sea and air. The reason for the preparation, the Ambassador wrote, was because the military leaders viewed the United States as more apt to interfere with their ambitions than any other western power. He suggested that before discussing any plan for disarmament the administration should seriously consider this Japanese view of America.[38]

That Roosevelt did seriously consider this view is indicated by a letter he later wrote to a friend from his days at Groton, Malcolm Peabody. Peabody had written protesting the use of Reconstruction Finance Corporation money for naval building. He feared any appropriation for naval building was a threat to the "happy international atmosphere" and might revive the "war bogey."[39]

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The President's response was that the appropriations were made as a first step toward building the navy up to the limitations provided by the Washington Treaties of 1922. Both the British and the Japanese had maintained their navies at the upper limits while this government had not kept up at all. He confided that he had no fear of the British. However, "the whole scheme of things in Tokyo does not make for an assurance of non-aggression in the future."[40]

In December 1933 Hull received a lengthy message from Grew on Japanese intentions in the Far East. The report was in large part a paraphrase of a conversation between Grew and the Netherlands Minister, General Pabst, which had taken place a few days before. Pabst expressed the belief that very soon the Japanese would begin their aggressions in China and would soon thereafter advance to the South and descend on the Netherlands East Indies, Guam, and the Philippines. It was his belief that within the next twenty-four months there was a grave possibility of a clash between America and Japan. He implied that America should begin a program of naval building in order to convince the Japanese that southern expansion was not in their interest. However, there was no guarantee that a naval building program would sufficiently impress the Japanese. The Navy, Pabst reported, was tired to taking a backseat to the Army. If, at a given time, the naval officers thought their services prestige was at stake, they would allow themselves

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to be subjected to no more restraint than did the Army in Manchuria in 1931.[41] This report was sent to Roosevelt with a covering letter by William Phillips. Phillips indicated that the President might want to read the views of the Netherlands Minister because they so closely coincide "with our own."[42]

As 1933 was drawing to a close there were two additional occurrences which indicate the President's continued anxiety over Japanese aims. The first had to do with the decision to recognize the Soviet Union diplomatically, and the second with a request to republish the President's 1923 article "Shall We Trust Japan?"

There were in 1933 numerous reasons for extending diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union. It was hoped that as a result of recognition extensive trade agreements could be negotiated with Russia and these would help relieve the economic crisis at home. The President contended non-recognition was futile and contrary to reality. The Soviet government had existed for over a decade and all evidence pointed towards its continued existence.[43] There was also the theory that through recognition America could obtain another ally against Japanese aggression. Henry Morgenthau confided to his diary in May 1933 that Roosevelt believed the continued isolation of Russia would impede his plan of preventing war in Europe and Asia. Recognition would have the affect of placing a check on two of the United State's potential antagonists, Germany and Japan.[44] Morgenthau,

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writing after recognition had been concluded, counted it as a great success. He described it as one of F.D.R.'s "first attempts to create a community of good neighbors as the best security against the depredations of the neighborhood roughnecks."[45]

In regard to republication of Roosevelt's 1923 article, Richard J. Walsh, Editor of Asia magazine, wrote Presidential Secretary Stephen T. Early in December 1933 requesting permission to re-issue the article.[46] Early replied that the President had no objection to republication so long as it was made perfectly clear that the article was written ten years ago at a time when conditions were substantially different from those now prevailing. Early requested Walsh to emphasize the difference "between the old and new conditions." The editor was also asked to "make it clear" that republication was on his own authority and without approval of the President.[47]

In the face of mutual apprehension the United States and Japan, along with other powers, began preliminary conversations in the Fall of 1934 to establish the basis for the London Naval Conference to be held the next year. The London Conference was called by virtue of a provision in the Naval Limitation Treaty of 1930, which prescribed that another meeting was to be held in 1935.

Even before the preliminary conversations started there began to arrive in Washington numerous indications of Japanese reluctance to expand or to even maintain the

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concepts contained in the existing armament agreements. On January 11, 1934, the United States Naval Attache in Tokyo sent a long memorandum to the President on the Japanese situation. He reported that the Japanese wanted the immediate negotiation of a new disarmament plan "based on the spirit of equality of armament." If at the forthcoming London Conference the powers rejected Japan's request for naval parity and continued the principle of naval ratios, the Japanese naval authorities would not mind the breakup of the conference. The aborted conference would then be followed by increased Japanese naval construction. The consensus in Japan, the naval attache reported, was that under no circumstances could the government agree to any treaty which did not provide for parity with the United States and Great Britain.[48]

The best answer to this Japanese arrogance, the Attache suggested, was for the government to announce its intention to increase naval building. It might also be effective to announce that if Japan demanded parity, steps would be taken to build bases in Guam and the Philippines. These announcements might cause the Japanese naval authorities to stop and ponder the question of a "free building policy."[49]

Three months later on April 17 the Japanese shocked much of the western world by the announcement of the Amau Doctrine. This Doctrine, which was viewed in Tokyo as the most significant foreign policy statement since the

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Twenty-one Demands of 1915, warned the other powers to keep hands off China. It also indicated that henceforward they intended to view the western Pacific as their own sphere of influence.[50]

The administration's reaction to the Amau statement was rather mild. On April 28 Cordell Hull sent Foreign Minister Hirota a note calling attention to the fact that the United States, by virtue of existing treaties, had certain rights and obligations in China and was associated with China, Japan, and other nations in multilaterial treaties relating to the Far East. "In the opinion of the American people and the American Government," he wrote, "no nation can, without assent of the other nations concerned, rightfully endeavor to make conclusive its will in situations where there are involved the rights, the obligations, and the legitimate interests of other sovereign states."[51]

Roosevelt's personal reaction to the Japanese announcement is difficult to discern. A few weeks after it was made former Secretary of State Henry Stimson questioned the President concerning his attitude in light of Amau's remarks. Rather than giving a direct answer to Stimson's questions, he recounted a conversation he had in 1902, while a student at Harvard with a Japanese boy. F.D.R. related that this young man, who was a highclass member of the Samurai caste, had told him of long-term Japanese ambitions. He reported that in 1889 there had been made a

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100 year plan for the Japanese dynasty. The plan included the absorption of all northern China and eastward expansion as far as Tibet. After these aims were accomplished there was envisaged the acquisition of all the Pacific islands, ultimately including Hawaii, Australia, and New Zealand. As for the Western Hemisphere, the young Roosevelt was told America need have no fear. All that was intended for this hemisphere was the establishment of outposts, one probably in Mexico and another in Peru. The President concluded by commenting on how many particulars of this plan had been confirmed by subsequent events.[52]

By the summer of 1934 there was much evidence to indicate the futility of any disarmament conversations. However, F.D.R. still urged that plans for preliminary talks be carried forward. In June he wrote the British Prime Minister of his belief that the social and economic good of humanity demanded reduction in armaments. He asked the Prime Minister to work with him toward effecting a ten-year extension of the Washington and London Treaties on the basis of a 20 per cent reduction from the present levels.[53]

Shortly before Norman Davis, who had been appointed as the American negotiator at the London Conference, was to leave Washington to begin preliminary conversations, a meeting was held between Roosevelt, Davis, Admiral Standley (Chief of Naval Operations who was to accompany Davis to London), and several members of the State Department.

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Standley asked the President if he would agree to a slight increase if it were necessary to facilitate an agreement.[54] F.D.R. replied with an emphatic "No!" He contended that the American policy had been one of demanding a reduction and consistency had to be maintained.[55] Davis remarked that he was convinced the Japanese would demand naval parity with American and British navies and it would be impossible to argue them out of this position.[56] Roosevelt countered by suggesting a compromise in "spirit." He tossed out the idea that while the United States must demand "real superiority" Davis could tell the Japanese "we would not in time of peace maintain in the Pacific a fleet greater than that of Japan."[57] This compromise in tone was as far as F.D.R. was ever willing to go.

Instructions, which were delivered to Davis on October 5, 1934, provided that the one principle which the negotiator had always to keep in mind was the principle of reduction.[58] A 20 per cent reduction below present treaty tonnage was to be proposed first. If this percentage proved impossible then alternative figures of 15 per cent or 10 per cent of 5 per cent should be offered. "The United States must adhere to the high purpose of progressive reduction." Only after all else had failed, the instructions provided, would a mere extension of present treaties be acceptable.[59] One additional point, the President explained, must be fully understood. He would not accept or be willing to submit to the Senate any treaty calling for larger navies.[60]

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Shortly after arriving in London, Davis sent back to Roosevelt several cables confirming the previously held suspicions of a Japanese demand for parity.[61] In addition, it was reported, not only were the Japanese making these demands, but several members of the British Government were ready to support them.[62]

In a very sharp reply F.D.R. told Davis to impress upon the British Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, and a few other "Tories" that if they preferred "playing" with Japan rather than "playing" with America, he would be compelled, in the interest of American security, to approach public sentiment in Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. His efforts in these Dominions would be to make the people understand that their future security was linked with the United States, not Japan.[63]

As for the Japanese claim to parity, Roosevelt implied that the Japanese would give up on this point if the United States continued to hold firm. Their failure to give up this demand would mean the break up of the conference and a naval armament race was sure to follow. "I get increasing information," F.D.R. wrote, "that Japan cannot stand the cost of a naval race."[64]

Within the next few days the President apparently changed his mind about the effectiveness of American firmness. He wrote Hull on November 14 that as it was becoming apparent the Japanese were unwilling to continue with the present principles of naval limitation, it might be

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advisable to seek a "gentleman's agreement." This agreement could provide that no nation would lay down any ships without formal notice to the other parties. The theory behind the suggestion was that "full publicity" would be conducive to future limitation.[65]

The use of "full publicity" or world public opinion as a lever to retard Japanese naval aspirations was first mentioned by F.D.R. in the preceding memorandum. It was an idea he would refer to again during and after the London conversations. On December 7 he wrote Hull asking him to instruct Davis to make no further proposals until after December 31. The reason, further proposals might provide the Japanese with the rationale for denouncing the Washington and London Treaties. As it was already known they intended to do so on December 29, Roosevelt wanted the full "onus" of public opinion to fall upon them.[66]

Shortly after the first of the year Davis returned to Washington. Over the next several months conversations took place between various officials within the government as to the position which should be taken when the formal conference opened the following December. There is no evidence to indicate that during this period Roosevelt ever considered giving in to the Japanese demands.[67]

The first plenary session of the London Naval Conference took place on December 9, 1935. Davis explained the American position and recited the American hopes for the meeting by reading the instructions Roosevelt had given

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him fourteen months before. After preliminary remarks by delegates from each of the nations present, the conference adjourned for the Christmas holidays.

During the Christmas recess F.D.R. delivered his third annual message to Congress. Unlike his previous annual messages this one included a lengthy discussion of foreign policy. His remarks included a statement on the necessity of achieving some results from the London Naval Conference. He professed to believe that the majority of the people of the world were content with their territorial limitations and were willing to further reduce their armaments. However, present efforts to continue the current naval limitations and to broaden these in the future are being blocked by only "10 or 15 percent of the world's population."[68] Roosevelt declared that

> . . . a point has been reached where the people of the Americas must take cognizance of growing ill-will, of marked trends toward aggression, of increasing armaments, of shortening tempers--a situation which has in it many of the elements that lead to the tragedy of general war.[69]

On January 14, 1936, Roosevelt wrote to Davis in London confessing a fear that some of the comments in his annual message might have caused "bitterness" in Japan. He had nevertheless decided to make them in order to set the record straight and also to "solidity the forces of non-aggression."[70]

On January 15 the question of Japanese parity was formally raised and all the powers with the exception of Japan voted against it. Thereupon the Japanese government

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withdrew their delegation.[71] The conference continued for some weeks without reaching an agreement until on February 28 the President again suggested the idea of a "gentleman's agreement." He proposed that Davis try to get the remaining powers to agree to notify the signatory nations of every decision to lay down naval vessels of any size over one hundred tons.[72] On this basis an agreement was finally reached and on March 19 Roosevelt agreed to accept the rather disappointing results of the conference.[73]

By the end of the London Naval Conference Franklin Roosevelt's anxiety over the Japanese "problem" was quite intense. An "escape clause" was put in the treaty primarily because of the uncertainty of the future intentions of this Far Eastern power.[74] More and more it was being taken for granted by Roosevelt as well as by other administration officials that a very serious clash between Japanese and American interests in Asia was inevitable. However, in the mid-1930's, though there were many theories, no one dared predict exactly when or where the clash would take place.[75]

Mindful of the possibility of a clash the President began to think in terms of preparing the military establishment for this eventuality. In late 1934 as the preliminary conversations for the London Conference indicated doubt as to the possibility of an expansion or extension of the existing armament agreements, he began to cast about in an effort to find a means of expanding the military. The

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Secretary of the Navy was asked to begin studies in the direction of the development of new types of ships. These studies were to progress on the theory that the Washington and London restrictions might be removed within two years. He also asked for information as to the possibility of establishing air bases in the Philippines and Guam and in the Midway, Hawaiian, and Aleutian Island chains.[76]

Military preparedness, F.D.R. contended, would open several possible avenues. First, he argued that the Japanese would be more amenable to the negotiation of armament limitations if confronted with the possibility that America might begin a naval building program and might fortify its territories in the western Pacific. Second, and possibly more important, he maintained that Japan would not dare threaten American Far Eastern interests if this nation was prepared for military retaliation. From 1935 to 1941 this second principle remained one of the prevalent theories of the Roosevelt Administration. Military preparedness and other methods suggested to retard Japanese aggression were not undertaken in the interest of war, but in the interest of peace. Roosevelt assumed that a firm stand would cause Japan to back down.[77]

By the time Norman Davis returned to the United States from London in April 1936, Franklin D. Roosevelt was quite mindful of a Japanese problem. There were many in his administration who spoke of the inevitability of a clash of interests between the two nations. The President

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was sufficiently aware of this possibility to begin to lay plans for military preparedness in the hope of heading off any such clash. (F.D.R. had become quite suspicious of Japanese intentions by April 1936.) However, his apprehensions had not yet reached their peak. Several more months were to pass before his personal apprehensions became so strong that he decided it was time to relate them to the general public.

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[2]Ibid
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FOOTNOTES

[1]A. Whitney Griswold, The Far Eastern Policy of the United States (New York: Yale University Press, 1938), p. 147.

[2]Ibid; see also: Akira Iriye, After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).

[3]Griswold, Far Eastern Policy, pp. 400-410.

[4]Ibid.; see also: P. H. Clyde, "The Diplomacy of 'Playing No Favorites': Secretary Stimson and Manchuria, 1931," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXV (September, 1948), 187-202; R. H. Ferrell, "The Mukden Incident: September 18-19, 1931," Journal of Modern History, XXVII (March, 1955), 66-72; Robert Langer, Seizure of Territory; The Stimson Doctrine and Related Principles in Legal Theory and Diplomatic Practice (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947); S. R. Smith, The Manchurian Crisis, 1931-1932 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948).

[5]Quoted in Elting E. Morison, Turmoil and Tradition: A Study of the Life and Times of Henry L. Stimson (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1960), p. 376.

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[7]Henry L. Stimson, The Far Eastern Crisis: Recollections and Observations (New York: Harper, 1936), p. 56.

[8]Herbert Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: The Cabinet and the Presidency, 1920-1933 (3 vols; New York: MacMillan, 1952), p. 366.

[9]Text
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[16]Ibid.

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[18]Stims

[19]Moley

[20]Ibid.

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[23]Rauch
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[24]Tugwe

[25]Hull,

[9]Text of messages included in U. S., Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States (hereafter referred to as F.R.), Japan, 1931-1941, I, 76.

[10]Tugwell, The Democratic Roosevelt, p. 257.

[11]Japan Advertiser (Tokyo), November 10, 1932.

[12]"Japanese Postscript," The Living Age, CCCXLIII (January, 1933), 389.

[13]Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, III, 321.

[14]Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), pp. 292-293; Raymond Moley, After Seven Years (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939), p. 94.

[15]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, pp. 292-293.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Memorandum by Henry Stimson of a Telephone Conversation with Franklin Roosevelt, January 13, 1933, F.R., 1933, III, 53.

[18]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 293.

[19]Moley, After Seven Years, p. 94.

[20]Ibid.

[21]New York Times, January 18, 1933, p. 1.

[22]Moley, After Seven Years, p. 95.

[23]Rauch, Roosevelt: From Munich to Pearl Harbor, pp. 15-16.

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[25]Hull, Memoirs, I, 445.

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[30]Ibid

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[33]Ibid

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[35]Roos

[36]Ibid

[37]Hull
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[26]Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), pp. 67-68. This conclusion is also suggested by Roosevelt's subsequent actions as well as by his attitude toward China and the importance he attached to an independent China as reflected in his public and private comments during the period 1913-1932.

[27]Memorandum by Stanley K. Hornbeck on a plan of action in relation to existing tension between Japan and the Soviet Union, February 2, 1934, Roosevelt Files, President's Secretary's File (hereafter referred to as P.S.F.), Japan, 1933-34; Memorandum from William Phillips to Roosevelt, May 9, 1933, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. China, 1933-36.

[28]Memorandum by Stanley K. Hornbeck, February 2, 1934.

[29]Reported in James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story: The Roosevelt Years (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948), p. 25.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Fear that the Japanese might extend their area of aggression beyond North China and/or levy reprisals on the Chinese remained a factor during the entire decade in Roosevelt's decision to extend only limited aid to China. As early as the Fall of 1934 Henry Morgenthau recorded in his diary that Roosevelt, and the State Department opposed the Treasury Department's schemes to aid China as they might be objectionable to Japan. He especially ascribed Hull's opposition to effective aid to "undue sensitivity" to Japanese opinion. John M. Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959), pp. 205-210.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Hull, Memoirs, I, 270.

[35]Roosevelt Files, March, 1933, P.S.F. Japan, 1933-34.

[36]Ibid., April 3, 1933.

[37]Hull to Roosevelt, May 11, 1933, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan, 1932-34.

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[38]Grew to Hull, May 11, 1933, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan, 1932-34.

[39]Peabody to Roosevelt, August 14, 1933, Roosevelt Files, President's Personal File (hereafter referred to as P.P.F.), 732, Malcolm E. Peabody File.

[40]Roosevelt to Peabody, August 19, 1933, Roosevelt Files, P.P.F. 732, Malcolm E. Peabody File.

[41]Grew to Hull, December 12, 1933, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F., Joseph C. Grew File.

[42]William Phillips to Roosevelt, January 15, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Joseph C. Grew File.

[43]May 1933, Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, I, 54.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid., p. 57. William C. Bullitt, America's first Ambassador to Russia, also concluded that the desire to check Japan was an important factor in the decision to extend diplomatic recognition to Russia. Bullitt believed American aid to the Soviet Union could make that nation one of the bulwarks against the aggressive tendencies "developing in Japan." See Ibid., p. 56.

There is also evidence to indicate that many of the European governments interpreted recognition as a response to Japanese activities. Sinclair Kennedy, an American living in Geneva who wrote F.D.R. frequently between 1933-39, reported on February 26, 1934: ". . . of course you know that in Europe it is often assumed that American recognition of Russia was prompted primarily by the Japanese problem. European realists see America equipping Russia to cripple Japan." George K. Briggs to Roosevelt with enclosed letter from Sinclair Kennedy, February 26, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.P.F. 402.

[46]Richard J. Walsh to Stephen T. Early, December 22, 1933, Roosevelt Files, Official File (hereafter referred to as O.F.), 197 A, 1933.

[47]Stephen T. Early to Richard J. Walsh, December 28, 1933, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 197 A., 1933.

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[48]Memorandum to Roosevelt from U. S. Naval Attache in Tokyo, January 11, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.P.S., London Naval Conference, Folder 1934.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Joseph C. Grew, Turbulent Era, A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), II, 958; Hull, Memoirs, I, 279-282.

[51]Text included in F.R., Japan 1931-1941, I, 231-232; see also: Hull, Memoirs, I, 279.

[52]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 301.

[53]Roosevelt to Norman Davis, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F., London Naval Conference, Folder 1934.

[54]October 3, 1934. Nancy Hooker (ed.), The Moffat Papers: Selections from the Diplomatic Journals of Jay Pierrepont Moffat (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 116.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Roosevelt's Instructions to Davis re: London Naval Conference, October 5, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, Folder 1934.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, Folder 1934.

[62]Ibid.

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[63]Roosevelt to Davis, November 9, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, Folder 1934. This threat, no doubt, contained a great deal of meaning to the British. In the Dominions mentioned there existed a large reservoir of anti-Japanese feeling. The governments of each had voiced heated opposition when in 1902 the British negotiated a commercial alliance with Japan. At the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 it was the Dominion governments that forced the British to oppose the Japanese proposal of an equality of nations amendment to the Covenant. See Robert L. Burke, "Domestic vs. International Jurisdiction Over Immigration: A Diplomatic Controversy at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Iowa, 1964).

[64]Roosevelt to Davis, November 9, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, Folder 1934. There was some disagreement on this point within the administration. In a memorandum sent to the President on November 9 William Phillips reported: "Stanley K. Hornbeck has always expressed the views that the Japanese have means at their disposal to stand the cost of a naval race over a considerable period of time, but we need a good deal more information on this point before we can be certain." Memorandum to Roosevelt, November 9, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F., London Naval Conference, Folder 1934.

[65]Roosevelt to Hull, November 14, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F., London Naval Conference, Folder, 1934.

[66]Roosevelt to Hull, December 7, 1934, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 29, Norman Davis File. The Japanese government officially notified the Secretary of State of their denunciation of the treaties on December 29, 1934. The treaties would thereby lapse on December 31, 1936.

[67]One such meeting was held on November 19, 1935, at the Executive Office of the White House. The meeting was attended by Roosevelt, Hull, Davis, Phillips, and several other State Department officials. "On the basic issues of Japanese claims for a common upper limit, for an increased ratio . . . , the President confirmed the position heretofore taken by the United States that these claims are unacceptable and that no concession or compromise can be made concerning them." Memorandum of a White House Meeting, F.R., 1935, I, 145.

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[68]"Annual Message to Congress," January 3, 1936, Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, V, 8.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Roosevelt to Davis, January 14, 1936, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, Folder 1936. On January 7 the State Department received a cable from Grew reporting on the effect which the message had in Japan. Grew wrote: "Now comes the President's address to Congress, and whatever may be its effect in Europe, I am of the opinion that it has come at a timely moment to influence Japanese opinion and policy. While Japanese officials and the press have carefully avoided fitting the Presidential shoe to their foot, the implications of the address . . . must inevitably sink deep if tacitly into the consciousness and conscience of the Government and public in Japan." F.R., 1936, IV, 716.

[71]Hull, Memoirs, I, 450.

[72]Roosevelt to William Phillips, February 28, 1936, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, 1936 Folder.

[73]The treaty provided for exchange of information among the signatories concerning several classes of Naval vessels. It also provided that no ships could be laid down in these categories until four months after an announcement to do so. U. S., The London Naval Conference--1935 (Washington: The Department of State, 1936), p. 27.

[74]The treaty contained several "escape clauses," one of which permitted the signatories to exceed the limits imposed by the treaty if any nonsignatory nation were found or believed to be exceeding them. This provision, Cordell Hull wrote, "had Japan in mind, and had to be invoked two years later." Hull, Memoirs, I, 454.

[75]In January 1935 Joseph Grew reported the most likely field of Japanese conquest was North China. Though not venturing to predict when they would accelerate their activities in this field, he did suggest when it took place the United States would have to decide whether to withdraw from the Far East or "insist . . . on the maintenance of our legitimate rights and interests in this part of the world. . . ." Grew to State Department, December 17, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, 1935 Folder.

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Writing a year later, as the London Naval Conference was drawing to a close, the Ambassador still viewed North China as the most probable field for conflict of interest between the two nations. He wrote: "I think there is no doubt that . . . Japanese energies will be found, from now on, steadily directed towards consolidating Japan's control in North China and Mongolia as a primary axiom of her future strategic safety and economic welfare." Grew to Hull, F.F., 1936, IV, 717-718.

During the winter of 1935 Stanley Hornbeck prepared numerous memoranda on U. S. policy in the Far East. Several of these reports alluded to the "inevitable conflict" between the United States and Japan over policies in China. F.R., 1935, III, 829, 855, 856, 857.

[76]Roosevelt to the Secretary of the Navy, December 17, 1934, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. London Naval Conference, Folder 1934.

[77]A lengthy discussion of military preparedness is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it should be noted that from December 1934 Roosevelt devoted a great deal of his time to the formulation of plans to build up the armed forces. The failure of the London Naval Conference convinced the President of the need for a vigorous military building program. He would not move as rapidly in this direction as he desired because of Congressional and public opposition. The mid-1930's was the heyday of the Nye committee and those who contended "the merchants of death" had been instrumental in America's involvement in World War I. For additional information on Roosevelt's views on military preparedness at the time of the London Naval Conference see: "A Letter on Navy Day," September 24, 1935, Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, IV, 373; "Roosevelt to Jesse I. Strauss," February 13, 1936, Donald Day (ed.), Franklin D. Roosevelt's Own Story: Told In His Own Words from His Private and Public Papers (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1951), p. 258; Hull, Memoirs, I, 456; Eleanor Roosevelt, This I Remember (New York: Harper, 1949), p. 208; Frank Kingdom, As F.D.R. Said (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), p. 239; Jane D. Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes (3 vols.; New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953), I, p. 545.

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CHAPTER IV

A POLICY OF DRIFT

The close of the London Naval Conference coincided with an interlude of superficial quiescence in the Far East. There had been no abatement in Sino-Japanese antipathies, but both the Japanese and Chinese had shifted their strategy from that of direct military confrontation to quieter and more sophisticated methods of acquiring their goals.

Chiang Kai-shek continued to refuse Japanese demands for an independent regime in North China. He pursued on the one hand the goal of trying to find a compromise with Japan, while on the other he cultivated Russia. He issued a secret order permitting the publication of pro-Soviet articles in newspapers and magazines, and he subsidized private negotiations with Soviet authorities. Many of his generals favored sending an emissary to Moscow, but Chiang refused because he feared it might provoke the Japanese.[1]

The Japanese for their part retained an interest in carving out a sphere of influence in China and continued to station troops in the northern provinces in order to

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facilitate this goal. But their strategy during 1936 and early 1937 took the form of encouraging separatist movements within the desired provinces. It appeared, however, to many members of the Roosevelt Administration as if the Japanese might, in the near future, contrive an incident in North China similar to that which had signaled the beginning of hostilities in Manchuria in 1931.[2]

The President, during this interlude, retained an interest in Asian affairs and was cognizant of the continuing Sino-Japanese antipathy. He considered it essential that the Chinese continue to resist Japanese assertions. He encouraged Secretary Morgenthau's efforts at negotiating a silver purchase agreement aimed at providing stability for the Chinese currency and thereby strengthening the government of Chiang Kai-shek.[3]

Though aware of Far Eastern problems the amount of attention F.D.R. could give them was limited. Domestic developments as well as problems in other regions of the globe were rapidly crowding in on him. Many of the problems of the economic depression remained unsolved, and the President was being subjected to vehement attacks by "messiahs of the poor" such as Huey P. Long, Father Coughlin, and Dr. Francis Townsend. Also the mid-1930's was a time of "questioning" the nation's involvement in world affairs. It was the heyday of the Nye Committee and of those who favored limiting the involvement of the United States in the foreign sphere. Late in 1935 and

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again in 1936 the champions of limiting American international involvement succeeded in passing neutrality acts which restricted Roosevelt's freedom of action.

The mid-1930's was also the time the European cauldron again began to boil. Late in 1935 the Italian dictator Mussolini ordered his troops into the African nation of Ethiopia. Adolph Hitler took advantage of the Ethiopian crisis, in March 1936, by reoccupying the Rhineland in defiance of what was left of the Treaty of Versailles.

In view of the domestic difficulties and mounting problems in Europe, as well as the lull in surface activity in the area, it is understandable that F.D.R. relegated the problems of the Far East to a lower level of attention. The evidence indicates that from the close of the London Conference until early in 1937 the President gave only cursory attention to Far Eastern policy.

The lack of presidential direction continued through the development of policy in response to the "Sian Incident" of December 1936. In mid-December news was received that on December 12 the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek had been kidnapped and was being held in Sian by General Chang Hsueh-liang. Subsequent reports indicated Chang's motive in kidnapping his superior was to force the Generalissimo to take a more vigorous stand against Japanese aggression and to enact much needed political and economic reforms within China.[4]

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Chiang remained in captivity for fourteen days. During the "affair" the American government followed a very cautious policy. Ambassador Nelson Johnson cabled the State Department on the afternoon of December 18th requesting approval of a scheme aimed at relieving the tensions which had grown out of the "Incident."[5]

Johnson's position was that it would be in the best interest of all nations if the Chinese were allowed to work their way out of the problem without foreign interference. However, he suggested, it might tend to relieve tensions and facilitate a settlement if the United States, in cooperation with Great Britain, was prepared to offer its good offices to assist in any arrangement that might be concluded. He also asked to be allowed to cooperate with the British in offering to transport General Chang to some location outside China.[6]

The State Department forwarded Johnson's cable along with a proposed response to the President. The Department advised approval of Johnson's proposals, but added that no guarantees should be given which might necessitate American involvement in the internal affairs of China. After reading the State Department memorandum Roosevelt approved it without suggesting any alterations.[7]

Shortly after the first of the new year the President showed renewed interest in Far Eastern policy. At this time he sought to devise a plan to relieve tensions in the Far East.[8] The crux of the plan rested upon the achievement

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of an agreement among the Great Powers whereby they would agree to disarm and neutralize almost all their territories in the Pacific with the exception of Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore.[9] In February Roosevelt asked the State Department to explore the concept of neutralization and prepare a memorandum on it. On February 16 the State Department returned a seven-thousand word "pro-con" discussion of the proposal.[10] The members of the Department concluded after considering all aspects of the proposal, "considerations Contra" far outweighed "consideration Pro." The major difficulty, the report suggested, was with regard to Japan. Until there was some change or clarification of "the Japanese situation" it was viewed as illogical to make a new agreement with a government that had in the past so flagrantly violated treaties and appeared to be determined to pursue a policy that would be in conflict with a program for insuring peace in the Pacific.[11]

In a sharply worded return memorandum Roosevelt offered a point by point rebuttal of the Department's objections. He complimented the drafters of the report for preparing a very interesting analysis, but remarked that it did not "fire one's imagination in favor of neutralization. . . ."[12] Further, he wrote, whoever prepared the memorandum knew absolutely nothing about military or naval facts. The Japanese were in complete "de facto" control of the northwestern Pacific. There was nothing, the President implied, the United States could do about this

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situation. The neutralization scheme would provide security for the rest of the Pacific area. He declared that the whole of the opposition's arguments were drawn from the philosophy that the time was not right for any action; that the proposal is "idealistic" and the Japanese would not abide by any agreement. This argument, he concluded, was "an argument in defeatism."[13]

Although faced with State Department opposition he continued to cling to his neutralization scheme. Shortly before Norman Davis was to depart for England on a special mission. F.D.R. discussed the plan with him. Davis was told the plan did not obligate any nation to guarantee to protect any territories against attack. The only obligations were: the neutralized territories would not be fortified, they would not be used as military bases in time of war, and all nations would agree not to attack them.[14] It was agreed that Davis should discuss this program with the British, "which would be very helpful in reaching a definite conclusion later on."[15]

Roosevelt's neutralization plans came to nothing. However, the scheme does indicate the President's continuing awareness of a Japanese problem. He did not know exactly what could be done to halt the growth of Japanese influence, but he was certain that something should be done. On May 20 a committee was created by Roosevelt to investigate pernicious activities of Japanese naval and civil personnel in Hawaii,[16] and in June "an informal but

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fundamental" exchange of foreign policy views was commenced between the United States and Great Britain.

The exchanges with Britain began with a series of observations by Neville Chamberlain, who had become Prime Minister on May 28.[17] Chamberlain reported the European Continent was becoming extremely tense because of fear of German aggression. Therefore, he would welcome any plan to stabilize Far Eastern conditions, otherwise Britain might, at some future date, find herself engaged in hostilities in Europe and the Far East simultaneously.[18]

Cordell Hull drafted and F.D.R. approved a reply to Chamberlain which was handed to the British Ambassador, Sir Ronald Lindsay, on June 1. The administration, it was reported, did not anticipate aggression in the Far East, but, if it should take place appropriate action would be taken to afford protection to the nation's "legitimate interests." In contemplating "appropriate action," Hull cautioned, it had to be kept in mind that it was against the "traditional policy" of the United States to enter into those "types of agreements which constitute or which suggest alliance." Consultation among and parallel action by the interested powers was suggested as the most effective means of thwarting the aims of any aggressive power. The principles on which any future consultation and action had to be based were those expressed in the Washington Treaties of 1922.[19]

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While these exchanges were being passed between Washington and London a serious Japanese-American controversy was brewing off the West Coast of the United States. During the summer of 1937 the taking of salmon by Japanese fishermen outside the three-mile limit but in the area of Bristol Bay threatened to become a major issue. American fishermen were complaining because the Japanese were using large floating canneries and were taking fish in such numbers as to threaten the future of salmon fishing in the area. Also because of lower production costs the Japanese could undersell American fishermen in the American market.[20]

As a solution to the problem the President suggested the extension of American territorial waters to a distance of ten or fifteen or twenty miles.[21] The three-mile limit, he contended, was a purely "ficticious distance" set for military reasons. The limit had been extended in the past in order to provide the government with the means of pursuing "rum-runners." He believed the government could legitimately maintain that conservation of the American people's normal food supply required its extension.[22]

Sumner Welles explained that there were two fundamental reasons for F.D.R.'s interest in the salmon controversy. One reason was to find some method of protecting the product for American fishermen. A second and equally important reason was a desire to strike at the Japanese. "The President believed that, if their activities could be

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curtailed, Japan would be deprived of at least some percentage of her foreign exchange." As a result of this deprivation it would be more difficult for them to extend the area of aggression in the Far East.[23]

Both the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of State voiced opposition to F.D.R.'s plan. They argued it would be inconsistent to adopt a policy which clearly violated recognized principles at a time when this government was attempting to impress on other nations the need for greater respect of international law. Also, the plan would involve the United States in controversies with friendly maritime powers, and inevitably, retaliatory action would be taken.[24] At length Roosevelt abandoned the project.

All plans for restricting Japanese aggression which had been previously considered were put aside when on July 7, 1937, fighting broke out between Chinese and Japanese troops near the Marco Polo Bridge. Heavy reinforcements poured in from Japan and during the next month hostilities spread to Shanghai with a frightful loss of life to the civilian population.

Following the outburst of hostilities it quickly became apparent that the sympathies of most Americans were with the underdog Chinese.[25] Though this was the case, the public was divided on the question of how their government should respond to this new Asian crisis.

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Included in the Roosevelt Files at Hyde Park are a few letters which urged the President to do his duty and send additional troops to China in order to protect that "Christian democracy" from external aggression.[26] Others suggested the United States should cooperate with Britain and offer mediation.[27] The letters with the most violent tone came from those who demanded immediate withdrawal of all American troops from China. On August 23 Hannah Clothier Hull addressed a letter to Roosevelt in which she advised that the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom deplored the presence of United States troops and war vessels on Chinese soil or in Chinese waters. The presence of these instruments of war, Miss Hull contended, could clearly become the focal points of disturbance "capable of leading this country to acts of official violence and we ask for their immediate withdrawal."[28]

The majority of those Americans who wrote the President did not believe he should relinquish any of the nation's rights in China. At the same time they were unwilling to support American intervention in the war to protect these rights. They hoped the government could find some solution to the problems and quickly bring the fighting to an end. The clearest opinion imparted by the letters to the President was that the majority of those who wrote did not want to go to war for China. What did the American people want their government to do short of

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war? So far as the letters to the President represent public opinion they indicate that in the summer of 1937 the majority of Americans were uncertain as to what their government could or should do short of war.

Roosevelt's first impulse after receiving news of the outbreak of hostilities in China was to act vigorously to end the fighting. In mid-July he discussed with Sumner Welles a plan to impose a trade embargo on the Japanese.[29] The embargo would be enforced by units of the American and British navies stationed at strategic points in the Pacific. Japan's economy depended on American and British markets. If these markets were denied the Japanese, F.D.R. contended, they could not continue their aggression for long.

There was little possibility, he explained, that this plan would lead to war. Japan was so committed in China her economy was already stretched to the breaking point. If the United States and Britain cooperated to cut off her trade her military effort would bog down long before she could obtain access to the raw materials in Southeast Asia she would need. At this juncture F.D.R. did not believe Japan would dare risk war with the United States.[30] As for obtaining British cooperation, the President did not anticipate any problems. They would cooperate because they must realize the vast financial and commercial losses that were bound to result from continued Japanese expansion.[31]

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Shortly after this discussion with Welles, Roosevelt abandoned the plan. The Assistant-Secretary speculated that there were probably numerous reasons for this decision. Among these he listed: the opposition of Cordell Hull, the knowledge that Prime Minister Chamberlain would not agree to joint action, the opinion of the Admirals in the Navy Department that a blockade was sure to end in a war for which the Navy was not prepared. The single most important factor which served to deter the President's actions, Welles contended, was his apprehension that an "isolationist Congress" and an "isolationist country . . . would refuse to support any action that entailed even the remotest possibility of war."[32]

F.D.R. replaced his embargo plan with a policy of hope! At the cabinet meetings of August 6 and August 13 Far Eastern policy was discussed in detail.[33] Vice President Garner urged the withdrawal of American troops from areas where fighting was taking place. He especially urged their withdrawal from the Peking area. Roosevelt agreed it was unfortunate troops were in the Peking area. However, he reminded Garner, they were there, along with troops from other nations, to protect the "legitimate interests" of "westerners."[34]

Cordell Hull added that the Chinese situation was extremely complicated and an orderly withdrawal of troops would be difficult. The Japanese would interpret such a withdrawal as a complete American retreat from the Pacific.

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As a result American influence and trade would be damaged in approximately half the world.[35] Garner was then told by Roosevelt, the administration was basing its policies in the Far East "on the hope of Japanese disaster, which could be produced by a rise in strength of Russia and China and a revolt on the part of the Japanese population against militarism."[36]

In retrospect it appears as if once he abandoned the idea of imposing a trade embargo on the Japanese, Roosevelt's thoughts on Far Eastern policy during the summer of 1937 revolved on a four-pronged axis. First, he hoped for a Japanese disaster. Second, efforts were made to keep Americans out of the Chinese war zone. These efforts were made in order to avoid the possibility of an "incident" which might cause an explosion of American public opinion such as had taken place in 1915 when the "Luisitania" was torpedoed.[37] Third, Roosevelt withheld application of the neutrality legislation to the Sino-Japanese conflict. The fourth element of policy was embodied in a series of "moral preachments" delivered by Cordell Hull.

The Neutrality Acts of 1935 and 1936 required that when the President discovered the existence of a state of war, he would forbid the making of loans and the sale or transportation of munitions to the belligerents. F.D.R. did not want to proclaim neutrality because if he did so it would be impossible to continue to export much needed supplies to China.[38] He was able to postpone a proclamation

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The "moral preachments" delivered by Hull contained nothing new. On the contrary these same principles had been repeatedly proclaimed for centuries. Herein lies their significance. Being unable to cope with or find a solution to the Asian crisis the administration fell back on the time worn practice of making righteous remarks while doing nothing.

The first of these "preachments" was issued by the Secretary on July 16. It was based on his "Eight Pillars of Peace" which he had proclaimed at the Buenos Aires Conference the preceding December.[39]

Inevitably, he remarked, serious hostilities anywhere in the world had an affect on the "interests or rights or obligations" of the United States. Therefore he believed it to be his duty to clearly explain the government's position in regard to the present international crisis. The Secretary then enumerated what he conceived as the basic ideals of American foreign policy. He declared:

> This country constantly and consistently advocates maintenance of peace. . . . We advocate faithful observance of international agreements. Upholding the principle of the sanctity of treaties, we believe in modification of provisions of treaties, when need therefore arises, by orderly processes carried out in a spirit of mutual helpfulness and accommodation. . . . We stand for revitalizing and strengthening of international law. . . .[40]

The sum of these four parts led inevitably to a policy of "drift." In essence, Roosevelt did not know what

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to do about the Far Eastern "situation." However, he was sure something should be done. He was convinced the United States could not sit placidly by while a brutal military dictatorship allied with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy moved to bring the immense resources of southeast Asia under its control.[41]

Toward the end of the summer the President became increasingly restive as information was received that the Japanese intended to increase pressure on China. On September 5 Prime Minister Konoye delivered an address to the Diet in which he declared that the policy for the Empire to adopt was to administer such a disastrous defeat to the Chinese army that it would lose its will to resist.[42] On the same day Foreign Minister Hirota delivered the same message but in different words. He called for such a decisive blow that the Chinese government would be convinced of "the error of its ways." It appeared to the Roosevelt Administration as if Japan was now committed to all-out war.[43]

Twelve days later China formally petitioned for League of Nations support of their war effort. In response the League members began to cast glances across the Atlantic for some indication of Washington's position. To head off any attempt by the League to "push the United States out in front" Hull, with Roosevelt's approval, cabled several of America's ambassadors in Europe and asked them to explain that the government intended for the League to take the

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initiative in the Far East. He explained the administration's position was that the League should investigate and then decide on a policy. The United States would then decide whether it could adhere to the policy. Above all, Hull wrote, the "United States must keep a free hand."[44]

On October 6 the League Assembly published two reports condemning Japanese actions as being out of proportion to the incident that occasioned the conflict and that Japanese statesmen had affirmed a policy of aggression that could not but cause disturbed relations in the area. After concluding that Japanese actions had violated international law, the Washington Treaties of 1922, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact; a provision was made for calling a conference of Far Eastern powers. The same afternoon the State Department issued a statement that the United States Government was in general accord with the League's conclusion.[45]

On the previous afternoon Roosevelt had given an indication of the government's attitude toward the League reports. While participating in ceremonies to dedicate a new bridge in Chicago he delivered the famous "Quarantine Address."[46] The "Address" was a summons to the American people to wake up to the facts of the modern world. As a result of the interdependence of all nations, no one nation could be secure while war, be it declared or undeclared, raged on any spot of the globe.[47]

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threat to everyone, he declared, began when a few governments decided it was their right to interfer in the internal affairs of other nations. This "unjustified interference" has reached a point "when the very foundations of civilization are seriously threatened."[48]

Only through a concerted effort by the peace-loving nations, the President asserted, could there be any hope for a future world in which men could "breathe freely and live in amity without fear. . . ." He called for a return to sanity and respect for international law and the sanctity of the pledged word.[49]

It is unfortunate, but true, he remarked, that an "epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading."

> When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease.
>
> It is my determination to pursue a policy of peace . . .
>
> America hates war. America hopes for peace. Therefore, America actively engages in the search for peace.[50]

A great deal has been written about the "Quarantine Address" and many quite different explanations of it have been suggested. It has generally been assumed that it marked the occasion when F.D.R. decided to take a firm stand against the aggressive policies of the "dictators." Dorothy Borg has written that the further one examines this thesis, the more it seems to invite rethinking.[51] There is no reason to argue with Miss Borg's conclusion.

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An analysis of Roosevelt's thoughts on Far Eastern policy suggests that above all the speech represented a climax of the President's antipathy toward the Japanese. This conclusion is supported by an examination of the history of the decade of the Thirties. It is also suggested by the writings of Sumner Welles, who during the decade played a leading role in the formulation of foreign policy. Welles has written that during the early 1930's F.D.R.'s major concern was the war in the Pacific. By the Fall of 1937 he had concluded, something had to be done to thwart Japanese aims.[52]

What did he intend to do? There is a wide difference of opinion among historians on this point, also. Every writer who has examined the "Address" has developed his own interpretation of what the President intended.

It appears as if many writers have over-reached their evidence. The general assumption has been that Roosevelt must have had a plan of action in mind or he would not have made a speech which was sure to alarm the "isolation" minded public. However, for him to have had a plan in mind would have been contrary to his usual procedure. He was not the type of man to think things through to their ultimate conclusion. Rather he liked to toss out ideas which other people could build upon until a final plan was formed.

The best interpretation of what he had in mind when he made this speech is probably the simplest interpretation.

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He was suspicious of the Japanese. He had been suspicious for some time and by the Autumn of 1937 Pacific affairs were making him quite restless. He also realized if Japanese expansion continued in the Far East the United States might have to become involved in the war in order to protect American "interests." Every action previous to the speech and every word in the speech suggests that essentially it was an attempt to make the American people realize that continued Japanese aggression was against the best interests of the United States.

The day following the "Address," while being questioned by reporters, F.D.R. denied having any plan of action in mind. Rather than a plan, he said he had only an "attitude" in mind. This attitude did not outline a program but suggested only that he was "in search for peace."[53]

After being pressed further for some concrete program, he exclaimed he was always being urged to "suggest something?" Why, he asked must America always make the suggestions? Why, he wondered, could not the British do some "suggesting" for a change. "Everytime we enter into some kind of an effort to settle something with our British friends, when we make the suggestion they get 90% and we get 10%. When they make the suggestion it comes out nearer 50-50."[54] In this case it is probably wise to take his comments at face value. He had no plan. He was looking for a plan, and he was open for suggestions.

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It has long been maintained that because of the adverse public response to the speech Roosevelt "pulled in his horns" and abandoned his plans to adopt a firm policy against the dictators. There is little doubt that Roosevelt as well as other high ranking members of the administration believed the public had responded negatively to his speech.[55] However, Dorothy Borg has suggested that the President misjudged public opinion. The public, she concluded, would have supported a firm policy against the Axis nations.[56] It is difficult to agree entirely with Miss Borg's evaluation of public opinion. It is true that the majority of the people who wrote the President in the weeks following the "Address" expressed approval of its contents, as Borg related. However, these same people placed conditions on their support. They supported bold action, but, they made it clear that they would not support any action wherein there existed the slightest chance of war. To a leader who was trying to wake up the people to the possibility of war, and to a leader who must always calculate the possibility of war resulting from bold action, the stipulations of support only "short of war" could hardly have been viewed as encouraging. On any account, it is obvious that Roosevelt had no bold action in mind. As he remarked to his press conference, "we are looking for a plan." In the days and weeks that followed the search continued.

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On October 6 Sumner Welles sent the President an outline of a plan for peace.[57] In a covering letter he advised it would be a blunder to think of calling an "international conference." Because of the past failures of such meetings the world was "sick" and "disgusted" with the very words "international conference."

The plan as the Assistant Secretary conceived it had two distinct phases. Phase one provided that on Armistice Day, after the customary ceremonies at the grave of the Unknown Soldier, the President would summon to the White House all the diplomatic representatives in Washington. When everyone was present he would announce his conviction that unless something was done soon to re-establish respect for international law there was little likelihood that world peace could be preserved. He would ask all governments to reach an agreement upon essential principles of international conduct and upon the best means of assuring their observance.

If this part of the plan was a success, if the nations were able to reach basic agreements on internationa law, he would then initiate phase two. He would invite nine other nations to join with the United States in drawing up an agenda covering the chief points mentioned in his Armistice Day proposal. This Executive Committee, working in Washington, would then develop a final program for peace to which all nations would adhere.

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Welles wrote that when he discussed the plan with him, the President was "not only receptive, but particularly enthusiastic."[58] Cordell Hull also noted Roosevelt's enthusiasm for the "colorful drama."[59] The Secretary, however, was opposed to the whole idea. He told the President he did not think it possible to achieve meaningful agreements with other nations just by sitting around a table for a day or two and talking. He further contended that the Axis nations would laugh at the whole arrangement. "It seemed to me," Hull wrote, "thoroughly unrealistic."[60] And, toward the end of October Roosevelt abandoned the plan. Welles judged that Hull's opposition and possible public resistance were the decisive factors behind this decision.[61]

Shortly after the Welles Plan was abandoned, delegates representing the major powers met at Brussels with the aim of finding a solution to the Far Eastern "situation."[62] However, before the delegates were assembled there appeared numerous indications that the achievement of a meaningful solution would be quite difficult if not impossible. Notification on October 22 that Japanese delegates would not attend portended limited results. But more important than the Japanese boycott was the indecision on the part of the American and British governments as to what they hoped to achieve. It is reasonable to assume that if any meaningful agreement was to be reached, one of these powers would have to take the lead. Both failed to do so.

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Three days after the invitations to the conference went out, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden sent a memorandum to the State Department expressing his views as to the three possible courses which could be taken.[63] These three were: deferring any action; expressing moral condemnation; actively aiding China and placing economic pressure on Japan. He wrote, he did not like the first two alternatives and would not specifically advocate the third because of the difficulties and dangers inherent in it. Japan, seeing aid going to China, might impose a naval blockade on neutral shipping. In that case "we should then have to acquiesce or else keep the sea routes open by armed force."[64] The memorandum indicated that Eden had no concrete proposals to make.

Roosevelt's thinking was even less incisive than Edens! On October 19 he met with Norman Davis, the American delegate, at Hyde Park.[65] He instructed Davis the administration would not "be pushed out in front as the leader in, or suggestor of" any action contemplated at Brussels. Also, though the government wishes to cooperate with the British, "it must be independent cooperation." The United States could not afford to be made, in American public opinion, "a tail to the British kite."[64]

The President stressed, during the conversation with Davis, the importance of mobilizing the "moral forces" in all peace loving nations. He thought the conference should be prolonged so as to serve as an agency for

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Shortly after this conversation J. P. Moffat, who was a member of the American delegation at the Brussels Conference, evaluated the President's instructions. He wrote he had seen the memorandum which had been given Davis and "reluctantly reached the conclusion that he (Roosevelt) did not see his way out of the situation any more than did we."[68] F.D.R.'s response to a letter written to him by Henry Stimson while the Brussels Conference was in session contains an additional indication of his inability to "see his way out of the situation."

Stimson wrote that developments in Southeast Asia were of vital interest to the United States.[69] China, in attempting to halt Japanese aggression, was fighting "our" battle for peace and freedom in the Orient. Time was running out in the Far East, Stimson concluded. Some means of helping China had to be found at Brussels. Failure to do so could have a permanent and damaging psychological effect upon China's faith in the United States and western civilization.[70]

Upon receipt of this letter, F.D.R. asked Hull to draft a reply and commented: "You and I will agree with him wholly but we still have not got the answer."[71]

The Brussels meeting adjourned on November 24 without finding any solution to the Asian "situation." The only courageous note sounded at the conference, Welles

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wrote, was sounded by Anthony Eden. He suggested economic sanctions against the Japanese, but he made it emphatically clear that this enterprise would be considered only if the other signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty would agree to collective military action to protect Britain's Far Eastern possessions should Japan decide to strike back.[72]

It was impossible for Roosevelt to agree to Eden's conditions. To have done so would have certainly made it appear as if America had assumed the position of "a tail to the British kite." Also, he was convinced neither Congress nor American public opinion would support a commitment that entailed the use of armed force were Japan to attack the possessions of some other power. His naval commanders advised him as well that the United States was not militarily prepared to undertake such an obligation.[73]

The Brussels conference had been adjourned for only a short time when there occurred a most serious threat to Japanese-American relations. On December 12 Japanese planes attacked and sank the United States gunboat Panay on the Yangtze river. The State Department found it difficult to obtain complete information as to the nature of the attack. However, as the evidence was received it indicated the attack must have been deliberate.[74]

The bombing shocked Roosevelt. However, he and Hull were convinced that the United States was not prepared militarily to send sufficient naval forces to Asian

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waters to require Japan to make full amends and resume a "law-abiding" course for the future.[75] On the morning of December 13 the President and his Secretary of State met in order to develop a policy in response to the "Panay Incident." Though unsure of what to do, F.D.R. believed something had to be done, and it had to be done quickly.[76] The Japanese, he believed, had been actuated by two or three motives: they wished to impress the Chinese with their power and strength; they wanted to make it uncomfortable for any western nation to stay in China; and, Japan had it in mind to force all westerners out of China.[77]

At the close of the discussion Roosevelt dictated a short memorandum to Hull:

> Please tell the Japanese Ambassador when you see him at one o'clock:
> 1. That the President is deeply shocked and concerned by the news of indiscriminate bombing of American and other non-Chinese vessels on the Yangtze, and he requests that the Emperor be so advised.
> 2. That all the facts are being assembled and will shortly be presented to the Japanese Government.
> 3. That in the meantime it is hoped the Japanese Government will be considering definitely for presentation to this Government:
> a. Full expressions of regret and proffer of full compensation:
> b. Methods guaranteeing against a repetition of any similar attack in the future.[78]

Shortly after presenting this note to the Japanese Ambassador Hull cabled Grew in Tokyo and instructed him to impress upon the government the seriousness of the situation.[79]

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Roosevelt was not convinced a mere request for an apology and guarantee against similar future action would sufficiently impress the Japanese. The next day he began a search for a more demonstrative plan. Cognizant of his military limitations he told Morgenthau on December 14 that there was more than one way of "declaring war." He asked Morgenthau to find out if he had the authority to take possession of all Japanese property in the United States and hold it against payment of damages. If he lacked authority he wanted to know what could be done to him if he did it anyway.[80]

Herman Oliphant, one of Morgenthau's assistants, suggested he could seize Japanese funds under a 1933 amendment to the Trading with the Enemy Act. Under the terms of this amendment the President could proclaim a national emergency and issue regulations prohibiting or restricting exchange transactions.[81] Delighted by Oliphant's suggestion he exclaimed: "My God, I completely forgot about it." He asked Morgenthau to examine the scheme further and prepare a memorandum on it.[82]

The President later discussed Oliphant's suggestion at the cabinet meeting of December 17.[83] Vice President Garner did not believe the plan would have any effect. He believed only "real force" would have an effect on the Japanese.[84] F.D.R. remarked that he believed economic sanctions could be effective. "We don't call them economic sanctions; we call them quarantines. We want to develop

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As it would take British cooperation to make any restrictions on Japanese exchange effective, later the same afternoon Morgenthau called British Foreign Secretary Sir John Simon to obtain his reaction to the plan. Simon refused to discuss the plan over the telephone as there was too great a chance for misunderstanding. Also, his dinner was getting cold. He asked Morgenthau to send him a memorandum on the plan.[86]

The following day the Treasury Secretary received Roosevelt's authorization to send a memorandum, but he noted by this time the President's enthusiasm for the scheme had waned.[87] By December 21, when the regulations were ready, the President gave no indication of wanting them; and, two days later the United States accepted an apology and promise of reparations made by the Japanese government.[88]

Roosevelt's search for a plan to counter the aims of the world's "bandit" nations did not end with the solution of the "Panay Incident." Shortly after New Years Day 1938 the Welles Peace Plan was resurrected.[89] Hull had agreed to withdraw his opposition to the plan on the condition that Great Britain be consulted before any move was made by the White House. Though Roosevelt had reservations about the wisdom of prior consultation with the

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British, he agreed to it in order to reconcile his Secretary. When first approached in January 1938, Chamberlain advised the President against the plan. Later, after being pressured by Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, he reluctantly agreed to go along.[90] By this time, Welles wrote, the "tides had . . . swept too far," and the President abandoned the plan.[91]

Throughout the period immediately preceding and immediately following the Quarantine Address Franklin Roosevelt was in search of some plan to halt the expansion of aggressive nations. He was cognizant of European problems, but in the summer and fall of 1937 his major concern was finding a solution to the Far Eastern "situation." His freedom to develop a plan was circumscribed, in his opinion and in that of his major advisers, by a lack of military preparedness and by hostile Congressional and public opinion to any scheme that contained the slightest possibility of war. But, a more important limitation on action was his own uncertainty. The President was convinced of the need for a policy to thwart Japanese aggression. The problem was, he had no conception of what that policy should be. The formulation of a clear and precise Asian policy would have required a definition of American stakes in the area. There is no evidence to indicate that during Roosevelt's search for a plan to halt Japanese aggression he ever attempted such a definition.

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Time and again his advisers suggested steps aimed at halting the Japanese. On each occasion the President at first appeared enthusiastic. However, on each occasion when it became time to implement the policy he hesitated. This failure to implement policy was usually explained, when it was explained at all, as a result of adverse public opinion. In retrospect, however, it appears as if Presidential indecision resulting from a lack of a clear understanding of American interests in Asia was the major cause of lack of action.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, I, 222.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., pp. 226-228. The silver agreement was completed in May 1936. The United States agreed to provide $20 million against the deposit of 50 million ounces of silver. Morgenthau also proposed to buy 75 million ounces of silver, starting with 12 million ounces for the month ending June 15 and continuing with nine million ounces each month through January 15, 1937. Because he feared it would be "upsetting" to the Japanese, Cordell Hull opposed this agreement. To avoid bringing in the Department of State, Morgenthau made it between the Chinese Ministry of Finance and the United States Treasury, not between the governments.

The American silver policy when first adopted in 1933-34 because of pressure of politically strong silver interests in the United States, had a disastrous affect on China. By setting the American price at an artificially high level, Chinese silver flowed to the United States in great quantities. As a result, in 1934-35 the Chinese Government was forced to give up the age-old silver standard. It is an anamoly that the American silver-buying policy which at first had such disastrous affects on China later became a vitally important means of aid in China's fight for survival. For a complete analysis of American silver policy in relation to China see: Arthur N. Young, China and the Helping Hand, 1937-1945 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 31-48.

[4]For a contemporary account of the "Sian Incident" see the New York Times, January 12, 1937, p. 8. The best historical analysis of the "Incident" is contained in Dorothy Borg, The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-38 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

[5]Nelson Johnson to the Secretary of State, December 18, 1936, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150 China, Folder 1936-38.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150 China, Folder 1936-38.

[8]Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, II, 51.

[9]Ibid., p. 7.

[10]F.R., 1937, III, 954.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid., p. 973.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Borg, Far Eastern Crisis, p. 247.

[15]Quoted in Ibid.

[16]Roosevelt Files, C.F. State, Unindexed Folder. The committee included the Secretaries of War, State, Treasury, Labor, Navy, and the Attorney General. On November 17 Secretary of War Woodring sent the President the committee's final report. It was reported that numerous activities contrary to the best interest of the United States were being carried out by Japanese naval and civil personnel in Hawaii. In order to stop these practices the committee recommended specific legislation. Woodring to Roosevelt, November 17, 1937.

In reply to Woodring, Roosevelt wrote that he fully approved of the report and intended to request the measures recommended be put into effect as quickly as possible. Roosevelt to Woodring, November 26, 1937.

[17]Hull, Memoirs, I, 531.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid., pp. 531-535.

[20]For information on the salmon controversy see: Roosevelt Files, O.F. 197, Folder 1936-37.

[21]Roosevelt to Secretary of State and Secretary of Commerce, July 14, 1937, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 197, Folder 1936-37.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Welles, Seven Decisions, pp. 76-77.

[24]On July 23 Secretary of Commerce Daniel C. Roper wrote Roosevelt explaining the difficulty of controlling salmon fishing. "It is analogous to the pelagic sealing controversy between the United States and Britain between 1886 to 1890. We tried to establish jurisdiction over seals but an International Arbitration body found against us." Roper to Roosevelt, July 23, 1937, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 197, Folder 1936-37.

On July 31 Hull wrote that in his opinion "the solution was one which should be sought through the medium of diplomatic negotiations, that the Department has already taken appropriate preliminary steps to that end, and that, pending the outcome of negotiations by this Department . . ." any other action by the government would be inappropriate. Hull to Roosevelt, July 31, 1937, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 197, Folder 1936-37.

[25]Hadley Cantril (ed.), Public Opinion, 1935-1946 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 1081-1082.

[26]Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150 C, China, Sino-Japanese War 1937.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Hannah Clothier Hull to Roosevelt, August 23, 1937, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150 C, China, Sino-Japanese War 1937. Miss Hull was President, United States Section, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

[29]Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 71.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, I, 480-481.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, II, 192; Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, VI, 354-355; F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 201.

[38]Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt, August 17, 1937, Microfilm Reel #5, Vol. X, pp. 162-167; Sumner Welles, The Time for Decision (New York: Harper, 1944), p. 287.

[39]Hull, Memoirs, I, 498.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 70.

[42]Hull, Memoirs, I, 542.

[43]Ibid.

[44]Ibid., pp. 543-544.

[45]Ibid.

[46]The complete "Address" is included in Rosenman (ed.), The Puplic Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, VI, 406-411.

[47]Ibid., p. 407.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Ibid., pp. 410-411.

[51]Dorothy Borg, "Notes on Roosevelt's 'Quarantine' Speech," Political Science Quarterly, LXII (September, 1957), 405-433.

[52]Welles, Seven Decisions, pp. 8, 70.

[53]Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt, October 6, 1937, Microfilm Reel #5, Vol. X, p. 246.

[54]Ibid.

[55]For information on the administration's interpretation of adverse public opinion after the "Address" see: Charles A. Beard, American Foreign Policy in the Making, 1932-1941 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946), p. 188; Burns, Roosevelt, the Lion and the Fox, p. 319; Hull, Memoirs, I, 545; Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, II, 222; Rauch, Roosevelt from Munich to Pearl Harbor, p. 50; Samuel Rosenman, Working with Roosevelt (New York: Harper, 1952), pp. 167-171; Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 312; Welles, Time for Decision, p. 63; Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 13.

[56]Borg, "Notes," pp. 424-433.

[57]For a detailed discussion of the Welles Peace Plan see: Welles, Seven Decisions, pp. 15-30; Welles, Time for Decision, pp. 63-68.

[58]Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 22.

[59]Hull, Memoirs, I, 546.

[60]Ibid., p. 547.

[61]Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 24.

[62]The Brussels Conference was called as a result of the League of Nations' actions of October 6. The conference began on November 3 and continued through November 24, 1937.

[63]The invitations to the conference were sent out on October 16.

[64]Hull, Memoirs, I, 550.

[65]Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. State Department, 1937, Box 32.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

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[73] Ibid.

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[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid.

[68]October 28, 1937, Hooker (ed.), Moffat Papers, p. 157.

[69]Henry Stimson to Franklin Roosevelt, November 15, 1937, Roosevelt Files, P.P.F. 20, Henry Stimson Folder.

[70]Ibid.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 75.

[73]Ibid.

[74]For information on the Panay attack see: Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150 C, China 1938-45, Panay Folder; Hull, Memoirs, I, 560; Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, I, 275; Manny T. Koginos, The Panay Incident: Prelude to War (Lafette, Indiana: Purdue University Studies, 1967).

[75]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, I, 485; Hull, Memoirs, I, 560.

[76]Harold Ickes reported the President was a bit hesitant at first about taking a firm stand against Japan because he believed a secret Japanese-German alliance existed. But, this was not a serious difficulty because it was also believed Germany would find a way out of the alliance in case of trouble. Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, II, 278.

[77]Ibid., p. 275.

[78]Hull, Memoirs, I, 560.

[79]Hull to Grew, December 13, 1937, F.R., 1937, IV, 516.

[80]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, I, 486.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid

[84] Ibid

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[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., p. 489.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid., p. 490.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid., p. 491.

[89] Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 25.

[90] For a discussion of Anthony Eden's views on the peace plan see Ibid., p. 27; and Time for Decision, p. 68.

[91] Welles, Seven Decisions, p. 28.

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CHAPTER V

FROM PANAY TO THE TRIPARTITE PACT

The shock waves from the "Panay Incident" were still being felt in Washington as the year 1938 began. As a result the Roosevelt Administration found itself in a pitched battle with those congressmen who wished to place even further limitations on American involvement in international relations than had been accomplished by the neutrality legislation. In February 1937 Louis Ludlow had introduced in the House of Representatives a resolution for a Constitutional Amendment whereby the authority of Congress to declare war would not become effective until confirmed by a national referendum. The resolution having been referred to the Judiciary Committee which held it without action, Ludlow attempted to obtain the signatures of a majority of house members in order to bring it before the Committee of the Whole. After months of striving he still lacked sufficient signatures. Then came the bombing of the Panay and within two days he had the requisite number.

To the President the Ludlow Resolution seemed a disastrous move toward the most rigid form of "isolationism." In league with Jam Farley, Cordell Hull and other

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members of the Cabinet and State Department, Roosevelt directed a vigorous campaign to convince the members of the House of the inadvisability of the amendment. When on January 10, 1938, the vote was taken as to whether to remove it from the Judiciary Committee the proposal lost by a mere 21 votes.[1]

While the battle over the Ludlow Resolution was raging in Congress Japanese aggression in China had continued apace. Through barbarous military activity and careless and/or indiscriminate bombing, Chinese civilians were being killed and American interests, as well as those of other nations, were being threatened.

Roosevelt had, during this same period, continued his interminable, though fruitless, search for a plan to halt Japanese expansion. In the absence of a plan American Far Eastern policy continued to "drift." However, in order to preserve options for possible future action a few hesitant first steps toward the development of policy were taken. In a series of memoranda in January Roosevelt advised Hull that the government should begin collecting evidence of Japanese depredations in China. The sum of these memoranda suggest that he had concluded that this evidence might have a variety of uses in the future. It could be used to show that the Japanese Government had lost control of the army in China, to prepare the American people for a possible clash with Japan, and to build a case against the Japanese

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On January 21 he asked Hull to read a recent cable from the Third Secretary of the Embassy in China.[2] The cable reported wanton destruction of American and Chinese property and violations of the rights of Americans by Japanese military forces. The Secretary's report concluded that there had been no appreciable decline in destruction since January 15 when the Japanese War Department instructed the military to refrain from irregular entry of American property.[3] The President suggested that this or similar telegrams might be made public in order to show that the Japanese Government was powerless to stop these depredations and was unable to afford adequate protection to American property. F.D.R. also suggested that the time had come to make clear the general situation in China and to show the distinction between the Japanese Government and Army. "Few Americans," he wrote, "can object to our protection of Americans against an army which is out of the control of its own civilian government. . . ."[4]

Two days later at the regular Sunday Cabinet meeting, Harold Ickes reported in his diary that the Chinese situation was discussed. Roosevelt remarked that he had received numerous reports of Japanese atrocities in China. "Apparently," he stated, "the Japanese soldiers and even the officers are raping Chinese women without limit." Turning to Hull he told his Secretary of State that he

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wished he would devise some way of letting this news leak to the press so that the American people might get the real Chinese background for the sake of the future.[5]

After receiving additional reports of Japanese looting and destruction of American property from Clarence Gauss, Consul General at Shanghai, F.D.R. advised Hull that if he had not already done so, to begin to lay the foundation for holding Japan accountable in dollars for the acts of her soldiers. The Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917, he wrote, is an excellent precedent for holding in escrow Japanese property in America until they have paid for this destruction.[6]

At the same time that F.D.R. was advising Hull to begin to build a case against the Japanese he was also considering methods for extending a limited amount of aid to China so their resistance could continue.[7] This aid was to take several forms. One of the simplest was merely the refusal to recognize the existence of a state of war between China and Japan so that the neutrality laws need not be applied and trade could continue. Seven months after the beginning of the Sino-Japanese conflict Roosevelt explained to reporters in an "off-the-record" statement how his neglecting to proclaim neutrality had benefited China. He admitted that he had been "beating around the bush on this China thing" solely because the two nations had not severed diplomatic relations. If neutrality had been proclaimed trade would have been interrupted. This would have "benefited Japan and hurt China."[8]

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Maintenance of trade relations was viewed as a definite benefit to China. However, if this trade was to continue for any length of time and be of a magnitude that would truly benefit China, it was apparent that America would have to provide financial assistance to shore up the ailing Chinese economy. Henry Morgenthau, with valuable encouragement and support from the President, directed the American efforts to provide this financial assistance.

After the outbreak of hostilities of the undeclared war when China could be sure of few friends in America, Morgenthau resolved to do all he could to assist them. He did not know how far Cordell Hull, who refused to make any firm statement in regard to American support of China, would tolerate his monetary diplomacy, but he responded as generously as possible to Chinese overtures. On November 29, 1937, he began consideration of a Chinese request for a bid on 10 million more ounces of silver. He also wanted to tell them he would buy 50 million ounces during the next 10 weeks and extend for another year the agreement permitting China to borrow foreign exchange against gold on deposit within the United States. However, before proceeding with either of these programs he turned to Roosevelt for advice and consent.[9]

On December 2 Roosevelt instructed him to consult Hull. But, the President added, he would tell the Secretary of State that he was inclined to go along with both proposals. F.D.R. remarked that he believed the United

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States should continue its friendly policy just as if there were no hostilities.[10] Hull, on December 6, expressed some reluctance to agree to the plan and recommended a provision be included making future extensions contingent on "any possible questions of neutrality that may arise."[11]

For advice on how to respond to the State Department's recommendations, Morgenthau returned to Roosevelt. The latter called the Hull Memorandum "the most stupid . . . I have ever read." He explained that when there was added to the agreement to give China a foreign exchange loan the stipulation that it may be cancelled in case of a neutrality proclamation, "this would be playing into the hands of somebody like Senator Nye. Fix up an agreement with them right away in writing," the President directed.

John Blum has correctly assessed these steps as efforts, however modest, to help the Chinese purchase the materials of war which they desperately needed.[13] They were defined as ventures in monetary stabilization in order to circumvent State Department resistance. Had Hull enthusiastically supported these modest proposals one might suggest that the President would have been willing to extend even more generous aid. Though the amount of assistance extended was inadequate and more would be needed later, it at least gave the Chinese the psychological lift they needed in order to continue their resistance. Also, it was more than Hull would have extended. Morgenthau

found a way around Hull and Roosevelt stood behind him.

In addition to government assistance in the form of trade and loans, Roosevelt also encouraged private charitable organizations to aid the Chinese. On January 11, 1938, he wrote the Chairman of the American Red Cross, General Grayson, and suggested that a campaign for funds to aid the Chinese be staged. He wrote that he realized the difficulty of distributing relief to the Chinese civilian population, but it would be only proper for Americans to undertake a greater part in such relief work than was presently being done. "I would be happy to give approval to any appeal by the Red Cross for funds for destitute Chinese civilians. The same thing applied to funds to be spent for medical aid." F.D.R. expressed his confidence that $1,000,000 could be raised "without any trouble at all."[14]

On August 22, 1938, the President summarized his views on American aid to China in a reply to a letter he had received from Dr. J. Leighton Stuart, President of Yenching University. On July 15 Stuart had written Roosevelt recalling to him a conversation on Sino-Japanese relations which they had on May 1, 1933. On that date, Stuart related, the President had brushed aside the arguments for and against Japanese aggression in China as irrelevant, and stated that the only question with which he was concerned was how America would best assist China.

Stuart remarked that he was having difficulty reconciling this expressed sympathy for China with the refusal to enforce the neutrality acts. The enforcement of these acts, he submitted, "would be of incalculable aid to China. . . ." "No better service," Stuart concluded, "could America render the cause of peace in the Pacific area than by aiding China to maintain her administration and territorial integrity and thus to join the fellowship of freedom-loving peoples."[15]

The President responded by explaining that current American policy in China was not inconsistent with the ideas expressed in the conversation of May 1, 1933. As a means of clarifying some of the factors involved in the situation, Roosevelt enclosed a "statement of comment" in regard to the question of application of the neutrality acts to the conflict in the Far East.[16]

The enclosed "statement" directed Stuart's attention to the fact that the embargo provided for by the neutrality acts applied equally to all parties in a state of war. It could not be enforced against one belligerent and not against another. Should the President find that a state of war existed in the Far East, and so proclaim, the export of arms to both China and Japan would be at once prohibited. "In this connection, it is of interest to note that since July 1, 1937, the Department of State has issued licenses for the export of arms, ammunition, and implements of war to China in the value of $13,791,588.18, and to Japan in the value of $10,581,866.93." In light of these

facts and circumstances, the President concluded that it would not be in the best interests of this country to invoke the provisions of the neutrality acts.[17]

Stuart was also asked to remember that the American government had frequently expressed horror at the bombing from the air of civilian populations. Cordell Hull had reiterated this stand in his press conference of June 11, 1938, and had remarked that the government was trying to impress on American manufacturers of bombing planes the government's attitude in regard to this practice and in regard to the sale of planes and equipment to countries which engage in it.[18]

In October 1938 there occurred a rare opportunity for the government to protest Japanese intrusions in China directly to the head of the Japanese government. Prince Fuminaro Konoye had just been named Prime Minister and continued temporarily to function as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Grew wrote from Tokyo: "It seems to me an unusual opportunity to present to him . . . the full desiderata of the United States without going over the head of any minister."[19] On October 1 a statement was drafted by Hull in the State Department and after receiving Roosevelt's approval was sent to Grew to be presented to Konoye as from the "Government of the United States." As a result of a code garble which substituted "President" in place of "Government" it was presented as if it came directly from Roosevelt.[20]

In what became known as Hull's "Open Door Note," the Secretary of State excoriated the Japanese government for its policy in China. In this instance nothing was said of protecting the rights or guaranteeing the independence of the Chinese. Rather, Hull concentrated on Japanese violations of the principle of equality of commerical opportunity or the "Open Door." When Japan occupied Manchuria in 1931, Hull wrote, assurances were given that the "Open Door" would be maintained. However, equality of commercial opportunity has virtually ceased to exist in the area. The American government was becoming apprehensive lest a similar situation develop in recently occupied areas. The Japanese government, it was alleged, had assumed extraordinary control in the occupied areas. "There can be no equality of opportunity or Open Door in China so long as the ultimate authority to regulate, tax, or prohibit trade is exercised . . . by the authorities of one 'foreign' power in the furtherance of the interests of that power." The Secretary complained also of the unwarranted restrictions placed upon the personal activities of American nationals in China. While Japan operated in such an outrageous manner, the "Note" explained that in its territory the United States continued to abide by the "letter and spirit" of the Japanese-American Commercial Treaty of 1911 and other recognized principles of international law and order. "Japanese commerce and enterprise

have continued to enjoy in the United States equality of opportunity."

In light of the facts presented the Japanese Government was asked to implement its previous assurances in regard to the "Open Door" by taking prompt and effective measures to cause:

1. The discontinuance of exchange controls which discriminate against American trade and enterprise.
2. The discontinuance of any monopoly or preference which might deprive Americans of commercial equality.
3. The discontinuance of interference by Japanese authorities with American property and other rights including such things as censorship of American mail, and restrictions upon areas of residence, travel, trade, and shipping by Americans.[21]

During the first three-quarters of 1938 a few hesitant first steps toward the development of a policy in response to Japanese aggression in China were taken. The President decreed that trade would continue to flow to China, modest loans would be made so that goods needed to maintain resistance could be purchased, charitable contributions would be encouraged, and American rights in China were to be maintained. It should be emphasized that these steps were extremely hesitant, aid to China was extremely modest, and American policy in the Far East remained fluid. Rather than being steps toward the development of a firm and comprehensive policy they were intended to preserve options for the future. In essence, American policy at the end of the third-quarter of 1938 was still in a state of "drift."

The administration proceeded along the same meandering course during the last quarter of the year. Roosevelt continued to await future developments before commiting the nation. On October 8 Chiang Kai-shek sent through his Ambassador in Washington a personal appeal to the President that he mediate the Sino-Japanese conflict. The Generalissimo wrote that China looked to the United States for peace "because we have complete faith that the kind of peace the American Government is inspired to sponsor will be a just peace."[22] Eleven days later F.D.R. responded to Chiang's invitation. He confirmed his continued interest in Far Eastern problems and remarked that the solution to the tragic conflict occurring there through peaceful negotiation was daily becoming more imperative. However, he was not quite ready to undertake mediation, possibly a better opportunity for successful negotiations would occur sometime in the future.[23]

Four days prior to Roosevelt's reply, Chiang had sent a second letter to the President. He related that during the past few months Japanese aggression had methodically increased in both intensity and magnitude. City after city, he wrote, had been attacked, ransacked, and reduced to ruins. "Death missiles" have rained from Japanese aircraft on populous towns far remote from the actual area of hostilities. When hard pressed by the Chinese defenders the Japanese resorted to the use of poisonous gases. But still, Chiang noted, despite this

unprecedented suffering, the Chinese people have shown great courage and maintained high morale. The maintenance of this high level of morale Chiang attributed to his peoples faith in ultimate victory and also to the moral and material support received from the United States. "Words of encouragement coupled with such material help as the silver purchases have produced a most soothing effect on the anquish and suffering of the Chinese people who realize that China at this trying hour has not been forsaken at least by the President of the United States."

Chiang concluded his letter by thanking Roosevelt for past assistance and warning that an ever greater amount fo aid would be needed in the future if the Japanese invader was to be repelled. He asked the President for information as to the stage of negotiations that were taking place between Chinese and American officials in Washington.[24]

The negotiations to which Chiang referred in his letter had been going on for some time. The previous Spring Chinese Ambassador Wang had begun exploring the possibility of negotiating a cash loan with the American government. Roosevelt had supported the principle of a loan at the time and during the summer his enthusiasm for the project increased. In June he was informed by William Bullit, the United States Ambassador to France (who had been informed by Wellington Koo--the Chinese Ambassador to France) that without a loan Chiang would soon lack the means and the will to fight. Moreover, the French had intimated that

if the United States extended some sort of credit to China, they and the British would do so also. Bullit's advice provoked Roosevelt to instruct Morgenthau to consult the Departments of State and Agriculture and, if necessary, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Commodity Credit Corporation, and Export-Import Bank "in order to push to completion a loan for the Chinese."[25]

Early in September Morgenthau began serious discussions with Wang on the terms of a loan. The Ambassador reported that he had been given the impressions by Roosevelt that a $25 million loan for medical supplies, cattle, gray goods, and flour could be quickly arranged.[26] On September 6, a few days after this discussion, Morgenthau told Roosevelt of Wang's impression. F.D.R. remarked that he had made no promises, but he was "enthusiastic to do something."[27]

On September 22 K.P. Chen, the Chinese Finance Minister, arrived in Washington to direct his government's negotiations. Chen suggested to Morgenthau that the government agree to extend a large loan to China which would be paid off through American purchases of tung oil.[28]

During these negotiations Roosevelt gave his Treasury Secretary all the encouragement he needed. On September 26 he said: "Well, if there's a war in Europe we'll give them credit." He paused for a moment and then added: "If there isn't maybe we'll do it anyway."[29] While F.D.R. was encouraging his Treasury Secretary, Hull

was doing all he could to discourage the project. He explained his opposition to Roosevelt and Morgenthau by remarking that it would be difficult to defend the project "to neutrality-minded Americans or to an irritated Japan."[30]

The negotiations dragged on into October without agreement. By the middle of October Chinese financial resources were gone and Chen requested an immediate loan that would at least carry them through the next year. On October 17 Morgenthau sent Roosevelt a plan for a loan arrangement which had been drafted by Herman Oliphant. The Oliphant plan provided for an agreement wherein the Chinese government would sell tung oil to the Universal Trading Corporation which would then resell it to a syndicate of American consumers. Oliphant estimated that China could deliver about 350,000 tons of the oil in five years. Assured of this income, they could use the $2 million which they had obtained from previous silver sales to purchase military equipment. However, their needs totaled almost $150,000,000. To provide additional funds at once, Oliphant suggested an Export-Import Bank loan against 50 per cent of the value of the oil ultimately to be delivered.[31]

When the Treasury Secretary sent this plan to the President he included with it a personal statement on foreign policy. This letter, according to John Blum, represented "the strongest statement on foreign policy he had yet ventured."[32] The events of the past few weeks

Morgenthau wrote referring to Hitler's take over of the Sudetenland, have indicated the increasing effectiveness of the forces of aggression. Since the fall of Manchuira in 1931, he commented, there had occurred the conquest of Ethiopia, formented unrest in Latin America and the Near East, armed intervention in Spain, the invasion of China, the annexation of Austria, and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. There was no reason, he judged, "to expect the aggression to stop." At first Japan wanted only Manchuria, then North China, now all of China is being demanded. "The current claim of an aggressor power is always its last--until the next one."

What must the United States do to halt this aggression? The Secretary answered his own question by emphasizing that care should be taken so that the same "short-sighted" mistakes made by Britain and France would not be repeated.

> Let us while we can peacefully do so try to check the aggressors. Let us not be placed in the position of having to compound with them. Let it not be necessary for the President of the United States to fly to Tokyo and in humble manner plead with the Mikado that he be content with half the Philippines rather than wage war for the whole. Such a possibility may seem ridiculous now, but no more ridiculous than Chamberlain's flight to Berlin would have seemed seven years ago.[33]

Morgenthau appealed to his "Chief" to use the great financial resources at his disposal to safeguard the future peace of the nation. China must have aid, he reported. Without it Chinese resistance would soon disintegrate.

"By risking little more than the cost of one battleship we can give renewed vitality and effectiveness to the Chinese."[34]

In concluding Morgenthau took a stab at Cordell Hull. He explained that he was pleading China's case with special urgency because on numerous occasions he (the President) had told him to proceed with proposals for assistance to China. However, his efforts had made little headway against the adamant foreign policy of doing nothing which could possibly be objected to by an aggressor nation. He confirmed his respect for the "integrity and sincerity" of those who held that a course of inaction was best, "but the issues at stake go beyond any one of us and do not permit me to remain silent."[35]

On October 21 Morgenthau had a contract for tung oil drawn up. However, he had hardly arranged the contracts when he temporarily drew back. He explained to the President four days later at a luncheon that the contracts for the oil were ready. But in the last four days Canton and Hankow had been taken by the Japanese. He admitted he was reluctant to proceed with the deal because he was uncertain how long the Chiang government could remain in power.[36]

If the loan were made today and tomorrow a Provisional Government was set up, Roosevelt agreed, it would be very embarrassing. He advised a delay of a few days or a week to see what Chiang intended to do. If Chiang stated that

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he had withdrawn his troops from Canton and Hankow for strategic purposes and convinced the world that he could continue his present form of government, "I will be very happy to promptly approve this loan."[37]

That same evening K. P. Chen advised Morgenthau that the information he had received indicated that the retreats had been for strategic reasons. Later reports from Treasury representatives in China confirmed, to Morgenthau's satisfaction, Chen's diagnosis.[38]

While Treasury officials were waiting for reports confirming Chen's analysis, ominous sounding words were received from Japan. Speaking over the radio in Tokyo, Prime Minister Konoye declared on November 3, 1938, that Japan would create a "New Order in the Far East." He proclaimed that history showed that Japan, Manchukuo, and China were so related to each other that they must bind themselves together in a "common mission" for the establishment of peace and order in the Far East. The old power systems and the League of Nations, declared Konoye, were antiquated and ineffective so far as keeping peace was concerned. He called for a new peace fabric that could keep pace with history and still be in accordance with international justice. A fundamental part of this new peace fabric, the Prime Minister concluded, would be the close association and cooperation of Japan, Manchukuo, and China.[39]

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After resisting active Japanese aggression for more than a year there is little doubt that Konoye knew that Chiang would never accept the subservient role for China which the "New Order" implied. Thus, the Roosevelt Administration could only view Konoye's speech as the prelude to more vigorous activity in China in order to remove Chiang from power. If this analysis of Konoye's remarks was correct then financial aid to China was more imperative than ever. On November 10 Roosevelt responded to Chiang's previous letter requesting information as to the stage of the loan negotiations. The President declined to take this opportunity to promise the Generalissimo that the loan would be forthcoming, but he assured him that the matters brought forward by the Chinese representatives were "receiving most careful and sympathetic consideration. . . ."[40]

The next day Morgenthau reminded Roosevelt that he had promised to go ahead with the loan if he received a satisfactory report on the stability of Chiang's government. The President replied that all that remained was to get "Hull to acquiesce."[41] For several days Hull evaded Morgenthau. In the meantime Stanley K. Hornbeck prepared a memorandum giving a qualified endorsement to the scheme. While endorsing the project Hornbeck urged the administration to make the tung oil scheme a part of a comprehensive program of aiding the Chinese in their battle against Japanese aggression. Without this overall commitment, the State Department official advised, "consummation

of the tung oil project would achieve so little and be accompanied by hazards and possibilities of complications so great that consummation of that project would not, it is believed, be advisable."[42]

On November 15 Hull sent to the President a memorandum in which he stated he opposed the tung oil loan on the grounds that it would be unneutral, irritating to Japan, and at variance with American treaty obligations for keeping Chinese commerce open to all nations on equal terms.[43] Morgenthau reported that after reading this memorandum Roosevelt "was very much disturbed."[44]

Though certainly not prepared to commit the nation to as comprehensive a program as Hornbeck had suggested, Roosevelt early in December informed Hull that he was going ahead with the loan agreement.[45] After some delay and additional arguments Hull finally agreed to go along. The President approved the draft of the agreement for a loan of $26 million on December 14, 1938.

There is no firm evidence to indicate what finally caused Roosevelt to decide in favor of the agreement. Possibly, he believed the loan would benefit the American economy; or, it could be that he really wanted to do all possible to aid the Chinese. He never indicated what factor or group of factors convinced him to approve the loan. Possibly his endorsement of the scheme was merely an impulsive act for which there exists no precise explanation.

As Hitler's aggression continued in 1939 the attention of most Americans turned away from Asia and toward Europe. However, numerous conflicts of interest between the United States and Japan remained and required consideration. On the same day F.D.R. delivered his sixth "Annual Message" to Congress the leadership of the Japanese Government changed, Premier Konoye was replaced by Baron Hiranuma. Konoye had been regarded by the American Government as a "liberal" even though he had been adamant in his prosecution of the war against China. Hiranuma was seen as the Japanese counterpart of the European Fascists and Nazis.[46] The change boded ill for the future. After Hiranuma's elevation to power, the Japanese bombing of American properties in China and discriminations against American businessmen in China continued in the usual chain of incident, protest, investigation, regret, promises, then incident, protest, investigation, regret, promises, ad infinitum.

In his "Annual Message" to Congress Roosevelt called again on the American people to take cognizance of world problems. He asked them to realize that disruption of peace anywhere in the world threatened American security. He explained that he did not contemplate intervention to halt any conflict, but he suggested methods short of war might be used, such as discontinuing "action, or lack of action" that might aid aggressors as well as building up the American military forces.[47]

Roosevelt's intentions might have been serious when in his "Annual Message" he indicated that he "might" take a stronger stand against aggression. Shortly after delivering the message, however, indications were received from Japan that the time for such action was not opportune. On February 8, Grew cabled from Tokyo that Japan had entered into negotiations with Germany and Italy for a definite alliance, military and political. Japan, he said, wanted the alliance applied against Russia, whereas Germany and Italy wanted it applied against other nations as well, meaning Britain and France. The Ambassador reported, he had conveyed informally to Foreign Minister Arita the idea that Japan would do well to consider the possible effects of such an alliance on her relations with the United States.[48]

After receiving approval from the State Department, Grew continued his discussions with Arita. He warned him that war in Europe was imminent and if it came there was little doubt that the United States would ultimately be drawn into it. In this case, if Japan was tied to Germany, peace between America and Japan would be impossible to maintain. He urged Arita not to foreclose the possibility of a bright future relationship by "making a foolish liaison now."[49]

Grew's warning and promise appeared all the more persuasive because of an initiative taken by the United States on March 1, 1939. Acting on the recommendation of

the State Department, Roosevelt offered to send the ashes of former Ambassador Saito Hiroshi home to Japan aboard an American warship. Since Saito had not been Ambassador when he died it was an unusual gesture. According to Grew, the Japanese, ever sensitive to the nuances of relations among nations, and never more so than in this moment of world uncertainty, were immensely gratified. The Ambassador reported that they assumed "a new leaf had been turned in Japanese-American relations and a wave of friendliness for the United States swept over the country."[50]

On March 25 Chiang Kai-shek wrote once again to the President requesting additional assistance. The Generalissimo failed to take into account the effect which the rumors of a Japanese-German-Italian alliance might have on United States policy. The tone of his letter suggests that he truly expected quick American action to implement the concepts Roosevelt had stated in his "Annual Message."[51] He was probably surprised when he received from Roosevelt on April 8 a letter that was quite similar to many of the President's previous noncommittal responses. F.D.R. wrote that he remained vitally interested in Far Eastern affairs, but he implied that any additional American assistance for China would have to be sometime in the future.[52]

By the Spring of 1939 Roosevelt found himself stuck on the horns of a serious dilemma. On the one hand he wished to keep Japan out of the German camp. But to do so some solution would have to be found for Japan's China

problem. However, peace terms that would satisfy the Japanese could mean the end of China as an independent identity as well as the loss of valuable American commercial interests. Adding to the problem was the administration's concern for "principles." The chief hope for a return to sanity in world relations, Lawrence Salisbury of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs argued, lay in the commitment of American foreign policy to fundamental principles of orderly procedure in international intercourse. "Surrender or compromise in any given case would act merely as the breaking of a link in a chain which must depend for its strength as a whole upon the strength of its individual parts."[53] The chain stretched back to the Stimson Doctrine and beyond. The United States could not condone aggression or weaken a solemn convenant respecting the territorial and administrative integrity of China. "Maintenance of an unimpaired standard for permanent world peace outweighed any short run gain in manipulating power relations to the advantage of the United States."[54]

Soon still another difficulty was added. In April Senator Key Pitman of Nevada introduced a resolution which if passed would authorize the President to impose embargoes on essential war materials against any nations violating the Nine Power Treaty. The repeal or alteration of the neutrality legislation had been under discussion among administration officials and members of Congress since the previous Fall.[55] Adolph Hitler's threats on

Europe and the resulting Munich Agreement had produced a new awareness of the explosive state of world affairs and had convinced the administration of the need for reconsideration of the neutrality policy. However, because of the division of opinion in Congress which suggested the possibility that any proposed revision in the existing legislation might be defeated, Roosevelt had moved cautiously. Choosing to remain in the background he delegated the responsibility for framing new legislation to Senator Pittman.

It was Adolph Hitler, once again, who forced the President to finally take a stand on neutrality legislation. On March 15, 1939, the German army marched into Czechoslovakia and quickly occupied that country in direct violation of the pledge given at Munich. Two days later at his press conference Roosevelt spoke out on neutrality revision, affirming the necessity for prompt action by Congress.[56] In response, Pittman introduced in the Senate on March 20 a bill calling for the repeal of the arms embargo and the adoption of cash-and-carry for all trade with belligerent nations. In addition, the Pittman bill, labeled the Peace Act of 1939, would require the President to put the law into effect within thirty days after the beginning of either a declared or undeclared war.

Congressional reaction to the "Peace Act" revealed the difficult struggle facing the administration. On the one hand there were those who opposed any tampering with

the arms embargo. On the other there were those who suggested legislation to give the President the authority to discriminate against aggressors. A poll of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee conducted by the New York Times reported that still another group of Senators favored the total repeal of all neutrality legislation, while a majority had not yet decided what alternative they would support.[57]

The severest critic of the Pittman bill was the Chinese Government. In particular, they objected to the clause requiring the invocation of the law in cases of undeclared wars. They pointed out that this measure would require that all trade between the United States and the Asian belligerents be conducted on a cash-and-carry basis. Thereby Japan would gain an enormous advantage because of its control of the seas.[58]

When the President was informed of these protests, he revealed once again his sympathy for the Chinese. In a letter to Hull on March 28, he remarked that the cash-and-carry plan "works all wrong in the Pacific. The more I think the problem through, the more I am convinced that the existing Neutrality Act should be repealed in toto without any substitute. I do not mind if you pass this word to Senator Pittman and the leaders."[59] Pittman was so informed, and as a result he drew up the resolution which would have allowed the President to place an embargo on war materials to any nation violating the Nine Power Treaty. Since the United States had previously alleged

Japanese violation of this agreement, this resolution would have prevented that nation from taking advantage of the cash-and-carry provisions of the Peace Act of 1939.

The Pittman Resolution pleased the Chinese. However, it would have been a disastrous blow to Japanese-American relations. It would have created new tensions between the two Pacific powers at the very time the administration was trying to find a method by which to lure Japan away from Germany. Here then was the problem. What policy could serve to lure Japan away from Germany while providing for the continued existence of China and at the same time make cash-and-carry more applicable to Pacific realities. Cordell Hull wrote in his Memoirs that it seemed to Roosevelt as if the time had come to take that action which the administration had been contemplating for some time, the abrogation of the 1911 commercial treaty with Japan.[60] Abrogation had to be preceded by a six months notice, which was given on July 26, 1939.

The denunciation of the treaty, it was reasoned, would relieve Roosevelt of his dilemma. It would alleviate the need for the Pittman resolution and at the same time impress Chiang Kai-shek without obligating the government to any new venture in China. But, equally important it would tend to draw the Japanese closer to the United States by making apparent to them the importance of American economic cooperation. In late July Cordell Hull sat down and with a pencil wrote out his thoughts as to what United

States policy toward Japan should be after the treaty lapse. He concluded that the United States should take no firm stand, but keep the Japanese "guessing." This posture, he reasoned, might bring them to a sense of the position in which their flagrant disregard of American rights and interests in China was placing them. Also, he wrote, it would make Japan realize their need for American finances and economic cooperation.[61]

Hull referred to the government's Far Eastern policy during the summer of 1939 as one of keeping the Japanese "guessing." J. P. Moffat suggested that it did much more than that; it confused the members of the State Department as well. He wrote that Roosevelt's policy in Asia during the summer of 1939 remained "the eternal question mark."[62] In retrospect Moffat's evaluation appears correct. With war fast approaching in Europe and settling interminably over the Far East, major decisions were required. Roosevelt failed to make them. Indeed, his ability to maneuver was somewhat circumscribed. With the country just awakening from "isolationism" he hesitated to move too fast. Under intense criticism over the court-packing plan, and facing a badly divided Democratic majority and rancorous Republican minority in Congress, he had a major task of political leadership simply to release himself from the iron grip of neutrality legislation.

In September 1939 war came to Europe. When it began Roosevelt's policy toward the Sino-Japanese conflict was

still confused. There were broad and hazy conceptions such as the desire to aid China and protect American interests in the area. There was also the impulse to oppose the Japanese. During the period between the "Panay Incident" and the war in Europe three small steps were taken, a moral embargo on bombing planes in June 1938, a $25 million commodity loan to China in December 1938, and notice of intent to abrogate the 1911 treaty in July 1939. But these steps were mere hints of possible future policy. They were designed to preserve options rather than to represent firm commitments to oppose Japan. The "drift" continued.

II

On September 1, 1939, German forces invaded Poland. Two days later, after Hitler had spurned their demands for an immediate withdrawal, Britain and France declared war. World War II had begun. When hostilities of the magnitude and with the international impact of those of 1939 begin, some fundamental alterations in foreign policy are required by all major powers. The Roosevelt Administration began to adjust its policy to these new conditions when on November 3 the Neutrality Act of 1937 was amended. The new law provided for repeal of the embargo on arms and placed exports to belligerents on a cash-and-carry basis.

In making this adjustment little consideration was given to the continuing problems in the Far East. For

sometime there had been developing within the administration the hazy conception that European problems should take priority over those of Asia. The enactment of the "cash-and-carry" provision indicated that this hazy conception had become a fundamental of American policy. During congressional consideration of the provision the President made only a small effort to provide for adaptations in the law which might ease the problems created by it for the Chinese. That he was aware of these problems is indicated by statements made prior to congressional action. Expanding on his letter to Hull of March 28, he later remarked during a press conference that the law would work fine in the Atlantic, it would work to the advantage of the European democracies. However, in the Pacific it would be detrimental to the interests of the Chinese, "it would work on behalf of Japan."[63] Roosevelt accepted the law for the benefits it would provide for the European democracies and in this case disregarded the interests of the Chinese.

No significant alteration of American policy in the Pacific was made as a result of the war in Europe. Basil Rauch has suggested that in the Pacific Roosevelt strove during the first year of the war for a balance between acts of weakness, which would invite contempt for the United States, and acts of strength, which would invite defiance of it.[64] A better judgment is, the policy of "drift" continued. Sympathy for the Chinese remained along with

the policy of extending a minimum of aid to them so their resistance of Japan could continue. Also there remained the impulse to defy the Japanese along with the hesitation to actually do so. This hesitation became even greater after the assignment of strategic priority to Europe. Japanese retaliation could mean war, a war for which, in Roosevelt's view, the United States was not prepared and one which he did not wish to consider until after the problems of Europe were solved.

During the first few months after the outbreak of hostilities the continuing indecisiveness of the administration was vividly portrayed. On October 4 Morgenthau told K. P. Chen that the President was ready to authorize larger amounts of aid for China.[65] A few weeks later Joseph Grew returned to Tokyo after a brief summer vacation in the United States. There he delivered before the American-Japanese Society on October 19 a speech vigorously denouncing Japanese action in China.[66] The speech had been approved by Roosevelt before Grew left Washington, and four days after it was presented the President wrote his Ambassador congratulating him on the effective manner in which it was delivered.[67] Momentarily it appeared as if the administration was laying the ground work for a more vigorous stand against Japan. However, hardly had this foundation been laid when the administration began to retreat.

At the White House on November 2 Roosevelt had a short interview with Dr. W. W. Yen, former Chinese Minister

to the United States. Yen presented to him a letter dated July 20 from Chiang Kai-shek. In the letter Chiang referred to the relationship between the European and Far Eastern problems, and China's need for additional material assistance. He suggested as well that an international conference be called to deal with Asian problems. The need to uphold the principles of the Nine Power Treaty, he suggested, should be confirmed at this conference. If after the conference the Japanese continued their violations of these principles, he requested that Roosevelt agree to place an economic boycott on that nation.[68]

Before responding to Chiang's request F.D.R. received a lengthy analysis of the Japanese situation from his Ambassador in Tokyo. Grew reported that since returning to his post he had noticed on the part of the government a marked trend toward bringing about better relations with the United States. "I . . . believe that the Emperor desires it, and the present Cabinet, particularly the Prime Minister, General Abe, and the Foreign Minister, Admiral Nomura, are working in that direction." However, he cautioned, a quick change in Japanese policy should not be expected. The great mass of the people were still chauvinistically inclined toward the slogan "The New Order in East Asia" and would not tolerate any overt "kowtowing to foreign interests." That government, Grew advised, had to move slowly and cautiously. He judged the next two months as crucial to Japanese-American

relations. During this interim nothing should be done that might threaten friendly relations between the two nations. "If we declare an embargo against Japan which can be interpreted here as an economic sanction, we must expect to see American-Japanese relations go steadily downhill."[69]

On November 10 Chiang received Roosevelt's reply to his message. Following Grew's advice as well as that of the State Department, Roosevelt refused to make any new commitment toward Asia. He explained simply that the "fundamental and traditional policy of the United States is unchanged."[70]

The six months period of notification required for renunciation of the 1911 commercial treaty would come to an end on July 25, 1940. In December the State Department turned its attention toward the development of a policy to take effect when the treaty lapsed. Hull sent Roosevelt a memorandum on December 11, 1939, in which he suggested that when the treaty lapsed a new agreement should not be negotiated. In his opinion the government's commercial policy with Japan should remain in a state of suspended animation.[71] The President placed his "O.K.-F.D.R." on the memorandum and returned it to the Secretary.[72] Writing years later in his Memoirs, Hull explained why this policy, or lack of policy, was decided upon. He wrote:

> . . . in dealing with lawless government, it was important to lead them to do a bit of guessing, without making any threats. I believed in letting them guess as to when and in what set of circumstances we would fight. While Japan continued

> to guess, we continued to get ready for anything she might do.[73]

Though Hull might have been convinced the policy of keeping Japan "guessing" was the best policy, there is an indication that Roosevelt agreed to it merely because he knew not what else to do. In his diary Henry Morgenthau reported a conversation which he had with Roosevelt on December 14. Morgenthau wanted the government to send a letter to American manufacturers urging them to discontinue selling molybdenbum, a substance used in making aluminum, to Japan. The Treasury Secretary indicated that during the conversation the President said he had made no firm decision on this matter and had no clear idea as to what policy to follow toward Japan. He stated that he would call Hull and get his advice.[74]

Foreign Minister Nomura suggested to Grew a few days later that a new treaty should be negotiated, and until a new treaty was concluded a modus vivendi should be signed. On December 18 Grew forwarded this suggestion to the State Department with the comment that he thought a favorable reply would be far more likely to bring further Japanese steps toward meeting American protests on China than would result from a rebuff.[75] After showing the cable and suggested reply to Roosevelt and getting his "C.H.-O.K.-F.D.R." Hull wired Grew that the President agreed that a categorical negative to Nomura's suggestion would not be wise. But, at the same time, he explained, the administration did not want to commit itself to the negotiation of a new

treaty. As for a modus vivendi, the Secretary wished to leave that question "open" for the time being.[76]

1940 began with F.D.R. still facing the same dilemma that had haunted him since the beginning of the "undeclared war." The impulse to aid the Chinese remained side by side with the reluctance to do so because of the knowledge that it would irritate Japan. There was also the impulse to actively resist Japanese aggression through the use of economic sanctions. But here again Roosevelt hesitated, fearing that such action might lead to war. The one thing which the administration was certain of was that war in the Pacific was to be avoided so long as hostilities continued in Europe.

In Europe Hitler's conquest continued. In the Spring the German forces occupied Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, and on June 17 the Petain Government of France capitulated and sued for peace. Cordell Hull wrote in his Memoirs that as the German victories continued and it became apparent more and more military aid would have to be channeled to Britain, "the President and I wished, if at all possible, to prevent the Orient from falling further in chaos at the same time."[77]

As the Germans were solidifying their control over Western Europe in June, a series of conversations designed to improve Japanese-American relations were begun in Tokyo between Foreign Minister Arita and Ambassador Grew. Between the two governments there remained at issue numerous

questions. Japan and China were at war and the Japanese were seeking to establish the puppet Wang Ching-wei regime at Nanking while the United States continued to recognize and assist Chiang Kai-shek. Through the use of economic restrictions equal trade opportunities were being denied Americans in areas of Japanese occupation, and bombing incidents involving Americans and Chinese civilians were continuing. Also, Japanese-American commerce was on a treatyless basis, the 1911 commercial treaty having officially lapsed on January 25, 1940.

As the Grew-Arita conversations developed the Foreign Minister suggested three questions to serve as the basis for agreement:

1. Since the treatyless situation was the greatest cause of uneasiness between the United States and Japan, could not a commercial modus vivendi be concluded?
2. Could not the United States cease aiding Chiang Kai-shek and cooperate with Japan in reconstructing China?
3. Could not America recognize the "new conditions in East Asia?"

He closed the query by suggesting that the United States and Japan, each preserving its own sphere of influence in the Pacific, should work in concert to preserve peace in the world.[78]

Hull explained that though these were unpropitious bases for any agreement the administration chose not to return a blunt "No" and thereby terminate the discussions. The Secretary of State suggested that the government wished to keep the conversations going in order to get the Japanese to accept certain "basic principles" such as "national sovereignty, justice, and law and order." Once these principles were accepted specific details could be worked out more easily.[79] Considering the aim was to stay out of the conflagration in the Pacific so long as the war in Europe continued, the strategy of prolonging the conversations appears in retrospect to have been well advised. The likelihood of reaching an agreement was slight, but continuing the talks allowed for the retention of the image of a possible future agreement and thus might have delayed the coming of the war.

While conversations persisted in Japan the State Department sent to Roosevelt a memorandum dated July 4, 1940, and entitled "Reflections on Certain Features of the Far Eastern Situation and Certain Problems of United States Far Eastern Policy."[80] The document succinctly summarized the governing principles of Roosevelt's Asian policy. Two conclusions were offered in the memorandum. First, there was an intimate relationship between the aggressive policies of Germany, Italy, and Japan. All three nations were controlled by military "cliques" dedicated to the principle of achieving their aims through the

use of "Eisen and Blut." It was impossible to appease these governments because they refused to abide by international agreements after they were made.[81]

Second, and specifically in regard to the Far East, it was explained that the policy of the United States had been for some time based on the desire that Chinese resistance be not overcome and the Japanese effort to gain control of China be not successful. To facilitate this wish the government had given "encouragement and support" to the Chinese policy of resistance. The current situation in the Far East, the memorandum continued, has developed along lines which confirm the estimates on which the President's Asian policy has been based. Chinese resistance has been maintained making it impossible for the Japanese to bring matters to a "conclusion" at any point. With the continuation of the war the Japanese people have developed "doubts" and their human and material resources have grown more slender. The possibility of a gradual dissolution of the Japanese effort to conquer China has constantly increased. It was suggested that if the United States and British Governments

> . . . will but permit 'nature' to take its course, with a little help by giving some assistance to China and withholding some assistance from Japan, there is more than an even chance that the present Japanese effort to conquer China will be brought to an end, adversely to Japan, by processes of attrition and concomitants thereof.[82]

One item which served to annoy Roosevelt before, after, and during the Grew-Arita conversations and which was not mentioned in the "Reflections" was the Japanese claim that their "New Order" was simply the application of a Japanese "Monroe Doctrine" to Asia. On July 6 F.D.R. issued a press release in order to clarify his position in regard to this Japanese claim. He suggested that both Europe and Asia should apply the principles of the Monroe Doctrine to its territories. Under these principles all nations of the particular area would confer and make decisions, "not just one conquering power. . . . This Government would like to see and thinks there should be applied a Monroe Doctrine for each of those continents." In releasing the statement Stephen Early explained that it did not imply any lessening of the interest of this government in resolving Far Eastern and international problems by peaceful processes on the basis of mutual consultation and negotiation.[88]

The President, in making this statement, failed to consider the full implication of his remarks and failed to phrase them in such a way so that they would not appear as a major shift in policy. From China Ambassador Nelson Johnson cabled that the remarks had greatly excited the government. Many government officials, he explained, feared that the United States was about to abandon China and/or place them at the mercy of the Japanese in negotiations.[84] The Japanese apparently interpreted the

President's statement in a similar manner. The Japanese Government and press hailed the statement and claimed that it coincided with the regional structure recently suggested by Foreign Minister Arita.[85]

Quickly it became apparent that a further explanation and modification of Roosevelt's remarks was required. The President left this task to his Secretary of State. On July 8 Hull explained that Roosevelt's press release was not intended to be a statement of policy. Rather his (Hull) July 5 statement on the "Doctrine" remained the operative policy.[86] Hull's July 5 statement was released as a result of a message he sent to Germany and Italy on June 17. In the wake of the French surrender the Secretary of State notified both Germany and Italy that the United States would not recognize the transfer of Western Hemisphere territory from one European nation to another.[87] German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop replied on July 1 that Germany had given no indication that it intended to acquire territory in the Western Hemisphere, therefore the June 17 note was "without object." However, he went on to argue that the American interpretation of the Doctrine unjustly denied to certain European powers the right of acquiring territory in that hemisphere. Also, that the nonintervention in the affairs of the American continents demanded by the Monroe Doctrine could be legally valid only on condition that the American nations did not interfer in the affairs of Europe. It was the Ribbentrop message

that provoked Hull's comments on July 5.[88] The Secretary contended that the Doctrine was solely a policy of self-defense intended to preserve the independence of the Americas. It was designed to prevent aggression in the hemisphere by non-American powers. There was in it not the slightest "vestige" or "implication" of hegemony on the part of the United States. In a clause that appeared to be aimed at Japan more than Germany, Hull remarked:

> It never has resembled, and it does not today resemble policies which appear to be arising in other geographical areas of the world, which are alleged to be similar to the Monroe Doctrine, but which, instead of resting on the sole policies of self-defense and of respect for existing sovereignties, as does the Monroe Doctrine, would in reality seem to be only the pretext for the carrying out of conquest by the sword, of military occupation, and of complete economic and political domination by certain powers of other free and independent peoples.[89]

No sooner had the issue of Roosevelt's ill-conceived remarks on the Monroe Doctrine been clarified when on the Asian horizon there appeared another threatening development. The British on July 14 agreed to close the Burma Road and Hong Kong frontier to war materials for three months during which time negotiations with Japan were to take place in an effort to solve the Far Eastern crisis. Being hard pressed to maintain the war effort in Europe now that France had surrendered, the British wanted desperately to come to terms with Japan so as to relieve the possibility of having to fight a war on two fronts.

Roosevelt had been opposed to this type of British appeasement of Japan for some time. The British Government,

anticipating hostilities in Europe, had requested on August 3, 1939, the government's attitude toward the closing of the Burma Road as a means of relieving Asian tensions. On that occasion Sumner Welles informed Victor Mallet, British Charge d'Affaires in Washington, that Roosevelt had remarked that if the English appeased Japan in this manner "the position of the United States would be that of a government which was attempting to give moral support to another government when the second government was deliberately undertaking to commit suicide."[90]

At the time the Burma Road Agreement was made, Roosevelt had at hand a device which could have given the British an alternative to appeasement. He had signed on July 2, 1940, an act authorizing the President to regulate by license, or to prohibit, the export of any commodities essential to national defense. Shortly thereafter, he prescribed license control for exports of some forty basic commodities. However, these did not touch oil, scrap iron, or tetraethyl lead (a product used in producing aviation gasoline) which Japan needed to purchase in the United States. Before agreeing to the Burma Road stipulations the British Government directed Lord Lothian, British Ambassador in the United States, to inquire of the Washington officials if they would be willing to use the terms of this act to embargo goods to Japan as an alternative to appeasement.[91] Roosevelt expressed the opinion that an embargo aimed directly at Japan would not be advisable.

It would be offensive to the Japanese and could provoke a Pacific war, and that was precisely what he wished to avoid.[92]

The President was in this case more adept at giving advice than he was in tailoring his own actions to suit it. He counselled the British against appeasing Japan. However, as he admitted on July 21 in a conversation with his son Elliott, the United State's policy toward Japan was one of appeasement. On the weekend of July 21 Elliott Roosevelt was at Hyde Park visiting his family. While there, he asked his father why the United States was continuing to ship scrap iron to Japan. Afterall, "scrap iron to Japan meant dead Chinese. . . ." F.D.R. replied that America was a nation at peace. "That's more than a condition, it's a frame of mind." He explained that he was not looking for war, did not want a war, and did not think the nation was prepared for war. Scrap iron, he added, was not classified as war material so any nation with which the United States had commercial contacts was at liberty to buy it. If an embargo was placed on shipments of scrap iron to the Japanese, they would be within their rights in considering it an unfriendly act. Such action could provide sufficient cause for Japan to sever diplomatic relations with the United States.

> I'll go even further. If she thought we were sufficiently unarmed, she might even use it as an excuse to declare war. . . . We are in essence and in fact appeasing Japan. It's an ugly word, and don't think I like it. But it's what we're doing.

> We're appeasing Japan in order to gain the time we have to have to build a first-rate navy, a first-rate army. . . .[93]

In the summer of 1940 the administration began to hear rumors that the Japanese were laying plans for new military operations to the south of China. Adding weight to these rumors were startling reports that they were attempting to buy in the United States great quantities of aviation gasoline and lubricants. Furthermore, they were trying to secure these products in metal drums, and were seeking to arrange for delivery at southern points in China. This spurt in buying, Herbert Feis has written, was to the administration objectionable in any and all of the meanings that could be attached to it. "Did it not portend the near start--while Britain was defending itself against invasion--of new military operations to the south? Or, if not that, the storing up of large reserve stocks which would later enable the Japanese Navy and Air Force to sustain a long war over all parts of the Pacific?"[94] There resulted a great deal of discussion and much disagreement among administration officials over how best the United States might warn Japan against a southern adventure. Stimson and Morgenthau contended that an embargo should be levied against all shipments of oil and scrap iron to Japan. Sumner Welles, who was serving as Acting Secretary since Hull was away from Washington attending the conference of American Republics in Havana, counseled a more moderate course. He contended that a full embargo might

provoke the Japanese to further aggression, and recommended that restrictions be placed only on high-grade oil and steel scrap. After much hesitation Roosevelt accepted the Welles proposal. On July 26 he proclaimed licensing regulations on the export of aviation motor fuel and lubricants, and No. 1 heavy melting iron and steel scrap, and on July 31 Export Control forbade the export of aviation gasoline to countries outside the Western Hemisphere. The American public was gratified by these acts. But, for another year the embargo was not strictly enforced, and these half-way measures served not to retard Japanese aggression. Early in August the State Department began hearing rumors of new Japanese demands on French Indo-China. By the beginning of September these rumors were confirmed as fact. On September 3 Grew informed Hull that Japan had presented an ultimatum to the French Indo-Chinese authorities demanding that Japanese troops be permitted to pass through their territory into China and also the use of certain of the colony's ports and air bases.[95] The Vichy foreign office informed the State Department two days later that on August 3 they had bowed to Japanese demands and recognized as well their dominant interest in the Far East in both the economic and political domain.[96]

The Roosevelt Administration deprecated this southern advance by the Japanese and so informed them. At this same time evidence began to appear that within the administration the attitude was developing that the time had come

to take a firm stand against the Japanese. On September 12 Grew sent a long cable to Hull in which he argued that the time had come to discontinue the policy of "restraint and patience." He related that the military in Japan saw the present world situation as a "golden opportunity" to carry their dreams of expansion into effect, and they discounted effective opposition on the part of the United States. Grew suggested that the government should adopt a policy of firmness in order to maintain the status quo in the Pacific while bending every effort to aid Britain in Europe. If the status quo could be maintained in the Pacific until Britain won in Europe, he submitted, the present opportunist policy in Japan could not keep the upper hand, and the time would come when a readjustment of Pacific problems to the benefit of both Japan and America would be possible.[97]

Henry Morgenthau confided to his diary that Grew's analysis was identical to that which he, Stimson, Ickes, and Hornbeck had been propounding for many months. Also, it impressed Roosevelt, who at a cabinet meeting of September 19, 1940, opened discussions of American policy in the Pacific. As Stimson recalled that meeting: "Morgenthau and I pretty strongly supported a complete embargo on oil which fitted in with the President's own ideas of strategy. . . ."[98]

Talk of taking a "firm stand" against Japan was once more becoming prevalent. But, there had been talk before,

many times in fact since the Fall of 1931 and the world was still awaiting action. The policy of the "firm stand" had never developed beyond the planning stage because of Roosevelt's and Hull's fear that resistance to Japan might provoke a Pacific war, a war which America did not want and one for which, in the President's view, the nation was not prepared. In discussing a firm stand in the Fall of 1940 a new item had to be considered. On September 27, 1940, Germany, Italy, and Japan announced the signing of a tripartite alliance. The "aggressors" were formally joined one to another. The "Pact of Steel" was a reality. Certainly, now new directions in American Far Eastern policy would have to be conceived. The policy of "drift" would have to end.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Hull, Memoirs, I, 563-564.

[2]Roosevelt to Hull, January 21, 1938, F.R., 1938, IV, 243.

[3]Allison to State Department, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, I, 567.

[4]Roosevelt to Hull, January 21, 1938, F.R., 1938, IV, 243.

[5]Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, January 23, 1938, II, 302.

[6]Roosevelt to Hull, January 28, 1938, F.R., 1938, IV, 250. On February 3, 1938, Hull reported to Roosevelt that the United States had a good basis on which to hold Japan accountable for looting. However, he disagreed that the Trading with the Enemy Act was applicable to this situation. "The Act . . . applied only to property of people denominated as enemies within the meaning of the Act. It really is a precedent only for a situation where the United States is a belligerent." See Ibid., pp. 255-57.

[7]Hull wrote that during the first weeks of 1938 the question of positive help to China was "frequently" under discussion. Hull, Memoirs, I, 566.

[8]Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 20, 1938, Microfilm Reel #6, Vol. II, p. 326.

[9]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, I, 482.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Roosevelt to Grayson, January 11, 1938, F.R., 1938, IV, 571.

[15]Dr. J. Leighton Stuart to Roosevelt, July 15, 1938, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150 A, China miscellaneous, 1938.

[16]Roosevelt to Stuart, August 22, 1938, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150 A, China miscellaneous, 1938.

[17]Enclosed Memorandum, Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Grew to State Department, October 3, 1938, F.R., 1938, IV, 53.

[20]Waldo H. Heinrichs, Jr., American Ambassador: Joseph C. Grew and the Development of the United States Diplomatic Tradition (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1966), p. 261.

[21]The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Japan, October 1, 1938, F.R., 1938, IV, 48-53.

[22]Chiang Kai-shek to Roosevelt, October 8, 1938, F.R., 1938, III, 312.

[23]Roosevelt to Chiang Kai-shek, October 19, 1938, F.R., 1938, III, 325.

[24]Chiang Kai-shek to Roosevelt, October 15, 1938, F.R., 1938, III, 321-322.

[25]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, I, 509.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Quoted in Ibid., p. 512.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid., p. 524.

[33]Ibid., pp. 524-525.

[34]Ibid., p. 527.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., II, 60.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Radio Speech by Prime Minister Konoye, November 3, 1938, F.R., Japan, I, 478-481.

[40]Roosevelt to Chiang Kai-shek, November 10, 1938, F.R., 1938, III, 376-377.

[41]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, II, 60.

[42]Stanley K. Hornbeck, The Tung Oil Project and American Policy in General in Regard to the Far East, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. China, 1938, Box 34.

[43]Memorandum by Cordell Hull, November 15, 1938, F.R., 1938, III, 574.

[44]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, II, 60.

[45]Memorandum by Roosevelt to Hull, December 2, 1938, F.R., 1938, III, 575.

[46]Hull, Memoirs, I, 627.

[47]"Annual Message to the Congress," January 4, 1939, Rosenman (ed.), Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, VIII, 1-5.

[48]Hull, Memoirs, I, 627.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Ibid., pp. 629-630; Heinrichs, American Ambassador, p. 279.

[51]Chiang Kai-shek to Roosevelt, March 25, 1939, O.F., 150 C, Box 6, Sino-Japanese War.

[52]Roosevelt to Chiang Kai-shek, Ibid.

[53]Reported in Heinrichs, American Ambassador, p. 288.

[54]Ibid.

[55]For a thorough analysis of the neutrality debates of 1938-1939 see Robert A. Divine, The Illusion of Neutrality (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 229-285.

[56]Reported in Ibid., p. 242.

[57]Reported in Ibid.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, II, 873.

[60]Hull, Memoirs, I, 636.

[61]Ibid., pp. 636-639.

[62]Hooker (ed.), Moffat Papers, pp. 193-194.

[63]Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 20, 1939, Microfilm Reel #7, Vol. 13, p. 320.

[64]Rauch, Roosevelt: From Munich to Pearl Harbor, p. 172.

[65]October 4, 1939, Morgenthau Diaries-China, Prepared by the Senate Internal Securities Committee, (2 vols.; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1965), I, 22.

[66]For Grew's speech see: F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 19.

[67]Roosevelt to Grew, October 23, 1939, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan, 1938-1939, Box 13.

[68]Chiang Kai-shek to Roosevelt, dated July 20, 1939, presented to Roosevelt by W. W. Yen on November 2, 1939, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150, China 1939-1940.

[69]Grew to Roosevelt, November 6, 1939, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan 1938-1939.

[70]Roosevelt to Chiang Kai-shek, November 10, 1939, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150, China 1939-1940.

[71]Hull to Roosevelt, December 11, 1939, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan 1938-1939, Box 13.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Hull, Memoirs, I, 914.

[74]Morgenthau Diaries-China, I, 75.

[75]Hull, Memoirs, I, 727.

[76]Ibid., p. 728.

[77]Ibid., p. 893.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid., p. 894.

[80]Reflections on Certain Features of the Far Eastern Situation and Certain Problems of U. S. Far Eastern Policy, July 4, 1940, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 150, China 1933-1940.

[81]Ibid.

[82]Ibid.

[83]Included in Hull to Grew, F.R., 1940, III, 389.

[84]Johnson to State Department, July 11, 1940, F.R., 1940, III, 396.

[85]Grew to Hull, July 11, 1940, F.R., 1940, III, 400.

[86]Report of Secretary of State's Press Conference, July 8, 1940, F.R., 1940, II, 394.

[87]Hull, Memoirs, I, 817.

[88]Ibid.

[89]Statement by Hull, July 6, 1940, Department of State Bulletin, p. 3.

[90]Memorandum of a Conversation between Welles and British Charge d'Affaires Mallet, August 3, 1939, F.R., 1939, III, 701.

[91]Rauch, Roosevelt: From Munich to Pearl Harbor, p. 260.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946), p. 11.

[94]Feis, The Road to Pearl Harbor, p. 89.

[95]Hull, Memoirs, I, 903.

[96]Ibid., 904.

[97]Grew's "Green Light" message of September 12, 1940, is included in Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1223-1233.

[98]Quoted in Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, II, 358.

CHAPTER VI

AND THE WAR CAME

In recent years historians have focused attention on the Tripartite Pact as a watershed of American Far Eastern policy. It has been suggested that previous to the pact few Americans conceived of China as an ally and few considered the defense of China essential to American security. "Then," as one student of American Asian policy has written, "in one of history's greatest diplomatic blunders, the Japanese changed all this." The Tripartite Pact "tied together two wars and elevated China to the status of 'ally' in the battle against Axis aggression. Ironically, her use of the pen rather than of the sword proved to be Japan's undoing."[1]

Available evidence confirms the analysis that the signing of the pact had a dramatic impact on public opinion in the United States. A substantial alteration of opinion toward Japan as well as toward China took place. By linking the European and Asian wars together, Hirohito was placed in the same nefarious "aggressor" class as Hitler. As a result the administration was relieved of some of the

domestic restraints which had previously circumscribed policy. To suggest, however, that this shift of opinion was the prelude to a dramatic new Asian policy is to over-emphasize the influence which public opinion had on policy. It is a well documented fact that Roosevelt, as president, earnestly strove to gain public approval for his policies. He devoted a great deal of attention to "educating" the people to world responsibilities. Since the beginning of hostilities in Europe, however, public opinion had played only a minor role in determining American policy toward Asia. Of far greater importance was the administration's decision to place strategic priority on Europe rather than Asia.

Regardless of the alteration in public opinion occasioned by the signing of the Tripartite Pact, there occurred no significant change in the basis of Roosevelt's Asian policy. There remained the impulse to aid China, and as a result of the shift in American opinion there was a small increase in the quantity of aid sent to Chiang Kai-shek's government. But, the hesitancy of extending large amounts of aid to China because of the fear that it might lead to Japanese retaliation and ultimately to American military involvement in the Pacific remained also. The aversion to war in the Pacific so long as the war in Europe continued was the principal influence on policy. It appears as if historians have over-emphasized the importance of the Tripartite Pact to Roosevelt's Asian policy. Indeed,

after the pact was signed it represented one additional problem that would have to be solved before amicable relations could be restored. Also, it became the focus of a great deal of discussion between representatives of the two powers. However, the Tripartite Pact, above all else, was a symptom of more serious Japanese-American conflicts of interests rather than being a major divisive factor in itself.

A short time after the public announcement of the conclusion of the pact, Roosevelt and Hull in a series of conversations fixed the points of American policy in the Pacific. The point they emphasized above all others was that American intervention in the Asian conflict was to be avoided if at all possible so as to allow for continued assistance to Britain. The administration would continue to press for Japanese recognition of the fundamental principles of international law and would continue to aid the Chinese. But, these things were to be done in a way so as "not to push Japan to the point where her military elements would demand war."[2]

During the first weeks of October J. P. Moffat was in Washington on leave from his post as Minister to Canada. Moffat recorded in his diary that during his visit he talked to many State Department officials including Hull and Welles. Both emphasized that the administration was doing everything possible to stay out of the Pacific

conflict. Europe was considered the major theatre of war, "there must be no lessening of our supplies to England." The views of Norman Davis were quite similar to those of Welles and Hull. However, he told Moffat that he considered the chances of war with Japan by the end of November, 1940, as about 10 to 1 in favor. He commented that the public thought Roosevelt was anxious to get into war, but, "he had been impressed with the President's caution and hesitancy. . . ." The Minister to Canada reported that Stanley K. Hornbeck was the only official with whom he talked who viewed the international problems as centering in the Far East. "He is almost alone in advocating measures that almost certainly would bring us into war."[3]

In reporting the views on Asian relations of various administration officials, Moffat made no mention of a change in policy subsequent to the announcement of the Axis alliance. However, in summarizing his views upon departing Washington he arrived at an ominous conclusion. In his judgment the nation was headed for war with Japan regardless of anything Roosevelt might do.[4]

Although the evidence indicates that there was little change in policy during the first weeks after September 27, in public F.D.R. assumed a more defiant position. On October 12 in Dayton, Ohio, he exclaimed that the United States would not be "cowed" by any alliance. He pledged to continue the policy of aiding those nations fighting

to hold the "dictators" at bay.[5] Three days later a new loan to China of $25 million was announced, and on October 16 the embargo against Japan was strengthened by restricting exports of iron and steel scrap to countries of the Western Hemisphere.[6]

Once again it appeared as if a "firm stand" was finally to be taken. Plans for additional actions were discussed during November. Morgenthau told his staff on November 28 that Roosevelt had informed him that he intended to send the fleet to the Philippines as well as extend an additional $100 million loan to China.[7] No sooner had Roosevelt explained this policy to the Secretary of the Treasury than he began to hesitate. Harold Ickes wrote in his diary on Sunday, December 1, that at the cabinet meeting the previous Friday the Japanese problem was discussed. Roosevelt announced, at that time, that no further dissuasive action against Japan was contemplated. His remarks, as reported by Ickes, suggests that in Roosevelt's opinion recent actions had been sufficient to indicate American displeasure with the Japanese signing of the Axis alliance. It was now time to revert to a more moderate stand and await their next move. Any further action at the present time might push Japan to the point where she "would go out on her own against the Far Eastern possessions of England and Holland. . . ."[8]

In order to confirm his own opinion as to administration policy and to obtain guidance for the future,

Joseph Grew wrote F.D.R. on December 14 requesting a summary of his views on Asia. The Ambassador wrote that the strategy of meeting every Japanese step with a step of our own had been "eminently wise. . . ." But, he judged a "showdown" with Japan inevitable unless the United States was prepared to withdraw from the entire East Asian sphere. The best method of retarding Japanese aggression, the Ambassador suggested, was to adopt a "progressively firm policy." There were risks in this policy and if it was adopted, Grew advised, the nation should be ready for war, "but in my opinion those risks are less in degree than the far greater future dangers which we would face if we were to follow a policy of laissez faire."[9]

Roosevelt replied to Grew's inquiry on January 21. The response indicates that at the time F.D.R. was beginning to think once more of taking a hard line against the Japanese. This position is understandable because during the first-quarter of 1941 rumors were circulating that the Japanese were planning new aggressions toward the south.[10] As will be shown later, action that seemed to threaten the South Pacific was received with especial displeasure by the President.

In his reply Roosevelt noted the possibility of Japanese aggression in a southerly direction. He also agreed with Grew's analysis that the hostilities in Europe and Asia were part of the same struggle. On one significant issue the President questioned his Ambassador's

reasoning. The latter had advised that before making any Asian commitment the administration should consider whether getting into war with Japan would handicap aid to Britain. Roosevelt wrote that the effect on Britain of Japanese control of the South Pacific seaways must also be considered. Britain was a great power, F.D.R. concluded, because of her ability to obtain goods from distant areas of the world.

> Our strategy of giving them assistance toward ensuring our own security must envisage both sending of supplies to England and helping to prevent a closing of channels of communication to and from various parts of the world, so that other important sources of supply will not be denied to the British and be added to the assets of the other side.[11]

Two key points were emphasized by the President in his letter to Grew. First, he strongly emphasized the American responsibility to protect the freedom of the seas; continued British resistance in Europe depended on this policy. One method of easing the Japanese threat to this doctrine was to convince them to withdraw from the Axis alliance. Roosevelt judged that the alliance antagonized many people in the United States because it openly challenged the "ideal" of the freedom of the seas. He expressed this opinion to Ambassador Nomura on March 14, 1941, when he explained that the pact irritated many Americans "because they think that a concerted effort is being made by Germany and Italy to reach the Suez Canal and by Japan on the other hand to approach Singapore, the Netherlands East Indies and the Indian Ocean."[12] If

this advance was allowed, American and British links to Asia would be severed.

The second point emphasized in the letter was that "hard and fast plans" for Asia could not be laid down. The administration had to await developments and cater its reactions to Japanese actions.[13] A few months later Roosevelt had occasion to explain more clearly why it was so difficult to make precise plans for Asia. On June 20 he received from Harold Ickes a memorandum suggesting that the administration take resolute action to prevent further Japanese aggression in China. This type of "snap judgment" on foreign policy determination, the President wrote to his secretary three days later, was exactly what he was trying to avoid. Asian policy, he added, had to remain fluid because the Far Eastern situation was so unstable and complex.[14]

The same day he received this reply, Ickes sent a second memorandum to the President urging an immediate embargo on oil.[15] Later Roosevelt asked the secretary if he would still make this suggestion if there existed the slightest possibility that an embargo would provoke a Japanese attack on Russia or the Dutch East Indies.[16] After Ickes had replied that such a possibility failed to alter his thinking because when Japan viewed it to be in her interest she would attack these areas anyway, F.D.R. terminated the exchange by stating that an embargo was impossible. His policy in the Pacific, he wrote, was one

of peace. "It is terribly important for the control of the Atlantic for us to help to keep peace in the Pacific. I simply have not got enough Navy to go round--and every little episode in the Pacific means fewer ships in the Atlantic."[17]

The outstanding fact which can be perceived from this Roosevelt-Ickes exchange is that the President was determined to delay a "showdown" in the Pacific until after the end of the war in Europe. Although a delay was all that could be realistically expected, conversations had been started the previous February in Washington between Secretary Hull and Ambassador Nomura with the announced purpose of finding a mutually acceptable solution to Asian problems.

Nomura arrived in Washington on February 12 to assume his duties as Japanese Ambassador. Two days later when he was presented to the President, Roosevelt suggested that he and Hull sit down and try to find a solution to the problems separating the two nations. From mid-February until July 23, when the talks were discontinued as a result of the Japanese occupation of southern Indochina, Hull and Nomura held a series of meetings. The desirability of accommodation beguiled both officials, but, the resulting conversations exposed the irreconcilability of their fixed and conflicting objectives. On April 16, after receiving Roosevelt's approval, Hull laid down the four principles on which any American agreement would have to be based:

1. Respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of each and all nations.
2. Support of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.
3. Support of the principle of equality, including of commercial opportunity.
4. Non-disturbance of the status quo in the Pacific except as the status quo may be altered by peaceful means.[18]

These principles, rooted in traditional American policy were too much for the Japanese to accept. "The China incident had already consumed too much of money, life, and grandeur to be abandoned now by diplomatic fiat, and even moderates in Tokyo saw a primacy of Japanese interests in neighboring areas of the mainland."[19]

On May 12 Nomura responded to Hull's suggestions by proposing a six-point program.

1. Joint acknowledgment of both Japan and the United States as sovereign and contiguous Pacific powers.
2. Joint efforts to restore peace in Europe and in lieu of peace, joint efforts to prevent the extension of the conflict to the Pacific.
3. United States aid to Japan in attempts to bring the China incident to a close through negotiations with the Chiang Kai-shek regime.
4. Re-establishment of trade on the same liberal basis existing previous to the abrogation of the 1911 treaty.
5. United States aid to Japan in the peaceful acquisition of natural resources in the South Pacific.

6. Mutual guarantees of independence of the Philippine Islands, and American agreement that Japanese immigration shall receive amicable consideration on the basis of equality with other nationals and freedom from discrimination.

The two sets of proposals and the discussions which followed the presentation of each indicated that a broad area of disagreement existed between the two governments. Hull wrote that in the President's opinion, Nomura's proposals offered little basis for agreement. But, to have rejected them outright would have meant throwing away a chance for a fundamental discussion of all outstanding questions. "Consequently, we decided to go forward on the basis of the Japanese proposals and seek to argue Japan into modifying here, eliminating there, and inserting elsewhere," until a mutually acceptable accord could be reached.[21]

A mutually acceptable accord was never achieved. The discussions were discontinued as a result of the greatest Japanese blunder of the pre-Pearl Harbor period, their military occupation on July 22 of southern Indochina. This step represented, in Roosevelt's opinion, an open challenge to the American "ideal" of the freedom of the seas. It placed Japan in a strategic position from which she could control the South Pacific trade routes as well as the Indian Ocean. The occupation represented as well

a threat to the Philippines and other American and British possessions. Japanese control of southern Indochina had to be resisted. Failure to do so, Roosevelt later remarked, would have appeared to the American people as if the administration had been a party to an Asian Munich Agreement.[22]

While the President was determined to resist this latest Japanese advance, the method of resistance had to be carefully chosen so as not to provoke further aggression that might require direct American military intervention. He was still determined to remain free from Pacific entanglement. He reported to an assembly of Civilian Defense Volunteers on July 24 that many people had been urging him to place an embargo on oil shipments to Japan. He explained that he was reluctant to take this step because it might lead to Japanese retaliation. If the United States cut-off the Japanese supply of oil, Roosevelt remarked, they would probably attack the Dutch East Indies and there would be war. "Therefore, there was--you might call--a method in letting this oil go to Japan, with the hope--and it has worked for two years--of keeping war out of the South Pacific for our own good, for the good of the defense of Great Britain, and the freedom of the seas."[23]

The same day Roosevelt delivered this explanation of American policy to the Civilian Defense group, he met with Ambassador Nomura. He proposed to the Ambassador a plan for neutralizing Indochina. This scheme, he explained,

would provide Japan with security without requiring military action.[24] Nomura was pessimistic about the chances of his government agreeing to the plan. He remarked that the step would be very difficult "on account of the face-saving element involved on the part of Japan and that only a very great statesman would reverse a policy at this time."[25] Based on Nomura's reaction Roosevelt decided not to wait for a formal Japanese reply. Two days later he ordered the freezing of all Japanese assets in the United States. Cordell Hull wrote in his Memoirs that from this time forward the administration's objective with regard to Japan was to gain time to prepare adequate military defenses.[26] Hull's analysis, though correct, should not lead one to believe that in July Roosevelt concluded that war with Japan was either desirable or imminent. Expansion into southern Indochina had irritated the President, but he had not yet decided that a Pacific war was either imminent or desirable. His resolve to maintain peace in the Pacific until the end of the war in Europe remained.

Finally on August 6 the Japanese Government replied to the neutralization proposal. As Nomura had predicted, Tokyo refused to agree to American terms. Their reply provided that if the United States agreed to liberalize trade relations and once more send them a specified quantity of oil, Japan would agree not to station troops in any southwestern Pacific area except French Indochina, and Japanese troops stationed in French Indochina would

be withdrawn "forthwith on the settlement of the China incident." The response, Hull wrote, offered little to cheer the administration.[27]

Less than a month after the presidential order freezing Japanese assets, the Far Eastern crisis became the topic of intense discussion between Roosevelt and Winston Churchill during their secret meeting in the North Atlantic. The Atlantic Conference is best remembered in relation to the European war and the Atlantic Charter, however, serious consideration was also given to Asian problems. Winston Churchill wrote:

> A conference between us (he and Roosevelt) would proclaim the ever closer association of Britain and the United States, would cause our enemies concern, make Japan ponder, and cheer our friends. There was also much business to be settled about American intervention in the Atlantic, aid to Russia, and above all the increasing menace of Japan.[28]

Roosevelt and Churchill agreed at the meeting that the President should, upon his return to Washington, deliver a vigorous denunciation of Japanese aggression. "We have," Churchill wrote, "laid special stress on the warning to Japan which constitutes the teeth of the President's communication."[29] Before leaving the conference the Prime Minister disclosed anxiety lest the American State Department try to tone down the statement. But, he wrote, the President assured him that he would "definitely use the hard language."[30] Nonetheless, Churchill's fears were justified.

The message agreed to while in the Atlantic began with a brief review of Japanese-American relations. It was noted that over the past few months conversations had been held between Japanese and American officials with the intention of finding a solution to Asian problems. While these talks were going on the Japanese undertook to occupy French Indochina, an action which was counter to the spirit of the conversations. Subsequently, Japan on August 6 presented a "fresh basis" for "understanding." Although the Japanese proposal was "totally unacceptable," the United States would agree to undertake new informal conversations on this basis upon receipt of assurance that the Japanese Government would commit no further military aggression in the Pacific so long as the conversations were in progress. The message closed with a stern warning:

> . . . if the Japanese Government undertakes any further steps in pursuance of the policy of military domination through force or conquest in the Pacific region upon which it has apparently embarked, the United States Government will be forced to take immediately any and all steps of whatsoever character it deems necessary in its own security notwithstanding the possibility that such further steps on its part may result in conflict between the two countries.[31]

Sumner Welles returned from the Atlantic on August 15 and presented the Roosevelt-Churchill draft to the State Department. The same afternoon Welles and members of the Far Eastern Division discussed the message and agreed it needed "toning down." They decided to suggest to Roosevelt that he receive Ambassador Nomura and present to him two communications, one of which would contain a

warning and the other, "in the nature of an olive branch," would inform Japan of American willingness to continue conversations with the aim of providing them a "reasonable and just alternative" to the course upon which they were engaged.[32] Significant alterations were made in the final "warning" paragraph. All reference to possible Japanese-American "conflict" was removed:

> This Government now finds it necessary to say to the Government of Japan that if the Japanese Government takes any further steps in pursuance of a policy or program of military domination by force or threat of force of neighboring countries, the Government of the United States will be compelled to take immediately any and all steps which it may deem necessary toward safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the United States and American nationals and toward insuring the safety and security of the United States.33

The State Department, as Churchill had suspected it might, certainly played a large role in moderating the "warning." However, after first agreeing with the Prime Minister on the necessity for a firm stand, Roosevelt began to have second thoughts. Unlike Churchill, who believed a stern warning would serve to retard Japanese aggression, Roosevelt judged that it might very likely have just the opposite result. F.D.R. continued to hope that through direct American-Japanese negotiations a mutually acceptable solution to Pacific problems could be discovered. At any rate, he was unwilling to forego this approach when in his opinion the only alternative was war. "At the time," Samuel Rosenman wrote, "the

President was not willing to take such an uncompromising position which might incite Japan to immediate war."[34]

Even before the Roosevelt-Churchill meeting a new scheme for American-Japanese negotiations was being discussed in Tokyo. On August 4 Prime Minister Konoye began development of a plan whereby he and Roosevelt would meet in the Pacific. If the President agreed, the two leaders would meet and discuss Asian problems at length and hopefully agree on a solution to the Far Eastern crisis.

A great deal has been written about Konoye's suggested "leaders conference" and many explanations as to why the conference was not held have been offered. It is enough to relate here that on August 28 when Nomura first suggested the meeting to Roosevelt, the President was very receptive to the idea. His only qualification was that it should be held in Juneau, Alaska, rather than Hawaii as suggested by Konoye. He explained that it would be difficult for him to be away from Washington the twenty-one or twenty-two days a Hawaii meeting would require, while a conference in Juneau would necessitate only a fourteen or fifteen day absence.[35]

After so responding to Nomura, the President was immediately deluged with advice against the meeting. Everyone of his Far Eastern advisers, except Ambassador Joseph Grew, counselled that he should agree to such a rendezvous only after tentative commitments in harmony with established American principles and objectives had

been obtained.[36] Every effort to acquire such Japanese commitments were in vain.

It is impossible to know what would have happened had Roosevelt and Konoye met. It seems doubtful that the war could have been prevented, however, its beginning might have been delayed. If there existed even the slightest chance that a meeting with Konoye could have averted war, the President should have agreed to the conference. But in fairness to Roosevelt and his State Department advisers, evidence uncovered since the end of World War II indicates that there existed between the two governments no basis for an amicable settlement. Konoye in his Memoirs described the circumstances surrounding the formulation of the proposal to meet Roosevelt. The Prime Minister wrote that he intended to express "straight forwardly and boldly the true intentions of the Empire." He would have insisted, he related, on the firm establishment of the Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. American claims to the contrary were based on the Nine Power Treaty. Konoye realized that these two concepts were at odds with each other, however, the American government had stated its readiness "at any time to discuss making revisions to the Nine Power Pact. . . ." If the President failed to understand the necessity of such revisions, Konoye stated that he was prepared to break-off the talks. "It is, therefore, an undertaking which must be carried out while being fully prepared for war against America."[37] It appears from Konoye's Memoirs

as if he intended for the American Government to do all the compromising. Apparently, his demands were not negotiable and were to be made "while being fully prepared for war. . . ." Roosevelt could not have agreed to Konoye's terms and at the same time upheld the Four Points laid down by Hull on April 16. Nor could he have agreed to Konoye's terms and retained the support of the American people. In the aftermath of the Munich Agreement the people were in no mood to abide by Pacific appeasement. The New York Herald Tribune reported on September 16 their confidence that the Japanese would win no more appeasement from the government than it would from the man in the street, "whose one fixed idea about the situation in the Far East is that, after the hideous agonies that China has suffered, to take care of herself and to keep the Japanese busy, nothing, not even a consideration of self-preservation, would move us to let the Chinese down."[38]

If there was little chance of negotiating a settlement with Konoye there was none at all after his cabinet fell from power. On October 17 Konoye was forced to resign because of his inability to reach an agreement with the United States and/or to solve the "China incident." He was replaced by General Hideki Tojo, who was more pro-Axis in his attitude.[39]

The day before Konoye's resignation, Roosevelt conceived of an idea of trying to work out a settlement by appealing directly to the Emperor. On October 16,

1941, he sent to Hull a draft of a message to Hirohito. In the proposed message F.D.R. related that he would have been happy to travel thousands of miles to meet with the Prime Minister if one or two basic accords could have been realized so as the success of the conference would have been assured. The prior agreements required were: first, a mutual guarantee of the territorial integrity of China, and second, a statement that neither Japan nor the United States would wage war to obtain additional Asian territory. He next explained that American goals in Asia were to provide for peace between Japan and China, freedom of the seas, and a fair basis for trade. If Japan would join with the United States to keep the world war from spreading to the Pacific, he pledged his willingness to resume normal commercial relations "with the sole exception of certain articles which we must keep at home for our own defense and that of all of the Americas against possible aggression from the direction of Europe." The President concluded the proposed message with a mild threat: "If . . . Japan were to start new wars north or south of her, the United States, in accordance with her policy of peace, would be very much concerned and would try to prevent any extension of such condition of war."[40]

Before responding to Roosevelt's draft the State Department received the news of the change of cabinets in Tokyo. In consideration of this development Hull, Hornbeck, Ballantine, and Hamilton each sent memoranda to

the President suggesting that his letter to the Emperor was premature. They advised against sending the message "pending further clarification of the situation in Japan and of the probable attitude of the new government."[41] Heeding this advice Roosevelt shelved his draft, and although he believed there was little chance of their being successful, he relied on Ambassador Nomura and Secretary Hull to achieve a settlement.

The Hull-Nomura "peace talks" had been resumed on August 8 when the idea of a Roosevelt-Konoye meeting was first suggested. The meeting between Roosevelt and Konoye had proved impossible to arrange, but, the Hull-Nomura conversations continued. On November 17 a second Japanese representative, Saburo Kurusu, arrived in Washington on a special mission to assist Nomura. The talks continued, however, neither party gave evidence of any inclination to compromise. Hull, with the President's approval, pressed the Japanese to agree to the four principles he had stated on April 16, and Nomura repeated daily the Japanese position as he had outlined it on May 12.[42]

A last effort to reach an agreement was made on November 20. Nomura and Kurusa presented to Hull on that date a draft which they hoped would serve as the basis for a modus vivendi.[43] Upon handing the draft to Hull, Nomura remarked that a modus vivendi would give his government the opportunity to develop public sentiment in Japan in support of a more liberal and comprehensive program of

peace covering the entire Pacific area. The political situation in Japan was so acute, the Ambassador explained, as to render urgent some relief such as was envisaged in this proposal.[44] The proposal provided for the transfer to Northern Indochina of all Japanese forces stationed in the south pending the restoration of peace between Japan and China or the establishment of general peace in the Pacific region. With the restoration of peace the Japanese pledged to withdraw all forces from Indochina. They called upon the United States to supply them with a certain quantity of petroleum products, to refrain from measures prejudicial to Japan's efforts to restore peace with China, to agree to a mutual commitment to make no armed advance in the south Pacific area (the formula offered would apparently not exclude advancement into China from Indochina), to cooperate toward obtaining goods required by either in the Netherlands East Indies, and to restore commercial relations to those prevailing prior to the adoption of the freezing methods.[45]

After examining the proposition Roosevelt and Hull concluded that agreeing to it

> . . . would mean condonement by the United States of Japan's past aggressions, assent to future courses of conquest by Japan, abandonment of the most essential principles of our foreign policy, betrayal of China and Russia, and acceptance of the role of silent partner aiding and abetting Japan in her effort to create a Japanese hegemony over the western Pacific and eastern Asia.[46]

Although the proposals were viewed as unpropitious for agreement (Roosevelt) did not wish to reject them and risk the possibility that the Japanese would break-off all talks. He decided to present to them a "reasonable counter proposal" and (sent to Hull a pencilled memorandum containing a Four Point program to serve as the basis for a six months modus vivendi. The President's plan provided for a partial resumption of economic relations and American assistance in beginning Sino-Japanese negotiations to end the "undeclared war" on the condition that Japan agreed: to send no more troops to Indochina, Manchuria, or "anyplace South"; and not to invoke the Tripartite Pact even if the United States became involved in the European war.[47]

During the next few days Roosevelt's draft was refined in the State Department. The mutual obligations of both nations were spelled out in detail and the extent to which the United States would ease its economic restrictions was made specific. The department also suggested limiting the agreement to a period of three rather than six months and inserted a provision that would allow either party to call a conference to determine whether the prospects of reaching a peaceful settlement covering the entire Pacific area warranted the extension of the modus vivendi.[48] When the revised draft was sent to him on November 24, Roosevelt wrote at the top ot if: "This seems to me a fair proposition for the Japanese but its

acceptance or rejection is really a matter of internal Japanese politics. I am not very hopeful and we must all be prepared for real trouble, possibly soon."[49]

Roosevelt, though anticipating "real trouble, possibly soon," hoped the Japanese would agree to negotiate. Harold Ickes reported in his diary details of a discussion he had with the President on November 23. Roosevelt remarked that he wished he knew whether the Japanese were serious about the current negotiations. "He was not sure whether or not Japan had a gun up its sleeve." Ickes replied that he was certain Japan would "sooner or later . . . be at our throats." The secretary remarked that since it was apparent an attack was coming "I preferred to choose my own time and occasion." Roosevelt agreed that Japan would soon undertake new adventures in Asia, but, the Secretary judged, ". . . the President had not yet reached the state of mind where he is willing to be aggressive to Japan."[50]

At the same time the modus vivendi was being drafted, the State Department developed as well an outline for a more comprehensive peace settlement. Reflecting the attitudes of both Roosevelt and Hull, this Ten Point Proposal provided that the United States and Japan would mutually promise to abide by the principles outlined by Hull on April 16. They would sponsor a non-aggression pact among all countries concerned in Asia which, in effect, would have meant re-validation of the Nine Power Treaty.

Also, Japan would agree to withdraw all military, naval, air, and police forces from China and Indochina.[51]

While drafts of the modus vivendi and Ten Point Proposal were being refined in the State Department, Hull on November 22 called in the British and Chinese Ambassadors and the Netherlands and Australian Ministers in order to relate to them the terms of the proposals. Each of these representatives expressed some reservations in regard to the modus vivendi, except the Netherlands Minister who stated that his government would gladly support the American plan. The Chinese and British Ambassadors were most reluctant to lend their support to any compromise with the Japanese and both refused to make any commitment until they could obtain specific instructions from their governments.[52]

On November 24 Churchill wired Roosevelt and explained that he would leave the determination of the best method of dealing with Sino-Japanese problems to the judgment of the President. There was, however, one point about the suggested modus vivendi that disturbed him: "What about Chiang Kai-shek? Is he not having a very thin diet? Our anxiety is about China. If they collapse, our joint dangers would enormously increase."[53]

The next afternoon a response was received from Chiang. Ambassador Hu Shih called on Hull and reported that the Generalissimo had a "rather strong reaction" when told of the American plans. It was his impression, Hu Shih

added, that the United States was putting the Chinese question to one side in its conversations with Japan, instead of seeking a solution, and was inclined to appease Japan at the expense of China.[54]

Faced with British and Chinese opposition the administration decided to lay aside the modus vivendi and on November 26 Hull presented only the Ten Point plan to Nomura and Kurusu. Kurusu, upon receiving the proposals, spoke disparagingly of them. He objected to the idea of a multilateral nonaggression pact on the ground that the Japanese Government had had a bitter experience with international organizations. Also, he did not see how his government could be expected to "take off its hat to Chiang Kai-shek" and withdraw its troops from China. He stated that in his opinion the response to the November 20 proposals meant the end. He then asked if the American Government was at all interested in a modus vivendi.[55] Hull replied that the idea had been explored but was determined to be unfeasible.[56]

The next day Nomura and Kurusu met with the President. Nomura remarked that they were disappointed because of the failure to negotiate a modus vivendi. F.D.R. replied that he appreciated the efforts of the peace element in Japan, that most people in the United States wanted a peaceful solution to the Pacific problem, and that he had not yet given up, "although the situation was serious and this fact should be recognized." He added that he was

disappointed that during the course of the Hull-Nomura conversations the Japanese leaders had continued to express opposition to the fundamental principles of peace and order that constituted the central spirit of these discussions. The United States had been patient in dealing with the Asian situation and would, he explained, continue to be patient if Japan's course of action permitted. But, the Japanese Government must realize that their best interests would not be served by following an aggressive course.[57]

By late November Roosevelt had reached the conclusion that a new Japanese adventure, clearly detrimental to the best interest of the United States was imminent. On November 22 the War Department had intercepted a Japanese message intended for Nomura. The cable directed the Ambassador to press the Americans for a speedy reply to the November 20 proposal. It continued, "if you can bring about the signing of the pertinent notes we will wait until November 29. After that things are automatically going to happen."[58] As a result of the information gleaned from this message, as well as from others that had been intercepted, Roosevelt began consideration of three possible courses of action: a message to Congress, an appeal to Emperor Hirohito, and a stern warning.

Two draft messages had been prepared for him. One was a message to Congress, which Secretaries Hull, Stimson, and Knox had prepared, advising that body of the imminent dangers in the Asian situation. The second was a message

to Emperor Hirohito appealing for peace. While he was considering which of these messages to use, Churchill cabled on November 30 and suggested a third approach as an alternative to war. Churchill proposed a "plain declaration . . . that any further act of aggression by Japan will lead immediately to the gravest consequences."[59] F.D.R. did not believe any such warning would do any good. He had before him an intercepted message from Tokyo to Berlin, dated November 30, instructing the Japanese Ambassador to inform Hitler and Ribbentrop "that there is extreme danger that war may suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms. The time of the breaking-out of this war may come quicker than anyone dreams."[60]

After receiving additional information of Japanese troop movements in southern Indochina and naval movements in the Pacific, Roosevelt decided to lay aside the message to Congress and instead send the appeal for peace directly to the Japanese Emperor. He began this message by briefly summarizing the friendly and cooperative relations that had existed between the two nations for more than 100 years. He then expressed the desire that such relations would return to the Pacific area so that all people could live without fear of invasion and with the full opportunity for freedom of commerce. F.D.R. next referred to the build-up of forces in Indochina that had taken place during the past year. The troop concentration in this area, he remarked, was causing the people of the

Philippines, the Islands of the East Indies, of Malaya, and Thailand to question whether these forces were preparing to attack in one or more of these directions. The people of the United States, he explained, also looked askance at the establishment of military, naval, and air bases equipped to such an extent so as to constitute armed forces capable of measures of offense. "It is clear that a continuance of such a situation is unthinkable." F.D.R. called upon the Emperor to withdraw all military forces from Indochina. This action would result "in the assurance of peace throughout the whole of the South Pacific." The message concluded with the statement:

> I am confident that both of us, for the sake of the peoples not only of our own great countries but for the sake of humanity in neighboring territories, have a sacred duty to restore traditional amity and prevent further death and destruction in the world.[61]

This appeal to Emperor Hirohito was sent to Ambassador Grew at 9 P.M., December 6, 1941, Washington time. Before the Ambassador could deliver it Japanese bombs had fallen on Pearl Harbor.

On September 27, 1940, the Japanese Government signed the Tripartite Pact and thereby officially aligned itself with the European "aggressors." This act has been interpreted as the great Japanese blunder which made war with the United States inevitable. The pact was a great blunder. In the opinion of the American people it was the missing link that made the European and Asiatic wars a part

of the same contest. It placed the Japanese Emperor and Government in the same category with Hitler and Mussolini. In this way the alliance served to remove domestic restraints from Franklin Roosevelt's handling of Pacific policy. It freed him to take repressive actions against the Japanese.

The President, however, did not choose to take a belligerent stand against Japanese expansion. Rather, indecisiveness continued to pervade his policy. The reason for the lack of a firm Asian policy at this late date can be found in the earlier decision to place strategic priority on the solution of Europe's problems. The President was convinced that the American stakes in Europe were far greater than those in Asia. Until the guns across the Atlantic were stilled those in the Pacific would not be drawn.

After September 27, just as before that date, Roosevelt wanted to extend a larger quantity of aid to the Chinese Government than was actually sent. It was reasoned, however, that large amounts of American aid to China might provoke the Japanese to expand their area of aggression into territory of a more vital nature to the United States and thereby require military involvement in the Asian conflict.

The signing of the Tripartite Pact was not the greatest Japanese blunder in the years preceding the bombing of Pearl Harbor. If there was any one "great blunder" it was

the Japanese decision to occupy southern Indochina in July 1941. This step, in Roosevelt's opinion, put the Japanese in a position from which to threaten vital national "interests." It put them in reach of the Philippines and also gave them a strategic base from which to control the entire South Pacific and Indian Oceans. An "old Navy man" such as the President could not allow the Japanese to control these vital waterways. Nor could he overlook this challenge to the "ideal" of the freedom of the seas. If there was a watershed for America's Asian policy in the months immediately preceding Pearl Harbor for Roosevelt, it was not the Axis Alliance, but the occupation of South Indochina. After this step American resistance to Japanese aggression through the use of economic restrictions became more vigorous. However, while stepping up resistance to Japanese expansion Roosevelt continued to hope that the Pacific problems could be solved through negotiation. When Japanese bombs fell on Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941, the President was as surprised and as shocked as the rest of his countrymen. The period of shock quickly passed and within twenty-four hours he went before a joint session of Congress and requested from that body a declaration of war against the Japanese Empire. The World War had come to America.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Warren I. Cohen, "From Contempt to Containment: Cycles in American Attitudes Toward China," typescript in Author's possession; see also Paul Schroeder, The Axis-Alliance and Japanese-American Relations.

[2]Hull, Memoirs, I, 911.

[3]Hooker (ed.), Moffat Papers, pp. 330-334.

[4]Ibid., p. 335.

[5]Quoted in Rauch, Roosevelt: From Munich to Pearl Harbor, p. 262.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, II, 363.

[8]Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, III, 388.

[9]Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1255-1258.

[10]Hull, Memoirs, II, 982-986; Memorandum by Stanley K. Hornbeck, F.R., 1941, IV, 776-779; State Department Aide Memoire, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. State Department, 1941, Box 34.

[11]Quoted in Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1259-1260.

[12]Hull, Memoirs, II, 990; Memorandum by Cordell Hull, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan, 1941, Folder 1; F.R., 1941, IV, 77-79; F.R., Japan, 1931-1941, II, 396-398.

[13]Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1259-1260.

[14]Harold Ickes to Franklin Roosevelt, June 20, 1941; Franklin Roosevelt to Harold Ickes, June 23, 1941, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 197A, Japan, 1941.

[15]Harold Ickes to Franklin Roosevelt, June 23, 1941, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Harold Ickes, 1940-1945.

[16]Franklin Roosevelt to Harold Ickes, June 23, 1941, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Harold Ickes, 1940-1945.

[17]Franklin Roosevelt to Harold Ickes, July 1, 1941, Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, III, 567.

[18]Memorandum by the Secretary of State, April 16, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 406.

[19]Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, II, 374.

[20]Draft Proposal Handed by the Japanese Ambassador to the Secretary of State, May 12, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 420.

[21]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1001.

[22]Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt, November 28, 1941, Microfilm Reel #9, Vol. IIXX, 325.

[23]"The President Explains Our Policy Concerning the Exportation of Oil to Japan," July 24, 1941, Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, X, 277.

[24]Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State (Welles), July 24, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 527-530; Hull, Memoirs, II, 1014.

[25]Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State (Welles), July 24, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 527-530.

[26]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1014.

[27]Memorandum of a Conversation, August 6, 1941, F.R. Japan 1931-1941, II, 546-550; Hull, Memoirs, II, 1014.

[28]Winston S. Churchill, The Second World War (6 vols.; Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1948-1953), III, 427.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Draft of a Proposed Communication to the Japanese Ambassador, August 15, 1941, F.R., 1941, V, 370-372.

[32]Memorandum by Joseph Ballantine, July 3, 1942, F.R., 1941, IV, 372-374; Memorandum by Joseph Ballantine, June 12, 1944, F.R., 1941, IV, 374-376.

[33]Quoted in Ibid., p. 375.

[34]Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, X, 315.

[35]Memorandum of a Conversation, August 28, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 571-572; Memorandum Prepared in the Department of State, May 19, 1942, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 352-353.

[36]Strictly Confidential Notification to the Secretary of State on the Subject of a Meeting Between Roosevelt and Konoye, August 28, 1941, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan, 1941, Group 13, Folder 1; Memorandum by Joseph W. Ballantine, August 28, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 403; Memorandum by the Adviser on Political Relations (Hornbeck) to the Secretary of State, September 2, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 419; Oral Statement Handed by Roosevelt to the Japanese Ambassador, September 3, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 589-592; Cordell Hull to Franklin Roosevelt, September 28, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 483; Memorandum of a Conversation Between Hamilton, Ballantine, Schmidt, and Nomura, October 9, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 672-673; Memorandum Prepared in the Department of State, May 19, 1942, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 343-351; Hull, Memoirs, II, 1025-1026; Joseph Grew to Franklin Roosevelt, September 22, 1941, Roosevelt Files, P.S.F. Japan, 1941; Joseph Grew to Cordell Hull, September 29, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 645-650; Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1315-1326.

[37]Quoted in Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1302; Feis, The Road to Pearl Harbor, pp. 274-276.

[38]New York Herald Tribune, September 16, 1941, p. 22.

[39]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1054.

[40]Proposed Message from the President to the Emperor of Japan, October 16, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 513-514.

[41]Memorandum by the Adviser on Political Relations (Hornbeck) to the Secretary of State, October 16, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 514-515; The Secretary of State to President Roosevelt, October 17, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 520-522; Memorandum by the Chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, October 18, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 522-523.

[42]For a discussion of the Hull-Nomura-Kurusu conversations see: Robert J. C. Butow, "The Hull-Nomura Conversations: A Fundamental Misconception," The American Historical Review, LXV (1960), 822-836; Feis, The Road to Pearl Harbor; Hull, Memoirs, 1054-1105; F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 718-777.

[43]Draft Proposal Handed by the Japanese Ambassador (Nomura) to the Secretary of State, November 20, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 755.

[44]Memorandum of a Conversation, November 20, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 753; Secret from the President to the Former Naval Person, November 24, 1941, Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, II, 1245.

[45]Draft Proposal Handed by the Japanese Ambassador (Nomura) to the Secretary of State, November 20, 1941, F.R., Japan 1931-1941, II, 755.

[46]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1070.

[47]Franklin Roosevelt to Cordell Hull, undated, F.R., 1941, IV, 626.

[48]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1072-1073; Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, II, 1245.

[49]Marginal citation, Roosevelt to Hull, quoted in Ibid.

[50]Diary citation, November 23, 1941, Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, III, 649.

[51]The text of the Ten Point Proposal is included in: Blum, Morgenthau Diaries, II, 385; Hull, Memoirs, II, 1073, 1077, 1083.

[52]Ibid.

[53]For the President from the Former Naval Person, November 26, 1941, F.R., 1941, IV, 665.

[54]Hull, Memoirs, II, 1077.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid., p. 1086.

[58]Quoted in Feis, Road to Pearl Harbor, p. 313.

[59]Churchill, The Second World War, III, 599.

[60]Ibid.; Hull, Memoirs, II, 1092.

[61]President Roosevelt Makes Appeal to Emperor Hirohito of Japan for Peace, December 6, 1941, Roosevelt's Foreign Policy, 1933-1941: Franklin D. Roosevelt's Unedited Speeches and Messages (New York: Wilfred Funk, 1942), pp. 544-545.

CHAPTER VII

EPILOGUE

At 1:47 P.M., Sunday, December 7, Franklin Roosevelt sat at his desk in the White House chatting amiably with Harry Hopkins. The telephone rang and the operator reported that Secretary of War Frank Knox insisted on being put through. The President said, "Put him on," and then, "Hello, Frank." The Secretary of War replied, "Mr. President, it looks as if the Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor!" Roosevelt't answer was "No!"[1]

As previously indicated, Franklin Roosevelt has been both praised and condemned for his handling of American Far Eastern policy during the years preceding the Japanese attack. In retrospect, it appears as if many of the conclusions of both the supporters and the critics of the President were in error. The available evidence indicates that the President sincerely hoped that through negotiations a solution to Asian problems could be found. However, from the Japanese point of view the bases for compromise offered by the administration were less than attractive. The nucleus of all Roosevelt's compromise proposals was a

western treaty system which had little applicability to the Far East. As Henry Stimson once phrased it: "The peace treaties of modern Europe made out by the western nations of the world no more fit the three great races of Russia, Japan, and China, . . . than . . . a stovepipe hat would fit an African savage."[2]

Why did the President rest negotations on these terms? The reason is simple. He never understood the Japanese opposition to them. He failed to realize that his terms were so unrealistic. To have understood this fact it would have been necessary for him to have clearly defined United States and Japanese interests in the South Pacific. There is no evidence to indicate that he ever developed a clear and precise definition of American, much less Japanese, stakes in Asia.

From the time of his youth Roosevelt expressed a fondness for China and the Chinese and an antipathy toward the Japanese. These feelings are understandable as his family, long active in the China trade, looked on China as an open field for American adventure and trade. On the other hand, Japan, at the beginning of the 20th Century was an expanding nation ready to challenge American rights in Asia.

During his tenure as Assistant Secretary of the Navy these twin feelings, sympathy for the Chinese, antipathy for the Japanese, influenced his actions. In 1913 when Japanese and American relations grew tense as the result

of the enactment of a California land law, F.D.R. was ready to fight. The crisis quickly passed, but surrounded by those in the Navy Department who viewed Japan as America's Number 1 antagonist of the future, his suspicions remained. There occurred in the 1920's a dramatic alteration in Roosevelt's attitude toward the Japanese. The change was a product of the spirit of the 1920's which was, as expressed in the Washington Treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, one of cooperation between nations in international relations. In his 1923 article "Shall We Trust Japan?" the future president went so far as to suggest that a redefinition of American interests in China was required. There is a need, he wrote, for the United States to alter or abandon the "Open Door" policy. It is of paramount importance for this nation to recognize the "real necessity to Japan of the market and the raw products of that part of the Chinese mainland contiquous to her island shores."[3]

Before the suggested redefinition was made the Japanese began to expand their area of influence in Manchuria following the "Mukden Incident" and Roosevelt was elected President of the United States. In Roosevelt's opinion, Japan, by its action in Manchuria, represented again as it had in 1913 that type of aggressive nation that had to be resisted. On January 17, 1933, the President-elect publicly pledged his administration's support for the Hoover-Stimson Doctrine of non-recognition. A few days later two of his advisers, Raymond Moley and Rexford

Tugwell, urged him to disavow the pledge and pressed him for an explanation as to why he made it. Roosevelt, lacking a precise definition of the American stake in China found it difficult to offer an explanation that would satisfy his advisers. Whereupon, he closed the conversation with a reference to his ancestral relationship to China and his own personal sympathy for the Chinese people. "How," he asked, "could you expect me not to go along with Stimson on Japan."[4] Sympathy for the Chinese along with antipathy toward the Japanese remained a vital ingredient in his Asian policy for the entire period preceding Pearl Harbor.

Although determined to resist Japanese expansion in Manchuria, he was convinced that the undefined American interests in China were not sufficient to justify direct military intervention. As an alternative to military intervention he chose to extend a minimum of aid to China so they could continue to resist the Japanese. He was convinced that if Chinese resistance continued, the Japanese would eventually come to the conclusion that they could not win and either withdraw or agree to negotiate. To complement this policy he chose, as had Herbert Hoover before him, to rely on the force of world public opinion to retard Japanese action. This decision became clear during the London Naval Conference of 1935. When the Japanese refused to agree to limitations on naval armament, he advised Norman Davis to delay the close of the conference

as long as possible so there would be time for the full "onus" of public opinion to fall upon them.[5] Public opinion was no more effective a weapon for Roosevelt than it had been for Hoover.

The fateful year of 1937 arrived and still the administration was without a well defined policy for Asia. As rumors began to circulate within the administration that the Japanese might, in the near future, contrive a new incident in North China in order to justify further expansion, the need for a plan to head-off such an eventuality became clear to everyone. Between February and July the President considered several plans to relieve Asian tensions, but his considerations came to nothing. Then in July the previously anticipated incident occurred at the Marco Polo Bridge and the Sino-Japanese "undeclared war" began.

In the weeks that followed the outbreak of hostilities in Asia public debate on China policy within the United States became more intense. Quickly it became apparent that the sympathy of most Americans was with the underdog Chinese. However, it was equally apparent that in the opinion of the majority of Americans, United States interests in China were not sufficient to justify war. Roosevelt's view in this regard was strikingly similar to that of the majority of Americans. Like his fellow citizens his sympathies were with the Chinese. But also, like them, he did not want to go to war for China. During

the period between the Marco Polo Bridge incident and the war in Europe he carried on an intensive search for a plan to end the Asian conflict short of American military intervention. As he stated in his "Quarantine Address": "America hates war. America hopes for peace. Therefore, America actively engages in the search for peace."[6] The effectiveness of the search was limited by his own indecision. Being unsure of American stakes in Asia he was uncertain as to what type of plan would best protect these "interests." His freedom of action was also limited, in his view and in that of his major advisers, by a lack of military preparedness and by Congressional and public opinion hostile to any scheme that contained the slightest possibility of war. Considering these restrictions it is understandable that no suitable solution was found. Lacking a solution Roosevelt proceeded along the same path he had followed since 1933. He continued to support the concept of sending a minimum of aid to China so they could maintain their resistance. At the same time the amount of aid was to be carefully limited so as not to provoke Japan into expanding their area of aggression.

In September 1939 German forces invaded Poland. Two days later Britain and France declared war on Germany and World War II had begun. The outbreak of hostilities in Europe required some fundamental alterations in foreign policy by all the major powers. The United States quickly adjusted its policy in relation to Europe, but, there

occurred no appreciable change in American conduct in Asia as a result of the war. The alteration that took place was merely a matter of degree. Before the beginning of the conflict Roosevelt was determined to remain free from Pacific entanglements. After it started and after the administration's assignment of strategic priority to the solution of Europe's problems, he was more resolute than ever in his intention to stay out of the Asian war. As he told Harold Ickes, ". . . it is terribly important for the control of the Atlantic for us to help keep peace in the Pacific. I simply have not got enough Navy to go round."[7]

In recent years it has been contended that the first real alteration in Pacific policy came as a result of the Japanese signing of the Tripartite Pact. A detailed examination of policy both before and after September 27, 1940, indicates that the importance of the pact to Roosevelt's policy has been over-emphasized. It is true that the alliance had a dramatic affect on American public opinion. In the opinion of the American people it "tied the two wars together and elevated China to the status of 'ally' in the battle against Axis aggression."[8] To suggest, however, that this shift in opinion was the prelude to a dramatic new policy is to exaggerate the importance of public opinion. The resolve to remain free from Pacific entanglements so long as the war in Europe continued, remained Roosevelt's Number 1 objective.

If there was a great Japanese "blunder" in the pre-Pearl Harbor period it was their decision in July 1941 to occupy southern Indochina. This step had to be vigorously resisted. It represented, in Roosevelt's opinion, an open challenge to the freedom of the seas. It placed the Japanese army and navy in a position from which they could threaten the South Pacific trade routes and the Indian Ocean. It also threatened the British war effort in Europe. As Roosevelt explained, the effect on Briatin of Japanese control of the South Pacific seaways had to always be considered. Britain was a great power because of her ability to obtain goods from all over the world. "Our strategy of giving them assistance," he wrote, "must envisage both sending of supplies to England and helping to prevent a closing of channels of communication. . . ."[9]

Though determined to resist this latest Japanese advance, Roosevelt moved carefully. He proposed to Ambassador Nomura that the Japanese agree to the neutralization of Indochina. In this way, he explained, Japan could obtain security without military action. When the Ambassador expressed doubt that his government would accept this plan, Roosevelt decided not to await a formal reply and froze all Japanese assets in the United States.

But still, after freezing Japanese assets, Roosevelt hoped to prevent or at least delay an escalation of the Pacific war. On August 6 "peace talks" were resumed between Hull and Nomura. However, neither party indicated

any willingness to compromise. Hull, with Roosevelt's approval, pressed for Japanese acceptance of his Four Principles of April 16, and Nomura repeated daily his propositions of May 12. Later in August Roosevelt agreed to a State Department moderation of a "warning" letter to Japan drafted at the Atlantic Conference. The moderation was urged because the State Department was apprehensive lest a "stern warning" would provoke the Japanese. Roosevelt accepted the alterations because, as Sam Rosenman wrote, he "was not willing to take such an uncompromising position which might incite Japan to immediate war."[10]

Additional futile attempts to negotiate an Asian settlement were made in the last months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Between mid-August and mid-September discussions were held between Japanese and American representatives in order to arrange a meeting between Roosevelt and Prime Minister Konoye. The meeting was never held. In explaining later why the meeting did not take place, Roosevelt remarked that he would have been glad to meet with Konoye if one or two basic accords could have been first achieved. The required accords were that Japan agree to a mutual guarantee of the territorial integrity of China, and that neither the United States nor Japan would wage war to obtain additional territory in Asia. These terms, though minimum American desires, were more than Konoye could agree to. Roosevelt has been roundly condemned for his refusal to meet with the Japanese Prime Minister.

However, an examination of Konoye's Memoirs suggests that had the conference taken place no satisfactory agreement would have been achieved.

On October 17 Konoye was forced to resign because of his inability to reach an agreement with the United States and/or solve the "China Incident." If there had been little chance of negotiating a settlement with Kenoye there was none at all after he was replaced by General Hideki Tojo. The Japanese made one last effort at negotiation when on November 20 they proposed a modus vivendi. Hull's remarks upon receiving this suggestion and his official response six days later suggested to everyone the futility of future negotiations. However, Roosevelt did not give up. Still he hoped to remain free of the Asian conflict. He sent on December 6 a last minute appeal for peace to Emperor Hirohito. The message arrived too late. Before it was delivered by Ambassador Grew, Japanese bombs had fallen on Pearl Harbor, The World War had come to America.

In retrospect there appears to be good reason to condemn Franklin Roosevelt's handling of American Far Eastern policy during the years preceding the attack on Pearl Harbor. But, he did not directly provoke the attack and until it actually took place he hoped a Pacific conflict could be avoided. His error was not one of commission, but one of ommission. He failed to develop a clear definition of American stakes in Asia so that

realistic American-Japanese negotiations might be possible. In the absence of such a definition his tendency was to allow policy to "drift." As he explained to Grew, "hard and fast plans" for Asia could not be laid down.

There is no intention to suggest that because of his failure to sufficiently define policy he must bear the total responsibility for the assault on Pearl Harbor. It was the Japanese Government that ordered that "dastardly" attack. By means of a decade of aggression the Japanese had backed themselves into a corner. From that position it appeared as if an attack on the United States Pacific Fleet was the only way out.

Possibly there was no American compromise, short of complete withdrawal from Asia, that would have satisfied the Japanese. One can never know. By failing to define American stakes in Asia, Roosevelt was not able to offer a realistic basis for compromise. And the war came.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Quoted in John Gunther, Roosevelt in Retrospect (New York: Harper, 1950), p. 319.

[2]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 233.

[3]Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Shall We Trust Japan?" p. 478.

[4]Moley, After Seven Years, p. 95.

[5]Franklin Roosevelt to Cordell Hull, December 7, 1934, Roosevelt Files, O.F. 29, Norman Davis File.

[6]"Quarantine" Speech at Chicago, Illinois, Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, VI, 406-411.

[7]Franklin Roosevelt to Harold Ickes, July 1, 1941, Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, III, 567.

[8]Cohen, "From Contempt to Containment."

[9]Quoted in Grew, Turbulent Era, II, 1259-1260.

[10]Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, X, 315.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

This study is based chiefly on primary sources. The most important of these are the Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York. Containing some 3,500 cubic feet of White House papers and approximately that quantity of other papers and records, the Library is a rich source for any researcher of the period 1933 to 1945. For this study the papers from five of the major files proved to be of most value. The 162 boxes of Papers as Assistant Secretary of the Navy contained much useful material for the early period of Roosevelt's service to the nation. The President's Personal File, the President's Secretary's File and the Official File were thoroughly examined for clues to Roosevelt's Asian policy while President. Each of these are hugh files. They contain not only official notes and memoranda but also private correspondence between F.D.R. and various individuals and organizations. Special subjects, such as records of communication between the United States Government and foreign governments, are included in these files as well. The files for China, Japan, and Great Britain were of especial use to this writer.

Also housed at the Library are the transcripts of the Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Amounting to twenty-five volumes, these transcripts afford a major source of week-to-week information on Roosevelt's ever-changing ideas and policies, at least to the extent to which he was willing to talk with reporters off the record. In general, however, the President was so careful in the information that he gave to the press that the transcripts rarely contain strikingly important ideas or statements.

As well as unpublished primary material there exists a large reservoir of published primary sources for the Roosevelt years. The Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States were of inestimable value to this study. Samuel Rosenman's Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (13 vols.; New York, 1938-50), contains most of the President's major foreign policy addresses. The author included in these volumes brief "Notes" recalling the context in which each address was given and suggesting the importance which Roosevelt attached to each. The few public statements which Rosenman failed to include in his work can usually be found in either Roosevelt's Foreign Policy-1933-1941: Franklin D. Roosevelt's Unedited Speeches and Messages (New York, 1942), or Addresses and Messages of Franklin D. Roosevelt (London, 1943). Elliott Roosevelt's, F.D.R.: His Personal Letters (4 vols.; New York, 1947-50), includes material from the time Roosevelt

was a small boy through the White House years. These volumes are especially rich in material for the years before 1933. The recently published Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs (Cambridge, 1969), is a valuable collection of documents, messages, and personal correspondence and should be of great assistance in future research.

The student of the Roosevelt era is especially fortunate to have at his disposal many volumes of published diaries, reminiscences, and memoirs. Several members of the President's family as well as many of his cabinet officials and close friends and advisers have published accounts of their relations with the 32nd President. For the years prior to the presidency Sara Roosevelt's My Boy Franklin (New York, 1933), presents an interesting discussion of F.D.R.'s personal characteristics, ambitions, and motivations while a young man. In The Wilson Era: Years of Peace, 1910-1917 (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1944), the former President's very good friend, Josephus Daniels, wrote a very lengthy and affectionate account of Roosevelt while Assistant-Secretary of the Navy. Eleanor Roosevelt in This Is My Story (New York, 1937), and This I Remember (New York, 1949), presented some valuable clues which aid one in gaining a better understanding of F.D.R.'s very complex personality.

There exist among the published works many valuable sources of information on Roosevelt's Asian policy. Cordell Hull's The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (2 vols.; New York, 1948),

has been used extensively in this study. These volumes are a valuable source of information, however, one should be aware that at times the former Secretary of State's analysis shows the influence of hindsight. The same warning applies to the two volumes written by Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions that Shaped History (New York, 1951), and The Time for Decision (New York, 1944). The best published diaries for the Roosevelt years are the compilations of Jane D. Ickes (ed.), The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes (3 vols.; New York, 1953), and Nancy Hooker (ed.), The Moffat Papers: Selections from the Diplomatic Journals of Jay Pierrepont Moffat (Cambridge, 1956). Other important primary sources used by this writer include: James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story (New York, 1948);Joseph C. Grew, Turbulent Era, A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years (2 vols.; New York, 1952); Raymond Moley, After Seven Years (New York, 1939); William Phillips, Ventures in Diplomacy (Boston, 1952).

Secondary Sources

Since his death in 1945 many biographies and other more specialized studies of the life and times of Franklin Roosevelt have been published. The best one volume biography of the President is Rexford Tugwell's The Democratic Roosevelt: A Biography of Franklin Roosevelt (Garden City, New York, 1957). Although it contains less detail than Tugwell's work, James M. Burns, Roosevelt: The Lion and

the Fox (New York, 1956), offers an interesting analysis of the President's personality and motivations. Frank Freidel's Franklin D. Roosevelt (3 vols.; Boston, 1952-56), is the best multivolume study of F.D.R. before he became President. Arthur M. Schlesinger in his Age of Roosevelt (3 vols.; Boston, 1957-1960) concentrated on the White House years. This three volume work portrays vividly the author's fine style, quick wit, and keen analysis.

There exist a number of fine secondary works that were of great assistance to this writer in his attempt to unravel the mysteries of Roosevelt's Asian policy. A. Whitney Griswold's Far Eastern Policy of the United States (New Haven, 1938), is an old work but the analyses and interpretations are sound. John Blum's From the Morgenthau Diaries (2 vols.; Boston, 1959), provides an inside view of the discussions among members of the Roosevelt Administration regarding Asian policy. Dorothy Borg's The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-38 (Cambridge, 1964) is the only substantial study of the diplomacy of the middle thirties. A solid, scholarly work, the book is highly informative and contains a good deal of material on Roosevelt. Herbert Feis's The Road to Pearl Harbor (Princeton, 1950), is a detailed and excellent study of the years after 1938, emphasizing the widening split between the United States and Japan. William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Challenge to Isolation 1937-1940 (New York, 1952), is also helpful for this period but

contains far less on the Far Eastern situation. Basil Rauch's Roosevelt: From Munich to Pearl Harbor (New York, 1950), is also an interesting study. However, Rauch, in this work, appeared less interested in explaining Roosevelt's Asian policy than in contesting the theories presented by Charles Tansill in Backdoor to War (Chicago, 1952), and Charles A. Beard in President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941 (New Haven, 1948). For a fine analysis of American economic policy and its effect on China see: Arthur N. Young, China and the Helping Hand, 1937-1945 (Cambridge, 1963).

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