

Its presentation after the event lends some support to the possible conjecture that, at the last moment, the fighting forces of Japan took the initiative into their own hands and anticipated the civil Government's programme at any rate by a matter of a few hours.

To return to the negotiations: in the interval between the presentation of the American note and of the Japanese reply, two other events took place, the second of which—the President's despatch of a personal message to the Japanese Emperor—may have had some effect in precipitating independent action by the forces, if, in fact, the above-mentioned conjecture is in line with what has actually happened. The first of the two events was the presentation of the Japanese reply to Mr. Roosevelt's question as to why Japan was augmenting her troops in Indo-China beyond the agreed number. The reply was that Japan had done nothing to transgress the "joint defence" protocol between Japan and Vichy, and that reinforcements in Northern Indo-China and, "as a natural sequence," certain troop movements in the south were a precaution which Japan had to take in view of signs of Chinese movements along the northern frontier. The reply, in fact, was completely evasive.

President Roosevelt's message to the Emperor, sent on the 6th December, referred similarly to the fears of aggression aroused by the Japanese troop concentration in Indo-China, and declared it impossible for the peoples concerned to continue sitting indefinitely on a "dynamite keg"; it included assurances to appease any Japanese fears of other Powers encroaching on Indo-China, and it ended with an appeal to the Emperor to combine with the President in thinking of ways of "dispelling the dark clouds." The Emperor's reaction to the message, assuming that it penetrated to the innermost sanctuary, is unknown, as no answer came before war started. On the other hand, the spectacle of the Emperor being personally addressed over the head of the Japanese Government, and apprehension lest the message might effectively strengthen the Emperor's anti-war tendencies, may have led the militarists to feel that there was no more time to be wasted, and so to precipitate the Japanese attack.

The question of Russian participation in war with Japan is discussed under "Soviet Union." While there is as yet no information from Russia to show what line the Soviet Government will take in the new situation, the Japanese Government, through its official spokesman, has intimated that it expects the neutrality pact to hold. With regard to Japan's Axis partners, the spokesman said on the 9th December: "We naturally expect Germany to declare war on the United States," but stated that official reports were being awaited.

On the side of the Democracies, the closest co-operation between Great Britain, the United States, China and the Netherlands East Indies has been doubly assured by Japan's action in breaking out in every direction. The Dutch Government has declared war on Japan, while China has now declared war on Germany and Italy, and—after four years' fighting—on Japan. Thailand, the weak link in the chain, has already given way to her terror of Japan. The Government signed an agreement on the 8th December allowing Japanese troops to use Thailand as a passage-way for attacking Malaya or Burma. We have, however, the assurance of the Thai Prime Minister that British troops resisting Japanese on Thai territory will not be opposed by the armed forces of Thailand.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

For the first time in their history the United States of America became on the 7th December, 1941, a victim of direct and unprovoked military aggression on the part of another Great Power. Whatever were the reasons which made the Japanese decide to attack, without warning, the Pacific Island bases of the United States and the Philippine Commonwealth on that day (see further under the "Far East"), they could not have chosen a time, or a method, or circumstances, for launching their attack—short of the actual bombing of continental United States territory—that would have rallied and unified the people of the United States and of her dependencies so rapidly and so completely. In his statement to the joint session of Congress on the 8th December, the President briefly outlined the picture which was already engraved deeply on the consciousness of every American: not only had the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, the

Philippine Islands, Wake Island and Midway Island been attacked; not only had American ships been torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu; not only had British Malaya and Hong Kong been attacked; but it was obvious that the attack had been planned many days or even weeks before, and that "during the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace." In addition, the President pointed out, the Japanese note declaring that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations in Washington, "contained no hint of war or of armed attack" and was, anyhow, only handed to Mr. Hull an hour after the Japanese bombing of American territory had commenced.

The reaction to this Japanese onslaught of the American press and of American public figures, whether Isolationist or Interventionist, has been virtually unanimous. The resolution of Congress, declaring that a state of war existed with Japan, was passed on the 8th December, with but one dissentient vote, that of Representative Jeanette Rankin, a Republican pacifist from Montana, who, as the first woman ever to be elected to the Congress of the United States, had in 1917 also voted against entry into the last war. She was then a political associate in Congress of ex-Colonel Lindbergh's father, but to-day even Mr. Lindbergh, unlike his father, who maintained his attitude of opposition to participation in war to the end, has announced that Americans must fight this war "regardless of their attitude in the past." Exactly how Mr. Lindbergh will interpret his support of this war, or the American Government take notice of it, remains to be seen, but he and other Isolationists may well redouble their pleas against further aid in Europe or the Middle East for Britain or for the Soviet Union, arguing that the United States must concentrate all her energies upon the war in the Pacific. If Russia does not enter the war against Japan, such pleas will become more strident, but, on the other hand, should Germany and Italy decide that their obligations to their Far Eastern ally necessitate declarations of war upon the United States, or even, in the case of Germany, the waging of overt undeclared war upon her in Pacific waters, then this argument, too, may have to be abandoned. Indeed, though Senator Wheeler, the America First organisation, Mr. Herbert Hoover, Senator Taft, Representative Hamilton Fish, and many other fierce opponents of President Roosevelt and of aid to Britain or Russia, have now declared themselves as wholeheartedly in favour of a maximum war effort against Japan and even the *Chicago Tribune* has condescended to return to its old slogan of "Our country, right or wrong"—the intransigent Senator Nye has stated that "the Japanese attack is just what Britain planned for us. Britain has been getting ready for this since 1938." It is nevertheless probable that not one-half of 1 per cent. of the American people believes anything of the sort. The menace of Japan to American interests, and the challenge of the trend of Japanese policy during the last ten years to American ideals and to the whole American way of life, has long been generally realised, particularly in the Pacific Coast States, and while the nature and suddenness of the clash will undoubtedly have come as a grave shock, many Americans had long since abandoned hope of avoiding an eventual conflict with Japan. The present mood of almost hysterical indignation at Japan's "treachery" is likely to be succeeded by the gradual emergence of a grim determination to see the matter through, and to remove the menace of Japanese aggression in the Pacific for once and for all. The newspaper statement that America, "on learning of the dropping of the first bomb became united as never before in its history," may at the moment be somewhat previous, but before very long such may, indeed, be the case. It goes without saying that the people of the United States, composed as it is overwhelmingly of persons of European origin and descent, is much more likely to react as one when faced with a challenge from an oriental Power than when told that this or that European country is seeking to dominate the world. Party differences, labour disputes, and many other social and economic fissures in American society, are likely to disappear, or will at least be "papered over" for the time being, and a sharp public intolerance of any dissentient views which run counter to the prevailing current of national emotions is very soon likely to manifest itself, as it did in 1917. The remark that "Such things as Gallup Polls of public opinion suddenly seem as old fashioned as quadrilles" is probably a very fair appreciation of the situation.

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