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measures. To guard against internal upset, they have welcomed tyranny and dictatorship. To guard against subversive opinions, they have accepted despotic intellectual regimentation. To avoid the possibility of defeat in a foreign war, they first practiced rigid and unrelenting isolation; from the 1640's to 1853, Japan was the hermit nation, allowing no visitors in or out, except for a handful of Dutchmen and Chinese in the one city of Nagasaki. This long period of isolation and peace is certainly the most radical foreign policy ever followed by a civilized state. It has been succeeded by a restless, swaggering expansionism. A psychologist may attribute these characteristics to an inner uncertainty; all I can tell is that they do exist, and that the Japanese exhibit an almost frantic determination to be prepared against all possible developments. This state of mind plays into the plans of unscrupulous militarists, since the plotters and schemers are always in a position to allege that moderate, sensible policies would leave the Japanese exposed to a variety of risks. The facts that risk is an inescapable concomitant of modern life, that perfect security cannot be secured by any nation by its own efforts alone, that the international community is a better protection against hazards than armament -- these arguments were never put fully and plainly to the Japanese people by their own leaders. Therefore, they prepared for war without realizing that they were preparing for aggression. They built the machinery of their own ruin and enslavement because they thought that preparedness was for security and not for aggression. Only the militarists knew better, and rejoiced.

Japan has prepared for this war, in one sense, for more than a thousand years. The military chauvinistic traditions of Japan have accustomed the people to thinking in terms of fighting. When a common Chinese becomes a soldier, he has had until recently a feeling that he has stepped down from his civilian status to a cruder, less worthy task; but when a Japanese worker or peasant becomes a soldier, he is apt to feel that he has been allowed to enter the gallant fighting company of knights and squires. To the Chinese, carrying weapons is a necessary disgrace; to the Japanese, it is an honor. When the Japanese think of war, they do not look upon it as an unnatural catastrophe brought about by the sinfulness and turbulence of mankind; instead, they consider it an exciting and honorable phase of their adventurous national life. The ancient teachings of the feudal codes, the ballads and legends of samurai and ronin, the archaic worship of the two-sworded hero -- these have been at work in Japanese thinking and feeling for centuries. All the various phases of Japanese temperament which have shown themselves in this war -- the sudden murderous attack, as at Pearl Harbor; the deceptive ruses, as in Malaya; the unflagging repetition of a bold tactical novelty, such as the "road blocks" used in Burma; the disregard of their own suffering, as shown on Guadalcanal and Attu -- were all written out plainly in the old Japanese stories, dramas, and military books. The Japanese have not changed in the least while fighting us. They are consummating a thousand years of preparation.

Japanese psychological preparation for this war is, accordingly, hundreds of years old. The attack on Pearl Harbor was the almost inevitable sequel of the campaigns of