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This article is written on Armistice Day. To say nothing of the troubles of the rest of the world, in China alone bombs and shells and the remorseless grind of economic ruin are operating actively in a million square miles of territory and are injuring a much wider range. One of the largest societies of the world, which had just completed the most promising decade in its modern life, is broken on the wheel of military imperialism. The evil and the suffering already wrought amount to an obscene grandeur.

Recent weeks have seen the capture of Hankow after a long, severe campaign marked by the lavish use of Japanese air and naval power in support of the army. Although the Chinese effort was in many ways creditable, it was also marked by gross ineptitude at several critical points. Now Manchang, Changsha, Shasi or even Ichang on the Yangtze, and possibly Sian are the immediate objects of scattering drives by the Japanese forces in Central China. It is presumed that the Chinese will defend central and western Hunan, western Hupoh, and Shensi, with considerable vigor; though at this moment the Japanese are pushing ahead rapidly south and west of Hankow. The sudden fall of Canton is not yet explicable. The circumstances certainly show poor staff work, but hardly treason. Naval pressure on the coast continues, and only small trickles of goods or mail can now enter China from the east except in the occupied territories. Air attacks have reached the immense range of Kunming (Yunnanfu), Chengtu, and Lanchow. The number of communities bombed must now be counted well into the thousands.

The Japanese military success is highly impressive, and must be not be underrated. Only tentacles of the Chinese railway system remain in the hands of the Chinese Government, and a large fraction of the trunk mileage is in active service for the military and economic benefit of Japan. The transfer of industrial and commercial resources, where such have not been destroyed, is enormous; and in any case only a minor fraction remains in the hands of "Free China". On the other hand, it is plain that the vast areas away from main lines of communication, even close to the main military centers of the occupied territory, are still independent. It can be said that Japan holds most of China, in a qualified sense; or that Chinese officials still rule most of it; or that neither side can make effective use of the country as a whole.

There are some hints of peace-talk in foreign circles and among Japanese civilian interests. Japan would of course like to cut the costs as soon as possible, but not to come short of full grasp of the prize. When I suggested to a Japanese friend that his desire for peace could readily become a reality if his country's armies were withdrawn, he replied: "But our generals think the Chinese armies would come right back into these territories." What can be said to such analysis of the problem?

The Japanese leaders seem to feel that their announced terms are really generous and easily to be accepted by right-minded Chinese: (1) abandon all elements of anti-Japanese policy (which seems in fact to mean the giving up of independent life and the full acceptance of Japanese management); (2) cooperate economically with Japan and Manchoukuo (which means turning over resources, tariffs, currency, banking, and communications to Japanese control for the primary reference to Japanese requirements); (3) sign the Anti-Comintern Pact (which means putting all foreign relations in Japanese hands, and justifies in advance the use of all Chinese resources against Russia).

It is not possible here to cite the military and journalistic statements which reveal the true temper of domination because they are not carefully ^{modified} ~~prepared~~ for foreign consumption. The declarations about garrisons and economic exploitation are sufficient support in words for the process which is everywhere observed in the occupied areas, and for which Manchoukuo is a partial precedent. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the Chinese leaders and all the articulate public that is free to speak is determined to resist, even if in despair. There is nothing to lose, and always the possibility of securing better terms than abject submission. Chinese morale seems to have stood well enough the first shock of the fall of Canton and Hankow, though the combination of the two, when the former was unexpected, was a severe test. But inevitably the course of military events has flattened the hopes of those in the occupied areas, and must have increasing effect in the west, if it continues on present lines.

The immediate outlook is something as follows: The dispersed Japanese campaigns in the west and southwest resemble the unthinking charges of a bull upon the enemy wherever he may be found. But they can, and presumably will in course of time, base their program upon defense of key cities, railway lines, coast and navigable rivers, confident that the Chinese national interests will not long be able to find the resources material and spiritual to take the offensive against superior equipment in the hands of armies consistently victorious. In its political aspects, the campaign may quickly take a new turn. A major one of the possibilities for which some preparation is apparent, is this: Japan will clothe the feeble, opium-smoking puppets as a Government of China, and dragoon them into signing a peace treaty which will give the forms of law to military conquest and economic domination. It will be possible even to burn with contempt the torn fragments of the Nine-Power Treaty. For Japan counts upon the isolationism of the United States, combined with American willingness to sell essential supplies ("even to the Devil if he pays cash"); upon British preoccupations, and the seeming weakness of Russia; and upon the outward cordiality of Comrades Mussolini and Hitler.

What of China? An optimistic view, still strongly held in the west and present elsewhere, believes that the Chinese campaign is just beginning, and that the far-extended Japanese forces will be increasingly troubled by attacks from all angles in mobile warfare, particularly upon the long lines of communications. A view of lesser optimism counts mainly upon guerilla enterprises and local organization in the occupied areas, to render the Japanese enterprise unprofitable and impossible of completion, expecting ultimately an economic and spiritual weakening on the Japanese side. A third view, ^{while} ~~in~~ despair-ly recognizing military failure, believes that the puppet regimes will be not merely inefficient, but actually disloyal servants, preserving by devious means a good deal that is Chinese, until a new era dawns in a Russian war or other Japanese crisis. Events thus far are dark.

The long interval from summer has seemed to direct this considerable disquisition entirely to military politics. It should be only the introduction to further writing on economic and spiritual problems, and perhaps upon international connections with the Sino-Japanese conflict, though the latter seem to be distinctly minor.