

NEW OUTLOOK

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The New State on the Left

By
Walker Matheson

A new nation of thirty million souls has just been created in the Orient, a feat marked by the usual apathy and lack of interest by the American people in the affairs of the East. The story of this creation is told by Walker Matheson, former editor of the North Manchuria Daily News.

HURLING HER defiance at the world—the League of Nations in general and the United States in particular—Japan boastfully announces she will recognize her illegitimate, war-born child, Manchukuo. The announcement by Count Yasuya Uchida, in the recent opening of the special session of the Imperial Diet in Tokio, came with no surprise; but Uchida's very plain defense of Japan's policy in Manchuria contained threats that scarcely can be called veiled.

Aiming squarely at Lord Lytton and his colleagues of the League of Nations commission to Manchuria to report on the Japanese invasion, and at Secretary of State Henry Stimson, whose prolific correspondence from Washington to Tokio during Japan's Manchurian and Shanghai "incidents" last spring brought sharp retorts from the Japanese, Foreign Minister Uchida's remarks were far from the customary national suavity attributed by the world to his countrymen.

Although Count Uchida did not mention either Secretary Stimson or the United States by name—which fact must certainly have caused the State Department to consider itself quite snubbed—he made it plain to the world that America was the dog in the Oriental manger and that, despite its growling, its bite was not to be feared. Also, because it has been generally understood for some time that Lord Lytton was going to make an unfavorable report to the League of Nations condemning Japan's Manchurian policy, Uchida expressed in a polite way that Japan regards the League as merely a European political group whose object is to prevent Japan from realizing what she considers her just hopes in her own part of the world. Japan, in short, is weary of the League, is on the verge of withdrawing and may, in all probability, form an Asiatic League with Tokio in the saddle.

Uchida did not in any way refer to present plans for an Oriental Monroe Doctrine, but he said he anticipated the time when Japan, Manchukuo and China, as three independent powers linked by cultural and racial affinities, would co-operate for the peace and prosperity of the Far East.



Count Uchida Kosai

In declaring that Japan would accord recognition to Manchukuo, Uchida explained that the step was the only one capable of establishing settled conditions. He defended Japan against charges of the

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United States and the League that the machinery of world peace had been disregarded, asserting that China's chaotic condition was beyond remedy by Kellogg pacts and other anti-war covenants. Indeed, Uchida said, the Kellogg pact did not prevent any power from taking whatever steps were deemed necessary to remove menaces to its territory, rights or interests.

The action of Japan, furthermore, is essentially the same as the action of other nations in similar circumstances. In other words, Japan does not regret her costly, albeit humiliating, invasion of Shanghai, and will repeat it if she chooses. Meanwhile, Japan considers China in chaos and trusts that some day it will become a nation capable of self-government and self-defense. But, if China does not become that shortly, Count Uchida virtually promises the world that Japan will annex several chunks from her neighbor, (a dozen other nations have been doing that for a century, and Japan wants to know why she shouldn't have her share.)



Denying that Japan's aim is to annex Manchukuo, Uchida told the Diet that the creation of the "puppet state" under Henry Pu-Yi, the former boy-emperor, was at the request of the Manchurians themselves. The statement is true. But to realize its basis, one must understand the history of Manchuria and the Manchus; and also understand the Japan-Manchuria trade situation, upon which both have profited enormously, despite China and the Chinese system of intrigue, graft and civil wars which have molested agriculture and industry in Manchuria to an appalling extent.

Manchuria, to the northeast of China proper, is a vastly rich territory, of 363,610 square miles with a population of 30,000,000. The eastern portion is intensely agricultural. About 20,000,000 acres are devoted to soya beans alone, which are a source of great revenue. Wheat, beans, millet and rice are the other crops, while there are rich deposits of coal, iron, lead, gold, silver and asbestos; 45,500,000 acres are timberland and extremely valuable.

These vast resources are tapped by the Trans-Siberian railway, running through Manchuria to Vladivostok; from Harbin, the railroad runs to Mukden, then branches to Peiping on the west, Port Arthur and Dairen on the south, and through Korea to Fusan on the southeast. Of the rail mileage, Japan controls more than 700 miles on the South Manchuria road, controls with Russia a large portion of the Chinese Eastern's 1,078 miles, and also has arrangements to operate considerable of the 1,800 miles of the Chinese Government and Provincial lines.

As Japan has no natural resources of her own, the nation is dependant on Manchuria to keep its factories humming and maintain the nation's credit, so that it was not surprising that, when Chinese soldiers allegedly tore up part of the railroad a year ago, Japanese soldiers seized Mukden. This act, petty as it may have seemed to the world in general, largely precipitated the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and later on drew several nations—including the United States—dangerously close to the brink of war during the Shanghai invasion by Japan.

It was Japan that started Manchuria on its modern path. Hardly ever more than a frontier territory of China, although the Manchus conquered China in 1644 and maintained a Manchu on the imperial throne until the revolution of 1911, Manchuria began its rise through the exploitation of its fabulous resources by Russia and Japan in the late nineteenth century. At that time China, politically weak then, as now, seemed near to disruption and the Great Powers were carving out "spheres of influence" which often were the prelude to the declaration of protectorates and ultimate annexation. Such seemed likely to be the fate of Manchuria, coveted for its resources and as the gateway into China proper.

To Russia, Manchuria was to be the eastern outpost to the empire, and to Japan, with an overflowing population, and with limited resources, Manchuria was of even more vital importance. A clash was inevitable between the

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two powers for this rich pawn. As everyone knows, Japan came out on top.

In possession of the arterial railway through South Manchuria and its seaward terminus in Dairen, Japan holds the chief key to the economic penetration of South Manchuria. It has become in effect, if not actually in name, Japan's "sphere of influence," in which Tokio repeatedly has claimed a privileged position—and seems ever ready to oppose the world to maintain it.

It was exactly a year ago that the Sino-Japanese-Manchurian conflict began to worry the world. Since then much blood has flowed, much worrying has been endured by the League and by Washington. Cities were razed; armies annihilated; warnings issued. And Japan continued to dare the world to stop her. The United States—with the sole exception of Secretary Stimson, apparently—was intent on such domestic problems as taxation, budget balancing, prohibition and the bonus, while Europe was struggling with such home problems as economic deflation, reparations and a limping arms conference.

Japan, meanwhile safe, was pouring thousands upon thousands of men into Manchuria, encroaching not only into China proper, but skirting so dangerously close to Russian territory that the Soviet bear also began to show his claws and an enormous conflagration seemed imminent. The United States and other powers signatory to the so-called peace treaties violated by Japan, taken by surprise, were unprepared to deal with the emergency. The situation explained their initial weakness and inability to form a quick united front for the protection of the treaties.

The situation showed Japan just what she wanted to know: that the peace pacts are mere scraps of paper. Therefore, on February 29, Japan took the preliminary steps of organizing the new State of Manchukuo. The next day, March 1, after impressive ceremonies, Lieutenant General Chang-ching-hui, chairman of the Northeast Administration Council at Mukden, published a manifesto in the name of the New State. Couched in classical Chinese, some passages of which are not easily interpreted, it substantially was to the following effect:

"Manchuria and Mongolia are situated on the frontiers, deferred in coming in touch with the tide of civilization. They are fertile in soil, with the people simple and industrious. As it was thrown open its resources came to be exploited, developing into a country rich in products.

"Since the Chinese revolution, warlords in Manchuria, taking advantage of civil war in China proper, usurped the government authority, appropriating Manchuria as if it were their own territory, and remained in power for nearly twenty years.

"Grasping, extravagant and even given to debauchery, these warlords never thought of the people's welfare, absorbed in furthering their selfish gain. Internally, they imposed extortionate taxes and waded in luxury, gratifying their carnal appetites. The currency system became torn up into shreds, withering industry."

Following this preamble of cause and effect, Foreign Minister Hsieh-chieh-shih of the new Manchukuo Government addressed a circular to the foreign ministers of seventeen countries whose consular representatives reside in Manchukuo. It read:

"Provinces of Fengtien, Kirin, Heilungkiang, and Jehol and the Harbin Special Administration District, and the Federation of Inner Mongolian Principalities have organized an independent State, and on March 1, 1932 detached themselves from the Chinese Republic and established Manchukuo.

"The old military clan under Chang-hsuehliang, who ruled the Northeastern provinces, was given to encompassing its selfish gain without regard for the people's welfare. It was corrupt to the core and bled the people white, precipitating them to the extremity of misery. Moreover, it kept up an anti-foreign front, tearing up its international relations.

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"In China proper there was no unified, stable government. The warlords fought for supremacy, engaging in domestic war attended with wanton destruction of life. Not a peaceful day passed.

"The people of Manchukuo, taking the opportunity of the collapse of the old military clan, have built up a new State among themselves. The Manchukuo Government will put forth its utmost effort to perfect its laws and other institutions, to guaranty the people's living, and to foster their security and welfare.

"As regards its international relations, it is decided to be guided by the following principles:

"1.—To deal with foreign countries in observance of good faith and friendship, and to aim at preserving and promoting international peace.

"2.—To respect international justice and fidelity in accordance with international law and decorum.

"3.—To take over all treaty obligations as assumed by the Chinese Republic as deemed proper in the light of international law and decorum, and to carry them out faithfully.

"4.—Not to trespass upon the acquired rights of foreigners possessed in the territory of Manchukuo, and to protect adequately their life and property.

"5.—To welcome all foreigners to Manchukuo, treating all races on an equal and fair footing.

"6.—To facilitate trade with the Powers and to contribute to the development of world economy.

"7.—Concerning economic activities of all foreigners, the principle of the Open Door is to be abided by."

In closing his statement, the Foreign Minister adds:

"I sincerely hope your Government will appreciate the spirit of the establishment of Manchukuo, as advanced above, and will formally open international relations."

Written by Japan? Undoubtedly. But it had been Japan's contention all along that conditions under the Chinese regime were disrupting her trade. It was to wipe out banditry that Japan launched her impressive "conquest" of Manchuria, and she so explained her "disagreement" with China to the world. On the declaration of independence of Manchukuo, and the placing on the "throne" of the former Boy Emperor Hsuantung, known as "Mr. Pu-Yi," Japan declared her policy toward Manchukuo in no uncertain words.



Quoting T. Chiba, Director of the Manchuria Agricultural Association of Dairen:

"In short, Japan's policy to China is that, however friendly Japan may remain to China, once any of Japan's important interests are transgressed upon, she will not stick at adopting some adequate measure to protect it. In particular, the safeguarding of Japan's special position in Manchuria is a constant policy common to all Ministries, dooming any ignoring of it to a speedy collapse under the pressure of united public opinion."

The above is Japan's official stand. The quotations, uttered five years ago, have remained Japan's basic policy. Yet, when Japan found Manchuria overrun by bandits and stuck to her pledges, the world was amazed

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at what commonly was believed a parallel to the German invasion of Belgium in 1914. Strangely, it was the murder of an obscure Japanese Army captain in the wilds of Manchuria that set off the conflagration, even as an assassination set all Europe ablaze in what turned out to be a world-wide war.

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However, whatever happened in Manchuria was bound to come; fortunately it went no further. At all events it liberated, outwardly at least, 30,000,000 people who for nearly twenty years had been suffering under almost unbelievable lawlessness. The fact cannot be overlooked, however, that changes have come over the body politic of Manchuria which no amount of theorizing can change. The bad days are gone. Manchuria has passed beyond control of the exploiters, reckless adventurers and ruthless plunderers. Manchuria belongs to the Manchurian people—the Manchus, the Hans, the Mongols, the Hulunbors, the Tartars: more than twenty races altogether—who are now resolving themselves into an independent nation, permanently carved from the chaotic mass of China proper.

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There were some good points in former regimes, Chang-Tso-lin, a peasant lad turned bandit, who rose to a mighty warlord with the power of an emperor, did much for Manchuria, even though his opium tariffs and wars were bad. His assassination, when he was at his prime of life, bode no good, however, for Manchuria. His rule passed on to the young Marshal, Chang Hsuehliang, who was a small factor in the government. Victim of a rotten system of intrigue, he could do nothing toward making those sweeping changes so necessary to the well-being of his vast domain. Although his intentions were of the best, he couldn't stem the tide of ruin: the resources of the people were squandered, their money debased, their rights callously ruined.

As to Mr. Henry Pu-Yi, who the world generally believes was put upon the throne of Manchukuo as a Japanese "puppet regent," he at least is dignified by an historic background, and so far has proved not to be the sort of jellyfish a puppet-throne usually bears. The official reports are to the effect that when he was first approached by the six representatives of the provinces and districts of the new-born Manchukuo on last March 1, he declined the honor, "doubting that he could really meet the people's expectations."

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"If I were to be the Sovereign Head of the New State, it would have to be for the welfare of the 30,000,000 people of the New State and not for personal interests," he is quoted in the *Manchuria Daily News*. "However, looking over the current situation in the New State, my meeting the people's expectations seems doubtful."

A second delegation waited on the Boy Emperor three days later, presenting a written nomination of his elevation to the Regency, asking him to accept. He signified his acceptance conditionally on two terms: (1)—that he officiate as Regent experimentally for one year and, (2)—that he be able to resign "in case the promulgation of the Constitution, the form of the new Government, the contents of the Constitution or any other phases of the new Government under the Regency do not come up to the expectations of the 30,000,000 people."

Called the "prize catch of Japanese intrigue," Mr. Pu-Yi once was the Emperor of 400,000,000 Chinese. Three hundred years ago his ancestors from what is now Manchukuo, invaded China, seized the Yellow Dragon throne at Peiping and ruled there in fabulous magnificence for 268 years. After a few generations the line began to go soft. In the end there was a revolution against the old Empress Dowager. That was in 1911. But in 1906 a son was born to Prince Chun Wen Tai Fang, younger brother of the Emperor Kwan Sung, whose son at the time was at the head of a wobbling China. The baby's name was Henry Pu-Yi. Four years later, the baby's uncle, the Emperor, died of poisoning and baby Pu-Yi was rushed to the palace and made emperor. In 1911 the baby emperor was thrust from his throne. By an agreement he was to remain with his court within the Forbidden City, and granted an annuity of \$4,000,000 a year. In 1917 a Manchu loyalist put the eleven-year-old boy back on the throne for a few days, but another revolt swept him off, and he was again a prisoner in the Forbidden City.

In 1924 troops broke into the palace and Henry Pu-Yi fled for his life to an asylum in the Japanese Embassy in Peking. He remained there a few months and then was spirited by the Japanese to Tientsin where, for eight years he lived with his wife, several concubines and tutors until he went to assume the throne of his ancestors in Changchun, Manchuria, last March.

Such is the brief history of the

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Regent of Manchukuo. On the face of the records, he does, indeed, appear to be the prize catch of Japan. But P. Ohara, writing in the *Manchuria Daily News* puts it rather sensibly when he says:

"It is ridiculous to say that this distinguished son of a dynasty which did such splendid work for China is a mere doll to dance at the bidding of Japan. We must consider that the young man has a personality of his own and full measure of self-respect. He is the last man to consider delivering his countrymen into the hands of an exploiting neighbor. Moreover, Mr. Pu-Yi was in the hands of his own talented advisers, members of the old Manchu nobility whose motives, while human enough in desiring to regain the old ascendancy, were not ignoble enough to consent to anything in the shape of racial slavery. When Manchuria went berserk they must have conceived the notion of restoring the original State. Logically, they put forward their candidate and, while at first intent upon a sovereignty, bowed their wills to changed conditions, and compromised upon a more republican form.

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"Most assuredly Japan took a hand in getting this nation together, and, if they did, the matter is all to their credit. It has been repeatedly announced that Japan had no territorial designs, that it was intended to let the Chinese people have their own government, and Mr. Pu-Yi was accepted as the representative of a very large body of opinion in his country. In agreeing to Mr. Pu-Yi the Japanese must have felt that in this young man, and the organization he headed, were truly popular expressions. If it were possible to hold a vote in Manchuria tomorrow, Mr. Pu-Yi, against any other candidate, conservative people are convinced, would head the polls with a great majority."

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In brief, the government is good and is there to stay; it would be criminal for any outside agency, such as the League, to dissolve it and try and create a different machine. The thinking people of Manchuria are congratulating themselves that at last they have an authoritative, responsible assembly.

Paramount to the interests of the United States and Europe in Japan's policy toward Manchukuo is, of course, the "Open Door" question. The fear is that this rich territory will be delivered into Japanese hands and that other nationals will be unable to carry on trade. Both the new Manchukuo officials and Japan made

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it clear at the outset that the Open Door will remain as wide open as ever. However, there is a well-defined feeling in Manchukuo—should the door be open to the unfriendly as well as the friendly; if an unrecognized party knocks for admission, should he be admitted without a pass? The question worries Manchukuo, especially since she knows that she is going to have difficulty getting recognized by some who pass in and out of the Open Door the most. Manchukuo wants the same rights as any other sovereign state to say with whom she will do business, and on what terms. There is equal opportunity for all—but no ironclad “rights.” Not even Japan is the guardian of Manchuria’s Open Door any longer, they say. Manchukuo is inviting brains, enthusiasm, capital for employment in a co-operative enterprise. But the yell for “rights” is going to be a different, a sad story.



Manchukuo up to now has understood the Open Door policy as a duty laid upon Japan, or extracted from her, to keep the territory of Manchuria open to the world and unrestricted and unfavored trade. But the Ministers in Hsinking, once announcing their independence, wanted to find out who else had Open Doors and they found that there weren’t any others—they never heard of one in the United States, France, Brazil, Siam or any place else. But Manchukuo can’t shut its door, under the Nine-Power treaty, and is willing to leave it open. There is, after all, enough for all if the alarmists cease howling and let the workers get their stride.

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