

## CHAPTER V

**W**E foreigners and our governments, some of them intentionally, and because of money interests they fear will suffer if the powers lose full control in China, have enabled this war and bloodshed to go on in China by misplaced sympathy and official acts. The real people in China, the great mass of them who are sickened by war and persecution, would have had their peace if foreign nations and peoples had not interfered in China.

In every way some foreign powers and peoples have hindered Japan as she went about the business of breaking the war lord power on the backs of the Chinese people, and of bringing that country to stability and peace under a good and conservative government. I have talked to many Chinese who frankly told me that it is their earnest wish to see set up in China a conservative government opposed to Communism, opposed to war lord alliance; and they are free to confess that the Chinese people have been unable to do this of their own accord because of these bandit chieftains who have risen to power through the conquest of provinces by their private armies.

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Only with the aid of Japan, they claim, can this be done as it was done in Manchuria. They point to Manchuria, now Manchoukuo, as an example of what Japan can do for China, or North China at least. The South of China on the whole even the Chinese of the better class despair of. The sole stability of South China, they admit, rests perhaps with Great Britain and her influence from Hong Kong. Red Russia will never dare go in there as long as Britain stands guard at the gates to Hong Kong. And the same, they often say, is true of the North. Japan alone can hold the war lords down, the Red Russia out.

The average man and woman believes that Manchuria has been sinned against, that Japan went in and gobbled the country. She went in there all right, but if you travel in Manchuria—Manchoukuo—you will find that Japan has so far played the role of Santa Claus there and that the Manchurians are very happy about it. Their old masters, Russia and China, were cruel taskmasters and they suffered under them. It was Japan that brought them peace and security, stability in government and business, built them railroads, cities and towns, hospitals and schools. Before Japan Manchuria was a pitiful sight in comparison to what she is today. And yet Manchuria could not have done this herself. Nor could she stand alone today under her own power. Both the Communists of Russia and the war lords of China would destroy

her. She would sink back into the sloth and decay she knew before Japan. And yet, despite the fact Japan has lifted Manchuria into a happy and contented state, our own government and other nations refuse to recognize her. Some day historians of the future will prove we were wrong. History is repeating itself in Asia and we are too stupid to know it. Or to see the handwriting on the wall.

By our policy, and the policy of other governments, largely influenced by Great Britain, who had the trade of the Orient all to herself before Japan came on the scene, we have upheld war lord rule, upheld graft and banditry, murder and intrigue in Manchuria and would uphold it in China today. If we did the right thing, we Americans would recognize the new government of Manchoukuo. By not recognizing it, by not giving it the encouragement it deserves, we are saying to the Manchurians:

“Abandon law and order, go back to war lord and bandit rule, don't try to ride on good railroads or have good train service, use candles instead of electric lights, why go to hospitals when you are ill, call in the medicine men and the witch craft folks; when epidemics threaten, don't insist on your families and their children being inoculated against disease; pay tribute to the gangster who comes around with the biggest gang, be a slave and a serf and live in mud huts. All these things Japan by setting up the Manchoukuo government has

done away with but you don't want to live like civilized people. True, Japan is progressive and has taken on the modern way of living with doctors and electric lights and trains and steam heat and things, modern housing, social service work and rot like that among the poor, but Japan is Japan and she is interfering with our friend John Bull's monopoly in business in China and it is better you Manchurians just forget you are human beings living in the twentieth century and go back and be a lot of half starved, unwashed coolies in mud huts and rags again.

"We would not care one way or another but if you Manchurians grow up and live as we do and get strong you are liable to be a bulwark or a first line of defense for the Japanese against Bolshevik Russia—anyway if you Oriental people want to be good friends with us western people, and this is Great Britain's idea really, not that we care particularly, but if you Oriental people want us to like you why just go on being coolies and let us civilized fellows exploit you just as much as we like—otherwise we won't be your friends."

There is in reality a feeling of keen resentment among many North Chinese and Manchurians over American and foreign attitude toward them in the relations of their countries with the Japanese. And even among the Chinese in North China and in territory held by Chiang Kai-shek and where Chiang Kai-shek can be said to have had something

of a hold on the imagination of his people, the American, or the foreigner at large, for that matter, is an intruding devil whom the Chinese do not like and whom some of them, so inclined, would as likely as not do away with when the opportunity should occur. The opportunity came at the time of the Boxer uprising and there have been many minor though bloody incidents since. In the Chinese armies this feeling is particularly rife. The average Chinese soldier is looking forward to the time when he can let loose and wipe out every "foreign devil" in China, the American among them.

It is an ironic thing to return from China, knowing the sentiments held by so many of them against our people and find in this country an almost maudlin sympathy for the Chinese. This is, of course, fostered and kept alive by propaganda and influence in general from many sources and the Chinese living in this country have aided it considerably but the Chinese born here, many of whom have never been to China, and know nothing of its life or their parent people, are really more patriotically Chinese than the Chinese of the homeland. I do not doubt that our Chinese born here are perfectly sincere and that they really believe, like the majority of our own people, that China is being invaded by a ruthless and ambitious conqueror. It is a pity they cannot look behind the scenes and know what is going on. Or

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follow the vast sums of money which they have sent to the war lords for relief and munitions and see what becomes of it and how it is spent.

What a terrific shock it would be to them to know that in more than one instance this money found its way to the pockets of the war lord-generals in whose care it was entrusted and never reached relief or munitions in any quantity. It has been common knowledge that hundreds of thousands of dollars have been poured into China's air corps and that when the war started there was comparatively little to show for it. Where did all this money go? The Chinese, with others, smile and shrug their shoulders and remark "squeeze" which is their word for our graft. The story is bantered laughingly in Shanghai bars and Peking cafes of twenty-five thousand dollars sent from an American Chinatown to Nanking for the purchase of an airplane and of only five thousand dollars of the original money reaching its final destination. That is one of the reasons why there were no planes to meet the Japanese until more hundreds of thousands of dollars were expended and when a new air corps was made ready there were no Chinese aviators to speak of to man the ships. Princeling sons and nephews of war lords had been given the glory jobs with fine uniforms in the China aviation corps but they had not taken the trouble of learning to fly, or if they did, coolie mechanics had

learned the mechanism of their machines and not they themselves.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek leaped to front page glory in America and elsewhere by taking command of the Nanking air forces. Foreign flyers manned the machines. But Madame countermanded orders as fast as she gave them and with the corps in an uproar the foreigners quit and the Russians came in. The Russian air corps had the world's goat. Not even Japan was sure what the Soviets could do in the air. They had made some splendid and spectacular long distance flights and observers from foreign nations crowded the lines to watch their first performances.

The first Japanese aviators who went up to meet these Russians must have done so with some idea they were being martyred for the empire. But they did not shirk their task. The first minutes in the air were a revelation. These Russians were not so good as the Americans or the English or the French soldiers of fortune who had been fighting with Chiang Kai-shek. Their planes appeared to be all right, but the aviators themselves did not think fast enough. They could not "dog fight." They could not twist and turn and tumble and spin on a dime; all right on long distance but not good on acrobatic work and if you are to live and kill up there in the clouds you have to know how to duck the other fellow's fire and strike back at him as quickly. As fast as the Russian planes came

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out the Japanese knocked them down. The Soviets, however, were gluttons for punishment. They sent more planes and more aviators but they kept from their own people the fact that they were being roughed badly by the Japanese. Other world powers knew it and marveled; at the same time, some of them heaved an intense sigh of relief, for, like the Chinese, the Russians had been bears on publicity and before their air force had been tested had bluffed and huffed and puffed to such an extent that they had their rivals in the jitters at what they would do in the sky when they once turned loose. It was no doubt a great relief to Japan to know that she was more than a match for the Soviet in the air. Within six months of the entrance of the Bolsheviks in the sky for China, the Nipponese had cleared the air lanes of them. Madame Chiang Kai-shek meanwhile was willing, and, at the same time, was forced to abandon her command of her husband's air fleet. There was no glory in bossing a losing job and besides the Bolsheviks refused to take orders from a lady. Madame stepped down and out just in time to save herself from the rap of commanding a failure.

I have been on a battlefield in China and watched the Japanese and Russians fight over my head. I have seen the Russians clumsily try to escape the Japanese net in the clouds. And I have watched the Soviet planes scream in flames to their destruction on the ground below. One fight, be-



tween three Japanese planes, and five Soviet planes, lasted little more than eight minutes. It was fierce and short. Three of the Soviets crashed. Their fellows raced away in flight, the three Japanese planes hot on their tails. The Japanese tell me they have the American automobile to thank for their success in this war both on land with the mechanized forces and in the air with their planes. In Tokyo are to be found the best taxi drivers and chaffeurs in the world. What will be perhaps the world's best flyers will come from these drivers. In China the Japanese have demonstrated they are no duds in the air. For years, since the world war, when a corps of them studied flying, and were slow to learn, the Japanese were given the reputation of being poor aviators. European army officers told me the Japanese never would learn to fly. But like everything else they have tackled the Nipponese have finally mastered the art and science of aviation. The Chinese are quick to learn and as quick to forget. The Japanese may be said to be slow to learn, but they never forget what they have learned. And it must be remembered that all this is something pretty new to them. It was less than eighty years ago that the Nipponese came out into the world and learned to play the westerner's game. They've done very nicely, thank you, for which, incidently, they have been given little credit and earned no end of animosity from their former teachers. Behind a lot of this propaganda and

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hatred for Japan is the jealousy of the nations that resented her learning their lessons too quickly.

Moscow knows that Japan has learned her secret, her weakness in the air and that her bluff is no longer as good as it used to be. There remains her gigantic Red Army about which much has been written and said, a highly publicised arm of her service and on which her sole hopes now rest. It will be recalled that in recounting the kidnaping of Chiang Kai-shek at Sian by Chinese Reds at the instigation of Russian Reds that I told how the Soviet at the time had given assurances of entering with China on a war against Japan if China would start it. There is no doubt that Russia intended at the time to keep her promise, but Stalin found, to his consternation, that not only did revolution threaten his dictatorship at home but that his widely heralded Red Army, its generals and officers could not be depended on. It became, almost overnight, an impossibility for Russia to keep her promise. Besides things had not turned out so well in Spain where Russia with her program of the Third Internationale for world revolution had been stalled if not stopped. Had the so-called Loyalists beaten Franco and established a Soviet after Stalin's liking, his rule at home would have been strengthened, but the reverses in Spain had weakened him in the eyes of his own commands and he entered upon a bloody purge which took the lives of some of his best army chiefs and the

lives of not only scores of his lesser officers but literally thousands of his men, soldiers and peasants alike. With blood and iron he held down the revolt at home and did not dare join China openly against Japan.

Japan, having discovered the Soviet's weakness in the air, began to feel out the vaunted Red Army on the Siberian-Manchoukuo-Korean borders. Manchoukuo had been reared as a buffer state against Russia. And Korea had long been an arm of defense in that direction. Now it remained to be seen of what mettle this Red Army consisted. For many months there had been shadow boxing on the banks of the Amur but it remained for the hill at Changkufeng to reveal the facts. While the World was told and generally believes that Russia won out in the fighting at Changkufeng, the facts are that the Japanese licked the Soviet to a standstill in these engagements while not actually taking the offensive. The Soviet was on the spot and Stalin had to save his face and while the Moscow propaganda mills lied to their own people and the world about what was going on, putting themselves in almost heroic light, the Nipponese were taking them gleefully for a real ride. Stalin, knowing his Red Army was being felt out by the Japanese, and that foreign nations, among them Germany and Italy, were watching the results, put the cream of his Red Army in front of the Japanese. They had orders that they must take

the disputed hill, from which they had been unceremoniously thrown off, at all costs and that the very honor of the Red Empire of the Proletariat, etc., etc., was at stake on the showing they would make. How many men they lost is a matter of conjecture and will never be known but it is certain that the Japanese waited and watched and let them have it when they saw the "whites of their eyes." They did not recover the hill. In fact they never got close enough to do it although the Japanese actually coaxed them to come on and take the steel. The steel is a measure of the private's ability to "take it." The Japanese proved themselves on the bayonet with the highly dramatized and publicized Big Swordsman of China but the Russian Reds on the few occasions in which they met the Nipponese bayonet to bayonet fell back in confusion. By stature, I have seen them, many of these Red soldiers are giants, well over six feet, raw and big boned, but they are clumsy, slow witted peasants, poor devils whose fathers and themselves have been the pawn of Czars and Dictators, for centuries. Towering over their Japanese foes in physical height, these Red soldiers of Stalin when they met them winced and quit, fell back and ran.

Stalin was laboring under no delusion on the front he was putting up with the Japanese on the Manchoukuo-Korea and Siberian borders. For months he had massed his best troops there and in

strategic places had built strong fortifications and pill boxes, but the Japanese had the unhappy faculty, for him, of shifting themselves about in such manner that his line of defense, or offense, whichever it might prove to be, was always left open. The outcome of the Changkufeng fighting was a bitter disillusion to Stalin and his Council and a real fright to them. Out of the raw boned material of the Russian peasantry and factory workers Stalin had hoped to rear a mighty army, not only in numbers, but in actual fighting ability. The execution of staff and line officers by the scores had taken what brains and ability his army had. These men could not think for themselves. The purge told and the Japanese knew it.

I have seen the Manchoukuon and Korean armies of Japan both in the bleak, stinging cold of winter and the blinding heat of summer: they are the finest body of fighting men to be found in the world. Their life is and has been a hard one. They have been drilled in a rigorous climate. And they are the flower of Nippon, boys of 18 and 20. In China the bulk of Japanese soldiers has been men militarily old, 35 and 40. The youth have been saved and trained for Russia, for the day when the Soviet must make accounting for its interference in China, for its attempt to strangle Japan there. Japan knows that so long as the Soviet exists so long will the Red menace hang over Asia like an ugly storm cloud. Russia fears that Japan,

knowing her weakness, may strike, when, she does not know, but you may be sure Russia would have struck first, while Japan was warring in China, if Russia felt she could do so successfully. It is the revolution that impends at home, the purge draining the life blood of that country's brain power, the failure of the Soviet air forces against the Japanese in China, the poor showing made by the Red Army against the Nipponese on the Siberian borders that ties the hands of Stalin and gives Japan the chance, unmolested or annoyed, to clean up a nasty mess in China, to restore there a rightist, conservative, anti-communist government, taking the place of the old war lord regime under which, since the revolution, China has suffered as keenly as she did under the corrupt empire.

Japan feels that she has this job ahead of her that must be done if she is to save not only herself but China and China she knows she must save from the chaos of Bolshevism if she is to have a great neighbor market to her south. That is why in Japan you will see unity that neither China nor Russia has. China has long proved she cannot stand upon her own feet. It is either a dominant Red Russia or a dominant capitalistic Japan. The Japanese are the bulwark, the stone wall against Bolshevism in Asia. The responsibility they have accepted, feeling it as their own. The Western nations, the Japanese believe, have failed in their mission in the Orient. They have bled China, not

resurrected her; they were content to allow the Chinaman to live in ignorance and poverty and to take the riches from his lands. The irony is that while these Western nations are opposed to Japan, feeling that Japan is to interfere with their long years of grab and spoil, they do not take into consideration the fact that if Japan should be defeated, the Soviet would close the door of China trade to all nations and keep this rich treasure house to herself under the red banners of Communism.