

CLASS OF 1923

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Thesis

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Submitted by

Commander H.R. Stark, U.S.N.

Naval War College
Newport, R. I.
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ITS RELATION TO WAR, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UNITED STATES POLICY IN THE PACIFIC.

In a paper of this type it would appear of little value to go back and make a careful analysis and study of our past policies, except perhaps in a very general way, to assist us in our study of cause and effect - what has led to the present, and again the bearing and interpretation of present conditions and facts as they exist today in relation to their effect on the future.

To start with, we may ask "Why does a government need a policy or policies." The answer is:- Government is a means to an end and that end is the defenses, self-preservation and advancement of the welfare of its people as a whole. To such an end nations, like individuals, must go out and buy and sell, TRADE with other nations, and in such international intercourse, just as in intercourse between individuals, many problems arise, and some rules for the game must be recognized. These rules we call laws, or policies.

Webster defines Policy as: "A definite course, or method adopted or followed by a government."

In a world of limited size and opportunity there must exist competition, and competition spells conflict, peaceful or otherwise, for the necessities and luxuries which ambitions, individuals and nations demand. Government therefore must see the light ahead, lay down some course, or courses, among the rocks and shoals of conflicting international ambitions whereby the ship of state may come safely through the dangers along the route, to the prosperity and happiness of its peoples.

With the internal policies of the State, this paper is concerned only to such an extent as they act, or bear, or lend to, our external or international policies. It is generally assumed that our internal policies are relatively well understood by the people at large who are or have been wont to look within rather than without. Nevertheless most of our external policies are but the outward expressions of our internal conditions.

For example, our present emigration policy has passed through

its various stages to its present, purely because of domestic conditions and may be expected to undergo further transformation as develop:- the labor situation; racial antagonism; questions of assimilation, etc., and what in these respects are best for the nation.

Likewise our domestic over-production in manufactured and raw materials finds its expression in external policies such as the most favored nation treaties, Open Door in China, etc.

The two, internal and external policies, are but parts of the whole, and a clear understanding of each in its relation to the other and to modern conditions is necessary to the adoption of national policies.

This clear understanding, in our case, is vital not only to our statesmen but to our people at large, because in a republic more than in any other form of government must policies (or the guiding principles to them) to have any strength and continuity, be firmly established in the hearts of the people. Without such support, as a general rule, a policy will not long live in a democratic government.

Granting such to be a fact, what is essential to life, endurance, and strength, of national policy among our people?

Making all due allowance for national self-conceit, and our own good opinion of our sense of fair play and good sportsmanship, it may be said with a pretty fair degree of accuracy that at present the American people as a whole will back only such propositions as may be called clean, open, fair, square, non-oppressive to others, non-militaristic, etc.,-perhaps best expressed in such a phrase as Lincoln's, "with malice towards none, but justice towards all."

Policies having such qualities and being evident and easy of understanding to the man in the street, and backed by him, may safely be announced by our government as a policy for the nation's guidance.

Foreign nations, if granting the above, may state that the reason for such self esteem on our part is our independence of position, our freedom from hostile neighbors, our being blessed with boundless resources, the full dinner pail, etc. Undoubtedly there is much in such contention, and the real test of our greatness will come, and is nearer year by year, to the time when, due to constantly increasing populations, closer proximity (because of better transportation facilities) of hungry rivals, over-production and keener competition, exhaustion of our raw materials, etc., non-employment and difficult living conditions set in on a large scale. In other words when, due to various causes now only dimly seen on the horizon, this nation begins to feel the pinch, as other nations have or are feeling it, will we then still continue to enunciate principles devoid of self-greed and purely self-interest, or will we, if we have the power, do, as others have done, - formulate policies, or action, directed only to our welfare, and so far as we can get away with it, regardless of our competitors; the sole criterion of our foreign policy then being "does it pay?"

Where other nations have sought to grab in China, we have asked only for equality of opportunity and China's integrity. Our statesmen know our people would support no other policy. The nation as a whole little understands the future vital part China must be to other parts of the earth, but the "open door" appeals to our sense of fair play, and our statesmen, at least the more far-seeing of them, as Hay, for example, seeing the time coming when, compared with which today's competition is only child's play, and that the pinch may come, realize, we must, at least have equal commercial opportunity to buy and sell in that great field. Hence our present policy is the only guide in sight, helpful to such equal opportunity, and that it has a highly moral flavor can only strengthen it among peoples (the man in the street) abroad as well as at home.

It does not take much of a student of history to know that friend of today may be enemy of tomorrow. Examples are many, even

in modern times. For the most part only self-interest and self-preservation guide nations to throw their support to each other. Changed conditions mean new international line-ups and new policies.

Washington in office said: "My policy has been, and will continue to be, while I have the honour to remain in the administration, to maintain friendly terms with, but be independent of, all the nations of the earth; to share in the broils of none; to fulfill our own engagements; to supply the wants and be carriers for them all; being thoroughly convinced that it is our policy and interest to do so." Note the "our interest to do so." Study of practically all our past history, but glaringly so in Washington's time, shows that our safety lay in keeping out of European quarrels, and that so long as European nations were lined up against each other, on the other side, with nearly a balance in power, our safety was not only secure, but in such a situation also lay our strength and freedom to develop unmolested and to pick up the plums along the way. Hence the formulation of our early policy of political aloofness.

Diametrically opposite to such aloofness, however, was the condition in 1917 when, regardless of other motives, self interest, and the danger of one great dominant power in Europe facing us unmolested and unchecked by any so-called balance of power, caused us to abandon our isolation and to plunge our national strength into the world struggle. Clearly new conditions warranted the departure.

Again Jefferson (incidentally a contemporary of Washington), in his inaugural address stated his foreign policy (quoting from Professor Dealey's lecture) "peace, commerce, honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none" yet when the Louisiana lands were ceded to France by Spain, Jefferson became seriously alarmed, he asserted that "the possession of New Orleans by France would make that power our natural enemy" if necessary to prevent this, he would favor, he said, the building up of a navy, and an alliance with Great Britain, so as to keep

France from regaining its hold on this continent. In other words, he realized that a new situation would necessitate a new policy".

Our Monroe Doctrine was undoubtedly dictated from the instinct of national self-preservation ; from the fear of having strong and powerful nations, as next door neighbors. It was to our advantage to be surrounded by weak neighbors, that we might develop our own life and strength in our own way, free from any forceful interference on this continent. Fortunately for us, in our early life, the European powers had too many troubles at home to challenge this doctrine. Our immunity from such a challenge lay in the fact, that, on the other side, there was too nearly a balance of power, for them to dare risk upsetting that balance, by major operations in this hemisphere. It is now accepted so far as territorial acquisition is concerned, but there is little doubt but that an unembarrassed Germany would have challenged it, and in this case, like, in the long run, most other policies would have survived or failed according to the amount of force back of it. In South America, in the future, our only concern, would seem to be, with economic competition, and of course the open door here as in China, seems the only logical course for us to pursue. In this we have been consistent.

Acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine by others is also a silent tribute to our fair play, as no one can claim that in, TRADE, which is the life blood of producing nations, we have, secretly as otherwise, sought special trade opportunity for ourselves in South America. Our Carribbean policy may be open to suspicion, but there seems to have been no other alternative, in the interest of general peace.

Could the Japanese in China, in what they like to term their, Asiatic Monroe Doctrine, act as we have, in keeping hands off Governments, and seeking no special economic privilege instead of, by every means possible, seeking to secure for themselves, and

themselves alone exclusive economic privileges, there might have been no wide suspicion of Japanese actions today, and no need for the "Washington Conference."

The Japanese idea of paramount interest in Eastern Asia has been a very different conception from our so called paramount interest in South America; or at least they have purposely, or for selfish reasons, so maintained - and selfish reasons, have their root in the purse of nations, as in individuals - TRADE - outlet for home production. ^{Brook} Adams says: - "The chief motive of human action is the instinct of self preservation, and that in the struggle for life, men follow the lines of least resistance. Since few communities have ever been self-sufficing, men from the outset have been constrained to supply their necessities from without, either by purchase or by force, and that to trade or to rob, they have been obliged to travel. In traveling animals follow the easiest paths, which we call roads, and where roads have converged men have met and markets have grown up. As energy gathers volume, highways stretch across continents, and the states which they traverse acquire a common interest in defending the traffic which feeds their markets and SUPPORTS their population. Thus economic systems are generated comprising several states, and where two or more such systems connect the same termini, war is apt to follow, for war is the sharpest form of economic competition."

"Moralists may theorize as they will, but the displacement of energy and wealth, which attends the worlds central market, or in other words the seat of empire, involves the life and property of millions of human beings, and men have never yet learned to surrender their possessions by appeals to abstract principles."

The foregoing quotation seems to apply today more than ever before. Pressed home on us by the world war, the present mess in the Near East, the unstable equilibrium in the Far East resulting in the demand for the Washington Conference, which stripped of all else sprung from economic considerations, and only incidentally the sav-

ing of some millions on battleships. Fundamentally in the far Eastern situation, was the necessity of our breaking up a possible coalition of England and Japan against us, thus keeping our competitors divided and not united against us in future situations in China; and endeavoring to secure for ourselves equality of economic opportunity, the reassertion of the "Open Door". For in China, trade routes converge. It is the Great Termini of economic strivings of nations of the present and at least of the near future. In this age of predominance of metals and fuel in national wealth, China offers the greatest reservoir for the future. These fields of metals, and fuel, being in close proximity to each other, and having available one of, if not the greatest, supply of labor in the world - it is evident that their control, or even partial monopoly by any one power would menace our future prosperity, and the peace of the world.

Hence our open door principle, and there can be no doubt that England's ready acceptance, and willingness to annul her Japanese alliance, and follow our lead for the Open Door, is actuated by the same instinct for self preservation, and future markets as actuate us. A common economic interest, a like perception of the Japanese menace to our common interest, has caused the present American-British line up.

And again we are fortunate, if as in our early days we are successful in having our competitors (England and Japan) divided, instead of united against us -- therein lies our safety--.

Again in what is today known as world opinion, a force that is more real than ever before, our present stand - regardless of the deepest motives actuating it is one appealing to the man in the street in any nation of the "live, and let live idea" and most governments of today must well heed the opinion of the man in the street. Support at home and abroad, among fair minded enlightened peoples, and particularly, the English speaking races, may therefore be expected, of a policy having this feature.

Japans loss of England as an ally is something her statesmen have endeavored to avoid. She realized that with this alliance

in effect, England often found her hands tied, so far as joining other nations in endeavoring to curb Japans aggressions in China. If the Washington treaties become a fact, Japan must proceed with more caution - and with far less of a free hand in the East. She can not stand isolation. Even so, however, the danger lies in the fact that she is on the spot; a strategic advantage of very great economic value, and furthermore we have no reason to believe that she has under gone change over night, or that there will be material lessening of her unscrupulous methods of the past - so far as she may get by.

Japans military controlling class have been largely trained by German methods. And we have no reason to believe that she is other than a desciple of the creed that no reliance can be placed on treaties, that in the last analysis they are scraps of paper destined for the waste paper basket; moreover European nations' morality give her good ground for such belief.

In the last analysis the only safe course, is, to be masters in our own house, and to put our greatest trust in ourselves, and that in the long run right and fair play must prevail - and if necessary, we must be prepared to fight for their prevailance. The two sayings "Thrice is he armed that has his quarrel just" and "Success or failure of state policy is dependent upon the amount of armed force behind it" should be two great guiding principles of our national life.-

The nations today, in a world of turmoil and uncertainty, grappling with unprecedented financial, economic and social difficulties, in some cases struggling for life, in others in the hands of despots, have need more than ever before for a clear light ahead. Amidst the general confusion, it is not for us to stay apart, but to "let our light so shine" that it may pave the way to a better world understanding with less of greed and more of giving; less of suspicion and secret dealings, and more of trust and full, and frank, and manly discussion; less of camouflage and more of directness.

In a very general way we have pointed out that economic considerations are the basis of national policies - and that China is the future centre of economic development, and hence the intensive point of international strivings. Here, then, is at least one of our opportunities to lead in international high mindedness, and equal opportunity.

In this connection a fair deal to the Chinese is essential - for moral as well as material reasons. There can be no doubt that the day will come, distant though it may be, when the great Chinese mass will awaken to political cohesion and solidarity, and her economic development must then be very intense.

In the gradual development of China, natives cannot be discounted in the same way as were the American Indians. Instead of gradual effacement, there will be gradual strength, until China becomes mistress in her own house. During that process, there will come to Chinese leaders a clear perception as to who in the long run, can be trusted and who cannot, whose motives are fair and whose are not,

Along our international life, we will be judged not so much by, what we say, as by, what we do, and our success will depend on our fairness, firmness, and resolution in right action.

This necessitates not only honesty in trade relations but regard for Chinese national life, religion, customs and traditions. Only thus may we, in time to come, gain the confidence of the Chinese people, and on our nationals in China, to a large degree, rests this responsibility.

Mr. Hornbeck stated in his lecture, "China cannot be driven, she must be led." The following are quoted from Reinsch "the repeated conquests of China by foreign invaders have left little or no impression on her ancient morality and polity." "The chief characteristic of Chinese society and the essence of Chinese morality is reverence for the past."

"Lack of security is the chief impediment to the development of foreign trade in China. The British China Association assigns the slow progress in the development of foreign trade in China to the following causes:- The entire absence of good faith on the part of China in the matter of treaty obligations; the absence of security for the investment of foreign capital in China anywhere outside the treaty ports; and the general want of knowledge regarding Chinese affairs." "The Chinese are willing to follow the lead of the strongest. They are willing to reform their institutions and methods if a strong nation will aid them in meeting the consequences."

Russia as one of the most aggressive powers against China has temporarily, at least, been eliminated. Japan is perhaps the nation now resorting to the strongest methods, as well as the most sordid to exploit China, and yet it can hardly be said China is willing to follow her lead. The converse would seem to be near the truth.

Buell in his book on "The Washington Conference" in the opening chapters paints a picture of Japan in her relation to China that is very illuminating as to the methods of Japan statesmen and their policies toward China, their mis-statement of facts to their own people, the military control of their government in its relation to Japanese policies, which can leave one in little doubt as to the dangers lurking in the Japanese imperialistic regime, similar in many respects to that obtaining in Germany in 1914. Japan at Washington made many fair statements; it remains to be seen how far her actions will bear out her words.

England and America, though competitors in many fields, can so far as China is concerned well pull together to insure to China a square deal, unimpaired nationality, and to the world the policy of the "Open door". In the long run, as before stated, there can be little doubt but that right must prevail - and on the surface at least - the Washington conference was a great moral victory for the "Open Door".

In addition the Washington Conference seems to forecast our more intimate association with the family of nations; our closer relations with Great Britain from all angles, and, temporarily at least, an easing of Japanese-American relations. Also China must realize the truth of the old saying that "God helps them who help themselves."

International law, the play of nations against each other, may be of much assistance to China, but primarily she must adopt western methods to save herself. There can be little doubt but that she must realize that the American people would not, at present, go to war for her sake, on any grounds. China might well take to heart Linion's "A house divided against itself cannot stand" and apply it to her national policy.

Though momentous questions were at issue at the Washington Conference, our Public has little understanding on Asiatic affairs, and relatively small interest. To create a vital force in the U.S. in international affairs, much education of our people is necessary. The lone fact that nearly half the population of the earth resides in countries bordering in the Pacific Ocean presages the great part predominance in that ocean must play in the war to come, and our vital interest therein.

Trade centres have been touched upon, now as regards the lanes leading to them:-we find ourselves washed by both oceans, Dealey calls us a world island, and this perhaps well pictures our geographical trade position.

Situated between Europe and Asia, trade routes converging from both directions, we occupy the most favorable trade location on the globe. We serve both ends, and this central position, in centuries to come, will undoubtedly bring forth problems of a magnitude, we cannot conceive at the present day.

South America also, lacking in steel must one day obtain it from the cheapest market-granted in the future to be China. Thus again economic control of this source of supply will play a dominant part in South American affairs, and control of this trade route and the Panama Canal will naturally be allied with it.

For the Pacific trade routes, Panama, Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, are important points for coaling stations, and stop-over ports, and in case of war they are ^{strategically} vital to control of the Western Pacific-all of the foregoing points to possible collision along the road.

We have only to look at the history of Great Britain. Economic competition in world trade brought it to the final test of war with its world competitors - the Dutch, Spanish, French, and German, one after another have succumbed to the British in trade, where war was the final arbiter.

History shows that trade purses at stake, have been the principal cause of war; and that "war is a means to an end, nothing more", interests challenged sustained by force, policy carried on by another means, living or dying according, as to whether or not, force triumphs or fails against the force opposed in the hands of your competitor.

There can be little doubt, that, as it has been in the past, so will it be in the future, and that when great national interests are at stake, men will fight to defend them. How does this affect us.

Washington said "It is to be regretted, I confess, that Democratical states must always feel before they can see; it is that which makes their government slow."

Since policies in democratic states must have the support of the man in the street, it is readily seen that the ablest of our statesmen have a difficult problem on their hands on the international chess board. Neglect to think about war in times of peace is one of the cardinal sins of our nation; to ignore the future and think only of the present is one of our greatest perils.

The Japanese have a highly centralized military government where according to Buel "the army and navy virtually control the foreign policy of Japan; it concerns vitally the peace of the world." Dealy says "In a highly centralized military government, the public opinion of the masses is relatively unimportant. Leadership and the opinion in the dominant classes are the important factors in the decisions. But in a democracy, policies in the long run must meet with general approbation."

Upton and Murray run in parallel lines of thought that the

greater mass of people have neither the time nor the inclination to study the requirements of the military situation; that military resources are likely to be mistaken for military strength, and that long immunity from foreign invasion breeds in the people the most dangerous feeling under modern conditions, - that war does not concern them in theory or practice.

The foregoing goes to show the danger in the "laissez faire" attitude that has previously characterized our people, the necessity for their education and understanding of national aims and policies, and increasingly so, as time goes on. The world war has done much to bring the "resultant thought wave" of the nation out of its rut.

It has mattered little heretofore, to the farmer, for example in the great middle west, where his products went, so long as there was sale for them at a good profit. It may, or it may not, have occurred to him that it was up to the so called capitalists to see that there were markets available; but what he must be brought to realize is that, he, along with the so called money interests, and all others, whose influence extends to foreign affairs and policies, are only links of the chain of our national life. A weak link may cause the whole to break. Interdependence is complete, we must ultimately all go up or go down together, therefore, the nation as a whole must be educated to the simple fundamental of our needs and their relation to our foreign policies. Hand in hand with this must go the realization of the necessity for their support, by force if necessary, in order that the man in the street, the financier, the local politician, the statesman, the army and navy may all realize our purpose, where our inter-national life is concerned, and this regardless of political party, or affiliation - which should stop at the coast line.

We must realize Roosevelt's- "Peace treaties and arbitration treaties unbacked by force are not merely useless but mischievous in any serious crisis. Mere treaties, mere bits of paper, with

names signed to them, have proved utterly worthless for the protection of nations, and when they are the only alternatives, it is not only right but necessary that each nation should arm itself so as to be able to cope with any possible foe. The effective workers for peace were men like Stein, Cavour and Lincoln, that is men who dreamed great dreams, but who also were pre-eminently men of action, who stood for right, and who knew that right would fail unless might was put behind it"---and so all great practical men have thought; also Lloyd George's "the menace to peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force and controlled wholly by their will, and not by the will of the people". In the conflicting problems of the far East, we have one of the last survivors of Autocratic governments - Japan -.

Our statesmen therefore must study the causes that go to make peace and war, seeing that all history shows a procession of peace, war, peace, following each other, terminating and beginning in each other, and it is only the nations successful in war, who have come through the fire and sword, that count today at the international table.

Education of our people, clear, easily understood statements of the principles we intend to live by, freedom from ambiguity, the full realization that the national defense is one of the primary duties of the statesman, that "Thrice armed is he whose quarrel is just", to look before you leap, and Napoleons "the moral is to the physical as three to one" are all good land marks along the way. This is not only for the statesman on the platform, but for our schools, colleges, and press to take part in a campaign which should ever seek to enlighten and explain.

There is hardly a first class metropolitan newspaper, or an important college in Europe, that does not have a student of world affairs with expert knowledge of war and strategy on it. There is hardly one in the United States that does.

What does it mean not only to the so called man in the street but to the average business man, or college graduate, or congressman, to be told he is paying taxes for defenses of Guam. Most probably nil, except that he would probably buck it. If however he had been brought to understand that an expenditure equivalent to the cost of a battleship for defenses in Guam, might and probably would in, the case of war with Japan, be worth the price of a squadron or many squadrons of battleships in time of war, let alone the cost in blood, the chances are the "Status Quo" would not be warning us today in the Pacific.

It is not enough for us naval officers to sit by lamenting these facts. We must endeavor to do our part in correcting them.

If national defense rests on national intelligence, it is clearly up to us not only to take an academic interest in world affairs, but to back up our requests for millions for the navy by setting forth convincing proof of the necessity of the measures we seek.

To do this, our estimate of the situation, the steps leading to our conclusions, must all be logical, clear, and obviously to the nations welfare. The public must be made to understand that our requests are impartial, uninfluenced by such things as elections, tenure of office, or self greed.

If there is the will on our part, in good faith, to put the international situation, as regards national defense, in its true light before our government and our people; if we train observers and get sound data along these lines; there is little doubt but that the proper channels of communication to congress and the public may be found - and such are certainly not the archives of the Office of Naval Intelligence.

As a class, naval officers have the greatest opportunity of any class of citizens for intelligent study of world conditions. Surely along with that opportunity goes the responsibility of presenting these conditions in a fair and open way to the public. If

civilians look on us as a body merely to ask for money for ships and then to fight ships;- whose fault is it. Do we not, for the most part confine our activities almost exclusively to our jobs on board ship, remaining aloof from the very people we criticize for not seeing the world through our eyes. If this be true, it is but natural that our criticism so often acts as a boomerang to the navy and the country. We must not remain apart from the whole, but a part of the whole, and a very vital part at that if we are to guide the nation in the matter of self-defense.

So far as our conclusions are unselfish and sound, formulated solely for the public good, so far will we command public confidence and attain the necessary equipment to back successfully, and by force if necessary, the policies of our government;- and this being able to back successfully our country's aims, is the primary reason for our existence.

Summarizing the foregoing, effort has been made to show that:-

Nations having of necessity to trade with each other, adopt treaties, agreements, or policies, for their inter-relationship. Such policies are, in the main, actuated by self interest and self preservation, and to stand the test of time, must be backed by public opinion and force. To fail, in times of peace, to educate and prepare public opinion, and the necessary force to carry out policies, is to invite destruction of every right and of every policy, that may be challenged by a rival state. The Washington Conference, like other treaties, while temporarily relieving tension, in certain quarters, is no permanent guarantee against war from those quarters. It does, perhaps, presage our more intimate participation in the family of nations, and shows that our present open door stand in far Eastern questions is one which may command general approval of an increasingly important world opinion. Dangers lies in autocratic government dominated by a military clique, and in no way responsible to the so called man in the street; also in possible coalitions of our competitors against us. Safety lies now, as in the past, in keeping our competitors divided, and as stated by Brook Adams "in being able to concen-

trate superior force at the point where rival trade routes converge" for it is there, in the future as in the past, that war is most likely to occur, and war is the sharpest form of economic competition, policy under another guise. Finally, we must be true to fair play, and place our greatest trust and faith in ourselves, as Roosevelt has said "fear God and do your own part".

(HRS/CAJ, 26 Aug. 1922)