

# The Chosen Enemy

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*This essay is taken from the book "The Tragic Fallacy" by Mauritz Hallgren, published in 1937 by Harpers, New York. The author is a well-known American writer and authority on world affairs, at various times connected with the Associated Press and the United Press as editor and foreign correspondent. He was formerly an associate editor of The Nation, New York and of the Baltimore Sun. Among his published books are: Seeds of Revolt, The Gay Reformer and The Tragic Fallacy.—Editorial Note*

THE "open door" and the political and territorial integrity of China have for decades been the subject of earnest solicitude on the part of American diplomacy. Stripped of its self-righteous dress, the Far Eastern policy of the United States stands revealed as being in fact a policy that looks toward the preservation, for future American exploitation, of the vast and supposedly lucrative Chinese market. It is here that American imperialism stands shoulder to shoulder with that sense of moral goodness which in recent years has become characteristic of the American people. It is here that the struggle for markets finds common ground with the American belief that the country will go to war only for justice and right.

For the American people have come to believe that the "open door" is truly an impartial and almost a holy principle, and to regard themselves, with the help of the deliberate propaganda of American diplomacy and the unconscious propaganda of American missionaries, as the special friends of the Chinese.

Is it, then, with an eye to the defense of these "just rights" in China that the United States is so assiduously girding for war? No one can be sure, for on this point the government itself is silent. But American militarism is not so timorous—or diplomatic. Whatever their reasons may be, responsible officers of the government, both military and civilian, have plainly indicated that Japan is the chosen foe. More than that, they do not expect the Japanese to cross the Pacific ocean to attack the United States, though occasionally a government official may drop a hint to that effect with a view to stimulating popular interest in the "national defense." They expect the United States to cross the Pacific to make war upon Japan.

It would be childish to pretend that this is not so. It would be silly to assert that Japan is merely a con-

venient bugaboo for the American admirals, something with which to frighten Congress into pouring more funds into the navy. For there is at hand an abundance of concrete evidence to show that those who have assumed the responsibility for the "defense" policy of the United States are shaping that policy so as to provide for a war against Japan in Japanese waters and perhaps upon Japanese soil.

TO begin at the weakest point, it may be noted that whenever there is a spy scare, or whenever the militarists and nationalists seek to work up a war scare for propaganda purposes, it is always Japan that is concerned, always a Japanese agent who is involved. One never hears of British or German or

Italian or Russian reservists in the United States being secretly armed and drilled, ready to spring at the throat of the American government the moment their own government gives the word. But it is repeatedly stated upon solemn official authority that there exists in this country an army of at least 25,000 Japanese reservists "capable of performing military service for their country," and it is likewise stated that Japan has off the California coast a fleet of 150 vessels, ostensibly fishing boats, but actually fitted out for naval service. These cock-and-bull stories are never supported by as much as a single scrap of verifiable evidence. Yet they are given currency through official statements uttered in congressional committees, or on the floor of Congress, and they are never challenged, criticized, or

denounced by the President, the State Department, the War Department, or the Navy Department.

When the Senate two years ago was considering a bill to increase the enlisted strength of the army by 40 per cent—that is, from 118,000 men to 165,000—the likelihood of war with Japan was the argument that clinched the case for the militarists. For five hours



the Senate debated the question and throughout this period Japan was the main, if not the sole, subject under discussion. It must follow from this debate that it was the intent of Congress, in approving this substantial increase in the army, the first in a number of years, that the increase should be regarded as a preparedness measure directed specifically against Japan. Again, it is worth noting, there was no word from the State Department or the White House counselling Congress against taking this course, nothing to indicate that the President and his Secretary of State were not in agreement with the action taken.

ON February 10, 1936, Mr. Pittman, the chairman of the all-important Senate foreign relations committee, and as such the congressional spokesman for the Roosevelt administration in the field of foreign policy, delivered on the floor of the Senate a blistering attack upon Japan and its policies. He declared that Japan had violated various of its treaty obligations, which was, of course, true. He asserted that, despite this and despite other Japanese activities, "Congress will not be bulldozed into abandonment of our national defense, the protection of our legitimate foreign trade, or our commerce with China." He then said, which was also true, that "the United States navy is not as strong as the Japanese navy in any operations that might take place in the far Pacific." He summed up his argument with the statement that, since American citizens "apparently" cannot look to treaties for protection of their interests in the Far East, "there is only one answer, and that is dominating naval and air forces." Here, in a word, was the chairman of the foreign relations committee of the Senate, an officer of the government who is looked upon abroad as a person of wide prestige and influence, calling upon his government to prepare actively for war against Japan in Japanese waters.

Nor was Senator Pittman challenged or criticized by the President or the Secretary of State. The State Department was given an opportunity to pass judgment upon the Pittman speech before it was delivered. Department officials had been provided with a copy several days in advance. When the question was raised as to why they did not endeavor to persuade Senator Pittman to change his approach and modify his tone, it was explained that copies of the speech had already gone out to the press and that there was no way of recalling them. And so, because of this minor technical difficulty, the State Department felt that there was no way in which it could prevent Senator Pittman from delivering what was tantamount to a notice to the Japanese that if they did not mend their ways to suit America, the American government would have no alternative but to prepare for war with Japan. President Roosevelt is the leader of his party in Congress. Senator Pittman is a member of that party; in fact, he is the President's lieutenant in

charge of foreign relations in Congress. A word from the President would have been enough to silence the Senator if the former did not approve of the latter's views. But that word was never uttered. Perhaps the President did not know the Senator was to make this speech. Considering the vital importance of the subject of the speech, however, that interpretation simply cannot be credited.

The Washington correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune* a few days later reported:

The preponderance of editorial opinion this week suggested the idea that the Senator himself was recklessly brandishing weapons in an atmosphere more appropriate to the untamed scenes of his youth than to the most responsible post connected with American foreign policy excepting only the White House and the office of the Secretary of State. But Washington itself was not inclined to dismiss Senator Pittman's speech as that of an irresponsible mischief maker or play boy on the international scene . . . The real index of the significance behind (the speech) is that State Department officials not only refrained from disavowing the speech—they did not even frown. As a matter of fact, the State Department, although its tutored diplomats are accustomed to look with horror on saber rattling, was quite satisfied. . . . Senator Pittman's speech . . . reflected the trouble existent in the Far East, where the undetermined administrative course of the United States in upholding the American policies in the face of Japanese encroachment in China get compensatory definiteness in military preparation. It was against this background that administration officials were privately saying that Senator Pittman spoke no more than the truth . . .

IT is not, however, in the apprehension of spies, in the alarmed outcries of California Congressmen, or even in the utterances of a Pittman that the real evidence of the preparations for war with Japan is to be found. This evidence lies rather in the attitude and activities of the army and navy. Some of the officers in the fighting services may hesitate to speak publicly of Japan as the chosen enemy. Others may refer only to an "an Asiatic power," though it is obvious that Japan is the only such power they can possibly mean. But still others have pointedly declared that "our most dangerous enemy is Japan." The admirals in particular have been amazingly frank in discussing their plans for a naval war in the western Pacific. The Secretary of the Navy himself not only has publicly accused Japan of breaking faith with the other signatories of the naval treaties, but has made little effort to conceal the fact that American naval activities are directed against that country. In a press interview he declared that he was opposed to a suggested plan to station an American squadron in European waters because "I don't think we ought to

get mixed up in complicated European matters." But apparently he had no fear of getting mixed up in Asian affairs, for at the same time he announced that in the following summer the fleet would engage in extensive maneuvers off Hawaii and in the northern Pacific, significantly close to Japanese territorial waters.

Since the close of the European war the American battle fleet has been permanently stationed in the Pacific. In the last few years the scouting fleet has also been kept there. Plainly, therefore, the American admiralty believes that the danger of war is greater on that side than on the Atlantic side. This makes little sense from the technical standpoint. Britain's fleet is larger than Japan's. Britain is only 3,000 miles away, while Japan is 7,000 miles distant. Britain is an ancient commercial rival; its interests conflict with America's interests at many points. There is no real commercial rivalry between Japan and the United States, while the point at which their imperialist interests conflict in any genuine sense are very few indeed. The broad but largely mythical Chinese market is perhaps the only one. It would seem, then, the naval strategists would regard the greater threat to American interests as lying in the Atlantic.

Their confidence in leaving the waters of the Atlantic technically unguarded would seem to be (as, in fact, it is) a denial of the most vital of Mahan's principles. It is possible to justify this situation on only one of two grounds. Either the American government has some secret understanding with the British regarding maritime interests in that area, which is an unacceptable supposition; or else the admirals have sense enough to comprehend the obvious—that is, that the British, because of their political and strategic position, would never risk sending their fleet on a hostile mission into American waters. But the same reasoning applies with double force to the Japanese. If the Atlantic seaboard is secure against attack, as the admirals concede by their actions, then the Pacific seaboard is doubly so, for there the hypothetical danger is more than twice as far away. In that case, why keep the fleet in the Pacific?

**T**HE answer is plain enough. It is in this theater that the American navy expects to go to war. The Assistant Secretary of the Navy has reported that not only will the fleet remain "based on the Pacific," but "the fleet problem is planned for the Pacific." The navy's strategic and tactical training has been confined to that ocean for the last several years. As Secretary Swanson has explained: "We simply want to get well acquainted with those waters." This acquaintanceship has by now become very broad indeed. In 1933 the navy's war games were staged in the area lying between Hawaii and California. In 1935 they extended from Hawaii northward—and, incidentally, a few months later the Japanese fleet held its own games in the northern Pacific and only a few hundred miles west of the area in which the American maneuvers had taken place. In 1936 the games were shifted to waters south and west—how

far west remains a naval secret—of the Hawaiian Islands and extended southeast to the Panama Canal. For 1937, it has been announced, the fleet will again go somewhere into the northern Pacific to work out its "defensive" problems.

The navy's knowledge of this vast theater is being augmented in other ways as well. For instance, every foot of the terrain and waters along the Alaskan coast, and of the Aleutian Islands, which stretch out into the Pacific and almost touch the continent of Asia, is being painstakingly chartered. The entire territory is being photographed by specially equipped airplanes, so that, besides the customary navigation charts, "pictorial charts" will also be available. This survey was started some years ago and, at last report, had not yet been completed. Submarines and naval planes have likewise been sent into that neighborhood in quest of information, the airplanes to test flying conditions in what is one of the stormiest and foggiest sections of the world. In addition, a radio station and weather observation has been set up to gather data regarding meteorological conditions. It was reported some time ago that this would probably be followed by the establishment of an aerological station "somewhere in the middle of the Aleutian chain," which would serve the navy as well as commercial mariners and aviators.

More active and more warlike preparations are being undertaken by the navy at Pearl Harbor, in Hawaii. The admirals plan to make the naval base there altogether as efficient and invulnerable as that which the British have at Singapore. Millions of dollars have already been spent in developing Pearl Harbor and millions more have been appropriated for that purpose. At a cost of about \$8,000,000 the harbor itself is being dredged to make room for the entire fleet. About \$4,000,000 is being spent on a submarine base. And something like \$10,000,000 is to go into a floating dry-dock, of a type said to be possessed by no other naval power. When the point was raised in a congressional committee that it might be cheaper to have a "graving" dock instead, Assistant Secretary Roosevelt admitted that that was so, but declared that then "we would not have what we want in the way of a movable dry-dock." In other words, the navy, which under the naval treaties has not been permitted to develop a base in the Philippines or on Guam, wants to have something in the way of a repair base that it can take along when it moves into action in the western Pacific. Something more than \$50,000,000 (\$38,145,3554.70 as of June 30, 1935) has been spent in the reconditioning of Pearl Harbor in the last few years. This compares with the \$75,000,000 the British are reported to have spent on Singapore, but the above figures do not include aviation and military expenditures, or the fortifications, which bring the cost of getting Pearl Harbor ready for the coming war to a figure considerably in excess of \$75,000,000.

It is upon this base that the "fleet problem" turns. Here the war games have centered. And here num-

erous intricate aviation tests have been conducted. For instance, in January, 1934, six navy planes were reported to have made "a record formation flight from San Francisco to Pearl Harbor." The flight, covering two thousand miles, took twenty-six hours, but the commanding officer said that his men could have gone on to Midway Island "if necessary." Some months later forty-three naval patrol planes did fly from Pearl Harbor to Midway Island and back. It is not to be supposed that a flight of six airplanes, or even forty-three, is going to destroy the Japanese fleet or to prevent it, if it is so minded, from moving across the Pacific to Midway or the Hawaiians. But these test flights show in which direction naval thought is moving. It is always across the Pacific, always toward Japan. No war games or aviation tests are undertaken in the other ocean.

**T**HE navy would prefer not to be bound to Pearl Harbor. From there to the Philippines would be a practically impossible jump in time of war. A few airplane squadrons might make it, but never the fleet as a whole. The admirals are living in the hope, therefore, that with the expiration of the Washington treaty the legal right to fortify Guam and the Philippines will be recaptured. When the British suggested that article 19 of that treaty be extended despite the lapse of its other provisions, the State Department remained curiously silent. And the Secretary of the Navy, commenting upon the British proposal, declared merely that the United States was ready to "answer fortification with fortification." Since it was supposed that Japan was even then fortifying, or at least establishing strong military or naval bases on, some of its islands in the South Seas, the Secretary's statement implied that the United States would not favor the retention of article 19. In another place Mr. Swanson suggested that the fortifications question was merely waiting upon an appropriation from Congress.

In fact, the navy is ready to move the moment the White House and the State Department give the word. It has available complete plans for the enlargement and fortification of its stations on Guam and in the Philippines. Once it has developed these advanced bases, it will naturally want to station the fleet, or a large part of it, in the waters of the western Pacific; for then it would be in an even better position to carry out that strategic offensive which it holds indispensable to the "national defense." And then, too, it could shake Mahan's mailed fist under the noses of the Japanese with no mistakable meaning.

The army has been doing its part. In the last few years its attention has been centered upon Panama, the Pacific seaboard, Alaska, and Hawaii. While budgetary estimates and expenditures in other corps areas have been treated by the War Department as more or less routine matters, expenditures in the Eighth and Ninth Corps areas and in the Hawaiian and Panama Canal departments have received special emphasis.

The commanding officers of these areas have been sent in person to Washington in order that they might place before congressional committees detailed and confidential information concerning the need for strengthening the "defenses" in each of their respective territories. And for the most part they have got what they have asked for in the way of extra funds.

In the matter of harbor and seacoast defense works, for example, they have come up with special appropriations 200 to 300 per cent greater than the appropriations provided for in the regular budget (in which they have also shared, of course). In the 1920's something less than \$2,000,000 was spent every year for all of the harbor and seacoast works under the American flag. In the last year or two approximately \$10,000,000 has been devoted to the development of these projects, the great bulk of it going to the Pacific coast and Hawaii. In the fiscal year 1937 more than \$8,000,000 is being spent, of which approximately half is being used at various points along the Pacific coast and in Alaska, and something like \$3,141,000 in Hawaii. Those islands already have in Fort Kamehameha and Fort de Russy and several other fortified positions defense works that are virtually impregnable. But even this apparently is not enough.

**I**N the air as well the army is preparing for war with Japan. Anti-aircraft defenses all along the Pacific coast are being augmented. In the summer of 1936 a board of officers was sent to Alaska "for the purpose of selecting a suitable site in the vicinity of Fairbanks, Alaska, for use as an aviation base." Behind this base, somewhere in the northwestern corner of the United States, another huge air station is to be erected (also accommodating a thousand planes, but the same planes, the Fairbanks station merely being the advance base for this force). Several experimental flights to Alaska have been undertaken, meteorological and ground studies have been made, and it is entirely probable that by now the actual construction work on these bases has been started. Supplementing these two stations will be the other great army air bases already established in California and neighboring states.

But again Hawaii is the pivot. Hawaii already has Luke Field, situated on an island in the center of Pearl Harbor and used by army aircraft and by naval land planes, and Wheeler Field, at Schofield Barracks (which, it is well to note in passing, is America's largest army post). To these is now being added Hickam Field. This station, to cost \$18,000,000 when completed, is located eight miles from Honolulu and very near the Pearl Harbor naval base. It has been said that it will be "the world's largest airport." This probably will be followed by the construction of six smaller air bases on outlying islands in the Hawaiian group.

Britain's Singapore, costing \$75,000,000 to develop, has attracted worldwide notice. Much less attention (except, perhaps, in Japan) has been paid to America's Hawaii. Yet there are located the greatest of

America's "defense" works, its most advanced naval base, its largest army post, its most formidable fortifications, and three air depots of no inconsequential size or significance. The modernization of these works is costing the United States in excess of \$100,000,000 (the cost of the army's program being placed at \$49,000,000). It may be doubted that Singapore is any stronger or better equipped either as a fortress or as a base for offensive operations.

**T**HAT is not all. Unlike the navy, which has been held back by the Washington and London treaties, the army has not had to confine its preparations for a Pacific war to Hawaii, Alaska, and the United States proper. It has been able to move forward in the Philippines, and this opportunity it is pressing to the utmost. Here the army is not acting formally or directly on behalf of the American government. That might have looked too suspicious to the Japanese. And it certainly would not have seemed altogether appropriate, since the United States was so magnanimously conferring "independence" upon the Filipinos.

In 1935 there was put through Congress, apparently without any discussion and without any understanding of the implications of the measure, a bill under which the retiring Chief of Staff, General MacArthur, was assigned to serve as military adviser to the Philippine government. The event went unheralded until General MacArthur himself, still on the active roll of the army and accompanied by a number of other active officers, left for the islands to take up their new duties. Very soon thereafter the Philippine legislature, proceeding upon MacArthur's advice, passed a national defense act.

The law provides for the organization of a standing professional army of 16,000 men. It also provides for a system of universal military training on a pattern very much like that which the General Staff had in mind for the United States after the war with Germany. It goes further than that, however, for under the MacArthur plan the training of the male Filipino begins at the age of ten, and thereafter he must give some part of every year to the military service so long as he is physically able. At the end of ten years this system should give the Philippines a trained conscript army of 500,000 men. And then, as one student has reported, "The Filipino nation of 13,000,000 people will have one of the largest armies in proportion to its size in the world." This army will, indeed, be even bigger than that which Japan has today, though not nearly so efficient.

MacArthur, who has been named field marshal of the Philippine army, although still presumably an active officer of the American army, also plans for the development of a fleet of small and fast torpedo boats for coastal defense, and an air corps, composed mainly of fast bombers. Besides, he would fortify "the few difficult, possible landing places" to be found on the islands. These preparations, he has said, will permit the Philippines to "rest in perfect security." At least, "it would take 500,000 men \$10,000,000,000, tremendous

casualties and three years' time successfully to invade the Philippines." At another time he declared that when the defense plan "has reached fruition, it will represent a defensive strength that will give hesitation to the strongest and most ruthless nation in the world. No chancellery, if it accepts the opinions of its military and naval staffs, will ever willingly attempt to attack the Philippines after the present development has been completed.

General MacArthur's position is weak in a number of particulars. First is the question of costs. He believes that his plan can be developed with an outlay of no more than \$8,000,000 a year for a period of ten years. He insists that that will mean an addition of only \$4,500,000 a year to the Philippine budget, for the constabulary, which is to be displaced by the new army, was already costing \$3,500,000 annually. But if this small police organization, admittedly of little value as a defense force, cost as much as that to maintain, how is the Philippine government to manage to pay, with an annual appropriation only slightly more than twice as large, for a standing army more than double the size of the constabulary and also for a huge conscript army, an air force, a torpedo fleet, fortifications, and the like, to say nothing of the special equipment, big guns, ammunition, fuel, and other materials and supplies that will be needed?

The \$8,000,000 estimate is absurdly low. The MacArthur plan, if carried out, will cost the Philippines a good deal more than that. And even to dig up this amount the new commonwealth government will have to scrape and economize in other directions. Its people, the bulk of them peons and many of them barbarians, are not so rich that their rulers can squeeze additional revenues out of them merely by increasing taxes. That, however, does not trouble General MacArthur. He holds that the budget must be adjusted to conform with his defense scheme. He insists that "the minimum cost of providing such protection logically becomes the first, not the last, charge against governmental revenues. While it is reiterated that the most rigid economy must govern every expenditure for this as for all other purposes, yet once the minimum defense requisites have been determined by properly constituted authorities the cost of satisfying them must be met or, in the long run, resultant risks will develop into disaster involving loss of independence and national degradation."

**E**VEN if the Philippine government can for the time being finance the MacArthur scheme, which it cannot without curtailing some of its more essential public services, within a few years it is bound to be confronted with a major financial crisis as a result of the withdrawal of American economic protection. Then it will not be able to carry even the army without borrowing money abroad. It is a certainty that the American government would never permit any other power to finance the Philippine government. The borrowing will have to be done in or through Washington. And that will give the United States a further

stake in the defense of the Philippines. The government at Manila will remain at the end of the ten-year transitional period a puppet of the American government.

There also arises the question as to whether an army of 500,000 men is really needed for the defense of the Philippines. If the islands are properly fortified, and if these fortifications have armament of sufficient firepower and range to hold back a determined enemy, then an enormous defending army would be entirely superfluous. An army large enough to man the forts, together with certain reserves, would in all probability be able to hold the islands. On the other hand, if the fortifications were to prove inadequate, an army of 500,000 half-trained conscripts would be worse than useless. It would never be able to stand up against the tanks, machine-guns, artillery, and other modern mechanized weapons that would be brought along by a Japanese army of highly trained professional soldiers. A considerably smaller modern army, once landed, could readily take possession of the more important cities and communication centers and then proceed at leisure to destroy the native conscript forces in the hills and jungles. Effective resistance could then be offered only if the Philippine army were a professionalized and mechanized force. But one cannot create such an army out of conscripts, nor equip and train it on \$8,000,000 a year.

Is it, however, actually the intent of General MacArthur to fortify the Philippines (notwithstanding article 19 of the Washington treaty) and to create this great conscript army solely for the purpose, as he says, of democratizing the Filipinos and helping them to defend themselves and their new government? Let it be supposed that it is. Let it be further supposed that he succeeds in building the defenses and the army he has planned. Yet how perfectly this fits in with the American preparations for a war with

Japan. With the Philippines properly fortified, a few men can hold them. Then, too, the American fleet might find safe refuge there. Thus protected, what need would the Philippines have for a great conscript army? None whatever. But in an American war with Japan it might be found opportune to attempt to land an American army on Japanese shores. It would be next to impossible to move such an army across the Pacific. It would be much simpler to ship an invading force from the Philippines. A transport fleet from Manila could reach southern Japan in three to five days. It might be argued that this idea has never for a moment occurred to General MacArthur or to the War Department in Washington. Possibly so. It might be argued, too, that the United States would have no authority to take over the Philippine army for this or any other purpose. But that argument would not be tenable. For under the Tydings-McDuffie act, and under the new Philippine constitution, the United States is specifically granted the right to call into its own service "all military forces organized by the Philippine government."

Japan, of course, would hardly remain idle while all of this was going on. It would probably strike before MacArthur or the Navy Department could erect anything in the way of worth-while fortifications. It would certainly not wait until the United States established a permanent station for its fleet in Philippine waters—just as the United States itself would not stand upon ceremony, but would strike at once, if the British were ever to attempt to send their fleet to permanent station at Halifax. In brief, these preparations for war with Japan are in themselves bringing that war ever closer; for the further America reaches out into the Pacific with its naval and military preparations, the nearer it draws to the Japanese islands, the more anxious will Japan be to begin the war in order that it may strike while it still has a decisive strategic superiority in the western Pacific.

