

A Significant Anniversary

Today is the tenth anniversary of Axis aggression. On September 18, 1931, Japan invaded and by force of arms annexed Manchuria. This date thus marks the real beginning of World War II. The seizure of Manchuria was not an isolated act but turned out to be, as Mr. Henry L. Stimson wrote in 1936, "the first major blow at the new system of war limitation and prevention built by the nations which had suffered in the Great War." He termed the occupation of Manchoukuo "a critical event in world history."

In almost every detail, Japan has practised in Manchuria the methods which later became known as those of the Nazis. The seizure of Manchuria was precipitated by an "incident." The "incident" was a bomb explosion which Lord Lytton's report states "might have occurred near the South Manchuria railway, but which was not sufficient to justify military action." On the pretext of "defence," Japan seized the portion of China that she then wanted. Lord Lytton's commission of inquiry in 1932 showed that this occupation had been carefully planned in advance and that it was put into operation "with swiftness and precision." Precisely the methods since followed by the Nazis in Europe.

The occupation of Manchuria preceded by two years the occupation of Germany by the Nazis. The Nazis, too, used an "incident" as their pretext for unloosing the terror on the German people and seizing political power. Their "incident" was the burning of the Reichstag, which, as the world now knows, they themselves had planned and perpetrated.

Manchuria provided an example of the sort of thing that was to happen in 1940 to Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Holland. In the bulletin, "Contemporary China," is reviewed the totalitarian evolution in Manchuria. First, a puppet ruler was appointed, in the person of Pu Yi, the former boy emperor of China. In 1934 he was given the title, "First Emperor of the Manchoukuo Empire." But the actual ruler was the commander-in-chief of the Japanese Kwangtung army. Chinese were appointed to the Manchoukuo state council, but the Japanese controlled policies and administration. All the judges, prosecutors, prison wardens and

police chiefs are Japanese. Finance, trade, education, the press, etc., were brought under Japanese control. And the 30,000,000 Chinese in Manchuria have been forced into the status of a "subject race," to be "guided" by the Japanese "master race."

Manchuria is important to Japan not so much for colonization purposes, as it is claimed, but for its economic wealth. The Japanese "five-year development plan," initiated in 1936, aims at making Manchuria the arsenal and granary of the Japanese empire. Exclusive trading privileges are allowed only to Japanese corporations, foreigners have been forced out, and Japanese monopolies control practically all industrial enterprises, including agriculture.

The Chinese press has declared that peace with Japan can only be negotiated on the basis that Manchuria will be returned. The Chinese war cry is "Recover the north-eastern mountains . . . and rivers . . . restore the status quo of September 17, 1931 . . ." Japan's seizure of Manchuria has been condemned by all democratic nations. Lord Lytton in 1932 reported that Japan had, "without declaration of war, seized and occupied by armed forces a large area of what was indisputably Chinese territory . . ." In January, 1932, the U.S. government declared it "does not intend to recognize any situation, treaty or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenants and obligations of the Pact of Paris." That year the Assembly of the League of Nations also adopted this doctrine in a resolution.

149

WAR

SINO-JAPANESE

218-117-836