

Japan Must Choose Between Bold Stroke Or Foxy Defense

While Conference Waits For Japs to Show Cards They Hesitate As to Strategy—In Some Quarters China's Proposals Regarded As Really Inspired By America—Demands Are Vague.

Daily News Bureau and Telegraph Office, 523 Albee Building (By Leased Wire) By FRANK SIMMONDS (Copyright, 1921, by the McClure Newspaper Syndicate) Washington, Nov. 17.—Thanks to the Chinese offensive on Wednesday the situation is now squarely up to Japan. It remains for her to disclose her own hand in the far east and for the moment Japanese strategy seems to be hesitating between a counter offensive and a passive defense.

It is true, however, that there is a marked inclination in well informed quarters to regard the Chinese gesture as far less Chinese than American. There is very good authority for the suggestion that the ten proposals made by China on Wednesday were made at the instance of the United States for the double purpose of placing China on record and opening the way for Japanese declaration.

I am reliably informed that China only reluctantly yielded to American suggestion in making her proposals, which have already become the ten commandments of the Chinese situation. It is not suggested that the United States government had anything to do with the character of the Chinese proposals, although they bear a striking resemblance to certain American propositions which have been advanced in recent years, but it is indicated that China would never have moved as she did without American impulsion.

Chinese Proposals Too Vague.

Nevertheless the value of the Chinese move to American strategy has been somewhat diminished by the fact that the Chinese proposals were vague in the extreme. Moreover the Japanese have for the moment eluded the necessity of a definite utterance by a perfectly reasonable request that China indicate what she means by each of her 10 proposals and do what, outside of diplomatic language, we call "get down to brass tacks." The mere westerner knows so little about the realities of the methods of oriental mind—and some of the methods of thought and of action are so different from our own—that it is foolish in the extreme to undertake to interpret Chinese or Japanese moves or to do more than show what they seem to mean.

It is worth recalling, too, that while China and Japan are separated on every other question, they are united in their desire to keep the west out of the east, and China will have the solid support of Japan against any project which suggests international control, political or economical, for

China, with the possible exception of that of the four-power consortium. Now, given the fact that China and Japan are united on this one large issue, it seems less sure that they are separated on others. Is this Pekin government controlled by the Japanese? Does the Pekin government control the delegation which it has sent here? Is the Chinese policy real or is it inspired by Japanese influences? Obviously these questions cannot be answered now, but every one who undertakes to estimate the Sino-Japanese situation must at every moment ask himself these questions.

Japan On Defensive.

Except for these complexities one would say outright that it would appear that the Chinese maneuver on Wednesday placed the Japanese in an embarrassing position, placed them on the defensive, and would ultimately force them to make a disclosure of their position.

Such a disclosure, it is clear, may take one of two forms. The Japanese may imitate Mr. Hughes and come out with a broad, general declaration covering the whole subject of the far east. They may, on the contrary, accept the Chinese proposals as the basis for discussion and express their opinion on each of the 10 as it is discussed in the committee. My Japanese friends tell me this latter course is now the one that has momentary support. They also tell me that they were taken by surprise by the Chinese proposals and they express admiration for the skill with which the Chinese seized the initiative. This is the Japanese statement.

There is still another interesting angle. I am again told by my Japanese friends that there is a profound difference of opinion in the Japanese delegation as to the wisdom or unwisdom of the suggestion that the Japanese ratio of national strength be increased from six to seven, that is, from 60 to 70 per cent. Among the Japanese journalists, who are more closely in touch with American opinion than their statesmen, there is a strong feeling that the government will make a mistake. It does not accept Mr. Hughes' ground as to capital ships without a protest. This, too, I present frankly as a Japanese statement.

In the United States presently to present a full program of its own as it did in the naval question or has it decided to content itself with waiting until Chinese, Japanese and perhaps British petitions have been presented and then undertake the role of compromiser, seeking a compromise agreement over the debated points? The question is unanswered, but there is every indication that at the moment Mr. Hughes inclines to play the latter role.

In a sense there is something ridiculous about the far eastern situation. Everybody is waiting for the other fellow to make the first move. China has been egged into making a move, but has couched her statement in such vague and general terms as to amount to no statement at all. Japan has dodged or rather has pushed the thing back by asking for a bill of particulars. So far the United States has not moved. Obviously American diplomacy would like to get China and Japan on record, but there are obvious difficulties which up to date have blocked the American desire.

Bargaining and Barter.

All of which is another way to say that the far eastern questions are going to be settled by a process of bargaining and barter. China and Japan will have to make big concessions. Neither of them, however, desires to concede anything until it knows what the maximum expected is, since obviously neither desires to give away anything that he does not have to.

If the Japanese and Chinese are really fighting a "sure-enough battle" then obviously the Japanese will promptly ask the Chinese what guarantees the Pekin government can give for the protection of railroads, property and lives provided Japan troops are withdrawn, and then we shall have before us at once the whole question of the difficulties and chaos in China. But it is still far from clear that either side desires to go to the bottom of the far eastern question since both have a common desire to get the "barbarian" out.

There are many resemblances between the present situation and that in Paris. Since the conference has gone underground we are back in the golden age of the press agent. The main sources of news now are the official spokesmen of the several delegations, the unofficial spokesman who gives voice to what the Europeans call "official" declarations, and the more or less inspired press agents who give circulation to every sort of rumor designed to hurt the other fellow's side and help their own.

The result is necessarily a stream of contradictory and critical comment, such as everyone who recalls the Paris conference remembers as a characteristic output of each day's work. If for no other reason than that a long period of this press campaigning might produce deplorable results it seems likely that those who are in control of the conference will seek to make events march rapidly. After all, the conference began better than anyone hoped; the possibility of achievement is larger than anyone could have imagined a month ago and, after the most magnificent entrance on record, what the responsible statesmen now desire most is a happy and quick exit.

SAND HILLS FAIR.

Big Crowd Watches Events and Sees Smashing Gridiron Battle. (Special to Daily News.)

Pinehurst, Nov. 17.—Over 11,000 people, the greatest population that Pinehurst has ever enjoyed on any one day in its history, attended the second day of the annual Sandhills fair here today and watched the State college freshman football team win by a score of 18 to 4 against the freshman team of Davidson college. A 40-yard run by Jeanette, the State college quarter-back, for a touchdown in the first period and a 50-yard run by the same player for another touchdown in the fourth period were the most sensational features of a rattling good game.

There were two good harness events and two running races on today's entertainment program. All three heats of the 2 1/2 mile trot were carried off by Lenora Watts, entered by Wiegner brothers and driven by Plaxico, and both heats of the colt race were won by Silk Hose, owned and driven by J. R. Thomas.

The Berkshire hog and Ayrshire cattle sales will be held tomorrow, together with the finals of the girls and boys basketball tournament, the annual pageant "Autumn" in which hundreds of children will appear the wind up of the various track and field events and a racing program.

Art and Crafts.

(Life.) We wish to correct an impression that the Gainsborough painting, "The Blue Boy," which is coming to America, is a portrait of Dr. Wilbur F. Crafts.

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