

doubtful loyalty, have been unsuccessful. The Chinese in that area are on the whole able to offer adequate resistance, since they continue to be in direct contact with the main body of Free China via Suiyuan, Shensi and the distant western provinces of Ninghsia and Kansu.

The second front, adjoining the first to the south, covers the entire area within the wide Yellow River bend—that is, the bulk of Shansi and a small part of Honan Province. To the west and south, the Japanese positions at that front are completely surrounded by Free Chinese territory. The main line across which Chinese and Japanese outposts have been facing each other for almost four years is the Yellow River itself down to the city of Kaifeng, which has long been in Japanese hands. The enemy has for a considerable time made no serious and sustained attempt to cross the river at points in southern Honan.

Fighting in Taiheng Mountains

However, a considerable effort is at present going on to consolidate Japan's inner positions within the Yellow River bend by relatively large mopping up operations against the great and compact area of resistance and counterattack in the Taiheng Mountain Range. Here guerrillas of various inner political complexion are still supported by units of regular Chinese troops. Several Japanese divisions fighting in dozens of small columns, and recently coordinated and generally aided in their diffuse action by several scores of reconnaissance planes, fighters and bombers, have been concentrated against these mountain strongholds, so far with limited success.

This is the only important military operation at present taking place in China. The main aims of the Japanese in the region seem to be to strengthen their western flank against the Soviet Union, and to remove the constant danger of Chinese guerrilla raids in areas where they are endeavoring to exploit valuable coal and iron resources.

The third front, north of the Yellow River, borders on the first and second to the east. It comprises Peiping and strips of the land along the railroads from Peiping, northward to the border of Jehol Province, and southward to the narrow corridor formed by Hopei Province between Honan and Shantung. This sector has no direct contact with Free China, and whatever sporadic fighting has recently been going on there was purely of the nature of guerrilla attacks and relatively weak Japanese countermeasures. The task of the small numbers of Japanese and puppet troops of guarding some 400 miles of vital railroad lines has evidently not become any easier in recent months; and it has so far been impossible for them to withdraw any troops from this area, although it is a great distance behind any actual fighting fronts.

The fourth front, extending over the coastal area of Hopei and part of Shantung to the Yellow River, has also more than indirect communications with Free China through the numerous wide gaps between the Japanese lines along the main railroads and highways. The enemy still has a hard time defending himself against the guerrillas and mobile bands of regular troops, even around strongly garrisoned cities like Tientsin. Recent attempts on a rather large scale to mop up the guerrillas in Central Shantung have once more proved completely unsuccessful. This is the main area where numerous puppet units in recent months and years have either defected to the National Army and the guerrillas, or at least have given them considerable tacit support.

The huge second region of Japanese occupation along the Yangtze has at present only about nine Japanese divisions and seven independent brigades. It extends from Shanghai and Hangchow westward via Nanking and Hankow to Ichang, the nearest Japanese position to Chungking, and covers part of the provinces of Kiangsu, Chekiang, Anhwei, Hupeh and Kiangsi. This front contains most of the potential Japanese spearheads for further expansion into Free China. The western half of these Japanese positions is practically surrounded by Free Chinese territory, because of the huge gap between the Yellow River and the Yangtze front, consisting of most of Honan Province and part of Anhwei, which are occupied.

Chinese Strong on Vital Front

In view of this situation, the strength of the Japanese garrison at this most important of all the China fronts is by no means imposing. It is here that the Japanese are facing the strongest regular Chinese forces. The mobile Chinese units and guerrillas between the main concentrations of the Japanese are relatively strong and enjoying somewhat better supplies than their comrades cooperating farther in the rear. Whatever action takes place in China during periods of a general lull is chiefly on this front, and the last few months have been no exception to this rule. In some cases the Chinese have taken the initiative on a small scale; but usually it is the Japanese who are tempted to advance beyond their semi-permanent positions and their lines of communications, in order to break up Chinese troop concentrations and at the same time to forage in the adjoining wealthy rice-producing areas of Free China.

This front sector has an extremely well developed system of railroad, river, lake and highway communications, over which fairly large bodies of men can be collected quickly for action against objectives like the coveted city of Changsha, the area between Ichang and Chungking, or air bases from which attacks against Japan might eventually be launched. Therefore Japanese troop movements within this sector are always followed by the Chinese with the greatest watchfulness. But no major Japanese concentrations have taken place recently, and the front as a whole shows no indication of imminent change.

The remaining two China fronts are completely isolated enemy outposts, but are also potential spearheads for further expansion into Free China. The southern coastal front, in Kwangtung and small parts of Fukien Province, is at present being held by no more than one division, three brigades, and a few small isolated units of Japanese troops, with only a few puppet auxiliaries. These forces occupy Amoy, Swatow, Canton, Hongkong, the French leased territory of Kwangchowwan, and Hainan Island. Apart from occasional small-scale Japanese activity a few dozen miles outside Canton, this front has recently been very quiet, since its garrison is barely sufficient for defense.

Tempting Objectives Well Guarded

The southwestern front, finally, consisting of two small, disconnected sectors in Yunnan Province, has at present perhaps two or two and a half Japanese divisions, probably not of full strength. On the Salween River sector along the Burma-Yunnan Highway, up to a point some 400 miles distant from its terminus, Kunming, the small numbers of the enemy are powerfully compensated by an exceptional plentitude of modern equipment. On the southern sector, the few Japanese troops are having the dubious support of several Thai or Siamese divisions. But both sectors can at any time be reinforced with relative ease from parts of the ten—or by now probably eleven—Japanese divisions in the adjoining Burma-Malaya-Thailand-French Indo-China theater. On this front more than on any other, however, topographical and climatic conditions are definitely in favor of the defenders. It is generally assumed that the recent sporadic fighting in both sectors will give place to a lull during the monsoon season, from early June to October.

The Chinese realize that in this sector are the most desirable strategic objectives of the Japanese in the entire Chinese theater—Kunming, the terminus of air communications between India and one of the important American air bases, and beyond that Yunnan Province as a whole, because of the role it may play in the eventual Allied counteroffensive against Burma. A serious attempt at overrunning Yunnan and taking Kunming, however, would certainly require infinitely greater forces than the Japanese now have anywhere in or near Yunnan, and no doubt would be exceedingly costly, without by any means promising success. The Chinese forces in this area consist of some of the best-trained and best-equipped troops in the country, and they have the support of the considerable and steadily growing American air force.

GEOPOLITICS AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

To the flood of publications on German geopolitics, three more books have been added in recent months.* By now the public has been given ample opportunity to familiarize itself with this pseudo-science. There are (or were) two lessons to be gained from this intensive educational process: a realization of the German and Japanese menace, and a recognition of the dire lack of international-political insight by the American people.

As to the first point, most writers began to cry "wolf" when the animal was already on the rampage, and the present preoccupation with geopolitics is more in the nature of an autopsy than a timely diagnosis of the danger. War has proved a much better teacher than the written word. There remains then the question whether we can "learn from the enemy" (a favorite expression of Haushofer) in our future attitude to world affairs.

The first reaction to this question is, naturally, one of disgust; what do we wish to learn from this arrogant creed of ruthless conquest? Having answered this question with a resounding "Nothing," various writers and lecturers then proceed to paint a world of the future in which either the ten commandments, the four freedoms, or the one golden rule will form the guiding principles of the victorious United Nations. On this moral plane it is so obvious where our choice lies that discussion is superfluous. The orators, however, have missed the point.

To create a better world after this war we need ideals, surely, but in order to apply them we need an understanding of the world around us. Doctrines are formulas independent of time and space; we have ideals and doctrines, but as a people we lack the understanding of foreign countries as distinct personalities, determined by history and location. If we want to make a sound peace we must realize that global unity does not mean global uniformity; global cure-alls will not work, they only cause disillusion at home and resentment abroad.

Moreover, the rejection of the might-is-right doctrine of German geopolitics tends to discredit the use of power altogether. Again, one cannot but agree with the moral attitude, but we should realize that there is a great difference between what ought to be done and the reality of this imperfect world. Power in itself is neutral; if we are able to make a wise peace, the vic-

* *Generals and Geographers: The Twilight of Geopolitics*, by Hans W. Weigert. New York: Oxford, 1942. 273 pp. \$3.00.

German Strategy of World Conquest, by Derwent Whittlesey. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942. 293 pp. \$2.50.

The World of General Haushofer, by Andreas Dorpalen. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942. 337 pp. \$3.50.