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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN MANCHURIA

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Report of a lecture delivered at a meeting of the Royal Central Asian Society on Wednesday, December 12, 1956, Admiral Sir Cecil Harcourt, G.B.E., K.C.B., in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Francis Jones, as many of you probably know, is a Reader in Far Eastern History at the University of Bristol; he was a student at Bristol University before he went to Harvard and later spent some years in China under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation. Mr. Jones tells me that he has not been in Manchuria since the war, but he has visited other parts of the Far East. Doctor Jones:

THE Chinese Nationalists and the Chinese Communists are agreed in rejecting the term "Manchuria" and in calling the region Tungpei—the North-East. This is done for a political purpose—in furtherance of their claim that the Chinese Republic is the rightful heir of all the territories included within the boundaries of the old Manchu Empire. This claim the Chinese People's Government has made good, except for Outer Mongolia—and the last word may not yet have been said about that.

However, whatever the political objections may be, the appellation "Manchuria" has a geographical validity as applied to the vast area of some 380,000 square miles, which lies between the Amur or Heilungchiang = Black Dragon River on the north, Korea to the south, the Hsingan mountain range to the west and the Ussuri River on the east. Until after the end of the Second World War the political frontiers were in broad correspondence with the geographical ones. The three north-eastern provinces—Heilungchiang, Kirin and Liaoning—which together embraced all Manchuria and which during most of the period 1912-31 were under the practically independent rule of Chang Tso-lin and his son Chang Hsueh-liang, were equivalent to the geographical definition, except for the Barga region in the north-west, which extends beyond the Hsingan range. The Changs also took in the province of Jehol, in the south-west. So did the Japanese Kwantung Army in 1933, after they had overthrown the Chang regime and set up the Empire of Manchukuo.

By that time Manchuria had ceased to be the "country of the Manchus"—these had been reduced by emigration and assimilation to a small minority. The great majority of the people of Manchuria as a whole were Chinese who had poured in from the overcrowded provinces of North China; in the main from Hopei and Shantung. But there existed important minorities; of which politically the most significant were the Mongols. Their total number was small—perhaps two millions—but in much of the Hsingan region of western Manchuria, which is more suited to pastoral occupations than to agricultural ones, they constituted either a majority or

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a substantial minority. But, as was happening in Inner Mongolia, the Manchurian Mongols were steadily losing their grazing lands through the advance of the ubiquitous Chinese farmer, backed by Chinese political and military authority. Many of them, as was true of the Mongols generally, in consequence became hostile to Chinese rule.

The Japanese went out of their way to conciliate the Mongols in order to win their allegiance to Manchukuo and to the cause of Japan. They therefore carved out a special Hsingan region from the provinces of Heilungchiang and Liaoning. As far as possible they drew the new boundary so as to include predominantly Mongol areas in the Hsingan region, while leaving predominantly Chinese-inhabited ones outside it, even if these had once been Mongol lands. They did the same in northern Jehol, and they subdivided the whole Mongol region into four provinces—north, east, south and west Hsingan. They forbade further Chinese colonization in the Hsingan provinces, and they allowed the Mongols to have their own political, military and police organization, although under careful Japanese supervision. But when after 1937 the Japanese Army overran Inner Mongolia and set up a regime there separate from the rest of China, they did not add the Hsingan region to it; that remained part of Manchukuo. Thus pan-Mongol aspirations were not satisfied, which led to some disappointment and dissatisfaction with Japanese rule. Nevertheless, the Manchurian Mongols had enjoyed a measure of autonomy which they were unwilling to forego.

After the defeat of Japan and the collapse of Manchukuo some of the Manchurian Mongols tried to establish an autonomous regime with its capital at Wangyehmiao. The unwillingness of the Chinese Nationalist Government to accept this was a factor in inclining the Mongols to the Communist cause since the Communists were more liberal in their promises and, indeed, in their performance. In May, 1947, the Chinese Communist regime decreed the establishment of the Inner Mongolian autonomous region. This initially consisted of the north and east Hsingan provinces and of north Chahar, inhabited by the Mongol leagues, or banners, of Hulunbuir, Silingol and Chahar. South and west Hsingan were added in 1949, and more of Chahar and northern Jehol in 1952 and 1956. What had been Suiyuan Province was also added in 1954. Thus the Manchurian Mongols now form part of an Inner Mongolian Autonomous Area of over 400,000 square miles, and Manchuria has been reduced by some 150,000 square miles.

The other important minority are the Koreans, mostly immigrants from the poorer provinces of north Korea. The Japanese, for political, as well as economic, reasons, encouraged Korean immigration into Manchuria, and there were an estimated two million of them there in 1945. They were not well regarded by the Chinese, who looked upon them as agents of Japanese imperialism and as economic competitors with Chinese farmers. Frequent quarrels occurred over water rights. Many of the Koreans left or were driven out after 1945. Others were conscribed into the North Korean armies. There are still, however, over a million of them in Manchuria, about a half of whom live in the Chientao region of south-east Manchuria. The Communists, in pursuance of their general

policy of conciliating racial minorities, have established the Yienpien Autonomous Korean District, which remains, however, a part of Kirin Province.

During the "Manchukuo" period the provinces were subdivided and nineteen smaller ones were created—including Jehol and the four Hsingan areas. The Communists, in 1949, reduced these to five, and these, together with Jehol, were put under the North-eastern People's Government, which enjoyed a large measure of autonomy, although it was under the supervision of Peking. In November, 1952, however, the powers of the North-eastern People's Government were materially reduced—as were those of the five other regional governments in China. In June, 1954, the regional governments were abolished altogether and the various provinces were placed under the direct control of the central government in Peking. It may have been these changes which caused the disaffection of Kao Kang, who had been chairman of the North-eastern Government and whose overthrow and suicide were announced early in 1955. At the same time, in 1954, the Manchurian provinces were reduced to three—Heilungchiang, Kirin and Liaoning. Jehol was abolished in 1955, part of its territory going to Liaoning. Thus present-day Manchuria has an area of approximately 300,000 square miles and a total population, according to the 1953 census, of some 43 millions. It is still something of a geographical unit, but it has no longer any political cohesion. The authority of Peking has been established over the whole region to an unprecedented degree, and whatever attempts at local separatism Kao Kang may have fostered appear to have been firmly repressed.

It is not without significance that this consolidation of the authority of the Chinese People's Government in Manchuria has gone hand in hand with the surrender by the Soviet Union of its special privileges in Manchuria. By agreements which accompanied the Treaty of August, 1945, between the U.S.S.R. and Nationalist China, the former Chinese Eastern and South Manchurian Railways were united into the "Chinese Changchun Railway," which was to be jointly owned and operated by the U.S.S.R. and China. However, the actual management of the line was placed in the hands of a Soviet director. At the same time the U.S.S.R. secured Port Arthur as a naval base and a lease of half of the port facilities of Dairen (Dalny). The U.S.S.R. had thus to a large extent regained the position which Imperial Russia had held in Manchuria prior to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5.

In February, 1950, following the establishment of the Chinese People's Government, another Sino-Soviet Treaty and ancillary agreements provided that not later than the end of 1952 the U.S.S.R. would surrender to China all rights in the Chinese Changchun Railway, and in the Port Arthur military zone, with compensation for improvements. The U.S.S.R. also agreed to return all property under its administration in Dalny and all properties in Manchuria which Soviet economic organizations had bought up from their former Japanese owners. In 1952 the Russians duly honoured their promises, except that by a special agreement, ostensibly asked for by Peking, they retained their rights and their garrison at Port Arthur. However, in October, 1954, following a visit by Khrushchchev and Bulganin to

Peking another agreement provided for the abandonment of these privileges and the withdrawal of Soviet troops. This was effected in May, 1955.

The Chinese Communist explanation of the delay in this matter was that during the Korean war there was reason to expect a possible American landing in the Port Arthur-Dalny region. The continued presence of Soviet forces made this impossible unless America desired an open collision with the U.S.S.R. It must in fairness be said that this excuse has some validity in view of the possibility that the Korean war might have spread to China. After the armistice of July, 1953, this danger could no longer be held to exist.

The *volte-face* in Soviet policy was no doubt in part because Moscow wished to extricate the Chinese Communists from the awkward charge of being accomplices in Russian imperialism while at the same time they were fiercely condemning that of other countries. But it also arose from the rapid—and, as there is good reason to believe—unexpected success of the Chinese Communists in bringing all mainland China under their control. It is doubtful, from the patronizing attitude which he had formerly adopted towards them, that Stalin had calculated that he could do more than hold Manchuria and perhaps North China, in which case their position *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union would have not markedly differed from that of its east European satellites. But the complete success of Mao-Tse-tung made it necessary, especially in view of what had happened with Tito, to conciliate Mao, lest he too leave the Soviet fold. Stalin's successors, men of lesser stature than either Stalin or Mao, have had to move further along this path. Thus today, for the first time since 1896, Manchuria is firmly under Chinese control and no foreign special privileges remain.

From the economic standpoint, however, the picture is a little different. Foreign penetration of Manchuria, culminating in the Japanese occupation of the country during 1931-45, has resulted in the development of a system of communications and a complex of industries, these well in advance of the rest of China. The Japanese in particular invested the equivalent of around £500 million sterling in Manchuria. They extended the railways, including double-tracking, to about 9,000 miles, more than half of that of all China. They vastly expanded the production of coal, iron-ore and other minerals, and they constructed iron and steel, chemical, engineering and a host of other manufactories. Many of these, it is true, produced only semi-processed goods for export to Japan, but especially in and around Dairen, Mukden and Hsinking (Changchun) there were numerous exceptions to this rule. Soviet removals of machinery in 1945-6, combined with looting and civil war crippled Manchurian production and severely reduced the value of the Japanese heritage. Nevertheless, what the Japanese had done ensured that Manchuria must be the chief centre of industrial expansion in China. That was one important reason why Chiang Kai-shek, in defiance of his American military advisers, would not abandon his efforts to wrest Manchuria from the Communists. The decisive defeat of the cream of his armies there in 1948 spelt the loss, not only of Manchuria but of all China, since the military *débâcle* was such that the Nationalists were henceforth

numerically as well as morally inferior to the Communists in military strength.

The Chinese Communists, building on the foundations laid by the Japanese, and with material and technical aid from the U.S.S.R., have once more made Manchuria the leading industrial centre of China. Today it produces some 30 per cent. of the total coal output, 60 per cent. of the iron ore and approximately 80 per cent. of the steel output of all China. It is also prominent in electric power, shale oil, railway rolling stock, engineering, munitions and a wide range of general industries. Mukden, the chief industrial city, had less than half a million people in 1931, under Japanese rule this rose to well over a million and is now in excess of two millions. Dairen or Dalny, the principal port, which had about 400,000 people in 1931, is now close on the million mark. Ansshan, the main centre of steel production, which was a small place in 1930, has at present some 600,000 people. Numerous other cities have undergone a correspondingly rapid expansion. These, the first Chinese Communist developments, are part of a five-year plan of industrial expansion which is due to be completed at the end of next year. A second, covering the period 1958-62, has already been drafted. It, too, lays the main stress upon "heavy" industry, *i.e.* coal, electric power, iron, steel and chemicals. It also looks to Manchuria to provide a large proportion of the anticipated increases in these products. Thus, the industrial preponderance of Manchuria is likely to continue in the near future, although in the long run the growth of new centres of "heavy" industry in northern and in western China will reduce its comparative importance.

Despite this great industrial development Manchuria, like the rest of China, remains primarily agricultural. Its importance as a source of special crops, such as soya beans, and of general food supply, as well as the opportunities it affords of increased settlement on the land, equals that of its industrial expansion. Manchuria is primarily a land of dry farming, kaoliang, millet and wheat, as opposed to rice. It is also the region of China in which the largest private estates were to be found, especially in Heilungchiang. Some of these were initially confiscated by the Japanese, because their owners refused to accept the Manchukuo régime. Later they fell into Communist hands; so did the properties of those who had served the Japanese. Thus it is no accident that most of the big state-owned farms are in Manchuria. The Communists are concentrating upon increased food and general agricultural production in Manchuria, more particularly in Heilungchiang, where fresh immigration is being actively promoted. This, however, is a region of poor soils and with an especially long and harsh winter climate, so that the chances of success are moderate. How much of Manchuria's food production is earmarked for export to the U.S.S.R. in payment for imports of industrial equipment is a matter upon which detailed information is lacking. But, in view of the fact that Manchuria is next door to the Soviet Far Eastern region, which cannot produce enough food for its growing population, the amount is probably considerable.

Therefore, because of the dependence of China upon the Soviet Union for industrial equipment, for which she must pay in food and raw ma-

terials, Manchuria, as a producer of excess agricultural products, is still to some degree tied up with the Soviet Far East. Moreover, because Manchuria is of such vital importance to China as its main industrial centre, as a producer of surplus food crops for export, and as a region where a considerable degree of fresh Chinese colonization is still possible, its loss would be a shattering blow. But its geographical proximity to the U.S.S.R., combined with the immense economic and military superiority of that country over China, makes Manchuria in a sense a hostage for Peking's continued good behaviour towards Moscow.

It must be remembered that Russian policy towards China—and this applies to both Tsarist and Communist Russia—has tended to oscillate between a policy of partition and a policy of alliance and protection. Thus, in 1896, Imperial Russia concluded a treaty of alliance with China against Japan and so appeared as China's "big brother." But soon afterwards she veered round to a policy of attempting to create a special preserve for herself in Manchuria. At Yalta, and during the immediate post-war years, Stalin also endeavoured to detach Manchuria from Chinese control and to consolidate Soviet political and military power there. In 1950, apparently realizing that it was better to have all China—now Communist controlled—as a willing and faithful disciple than to rule just a part of it, Stalin agreed to relinquish his hold upon Manchuria and adopted once more the policy of protection. His successors have so far followed the same line. Khrushchchev, indeed, has recently lauded the relationship of the Chinese Communists to Moscow as ideal. The Chinese Communists are willing collaborators and disciples—not satellites held down by the presence of Soviet Russian troops. Yet, Peking follows the line taken by Moscow to world affairs in general. But what if it should cease to do so and should proclaim a "Titoist" line, aiming to have a foot in both camps—Communist and Democratic? Then it is very likely that Moscow would revert to the policy of endeavouring to detach Manchuria—in common with other border areas—so as to acquire buffer regions for the protection of the growing industries of Soviet Siberia. Thus Manchuria might again become a centre of international rivalry and conflict as it was so often in the past. But it must be emphasized that at present there are no sign of any such development, and that the solid advantages which the "Moscow-Peking Axis" confers on both partners are such that neither is likely to wish to forfeit them.

Group-Captain H. St. C. SMALLWOOD: I will confine myself to two questions, although there are many more I would like to ask. Is there any properly demarcated frontier between the Inner Mongolia autonomous border and Outer Mongolia? There seems to be a fertile source of differences there unless the frontier is very well demarcated. Secondly, I take it that the Peking-Mukden Railway is still entirely under Chinese Communist control? The South Manchurian Railway ran up to Changchun and joined up with the Chinese Eastern Railway at Harbin. Is that under Russian management or has it been handed back to the Chinese?

Mr. FRANCIS JONES: The first question I cannot answer; I have no

definite information in regard to Inner Mongolia or the Outer Mongolian border. It is semi-desert country in which people wander back and forth. I have heard of no trouble. Yes, the Peking-Mukden Railway is definitely under Chinese Communist control and so now are all the other railways. There is no Russian-run railway in Manchuria. Apparently, the wheels are changed just across the border.

Dr. E. LINDGREN: I wish to express admiration for the way in which the lecturer has summarized a vast body of material. He has made everything extraordinarily clear. Being myself an admirer of the country in which I have travelled a good deal I cannot help think that the Chinese Communist boss to whom the lecturer referred might not only have become attached to his job but possibly also to the country itself. There might have been some love of the region. As to the point in regard to agriculture, it occurred to me that an important factor may be the great humidity of the summers in contrast to the dry and very cold winters which the lecturer mentioned. In summer it rains for two days out of three. That makes things difficult for the traveller but gives the agricultural and the pastoral industry so much more chance than one would suppose, judging from the winters.

Has the lecturer any opinion in regard to the hydro-electric scheme, referred to in *The Times* of November 17, proposed to be carried out in the Amur border region, including redirection of certain rivers? Is this merely propaganda or is it to be seriously contemplated?

Mr. FRANCIS JONES: I agree with Dr. Lindgren's remarks in regard to the climate of Manchuria. As to the proposed hydro-electric power scheme to which I have seen reference, not being a technician I cannot venture to express an opinion as to whether it is a possibility or not. The Amur is a vast river which has its seasonal rise and fall. Possibly if dams were erected with a view to regulating the flow of water much electric power might be provided. I am, however, not familiar with the particular region. The Russians have some ambitious plans in regard to the rivers in Siberia. They have much experience in connection with that kind of thing; they may do what they have done elsewhere as they have the necessary technical knowledge.

Mr. CAMROSE: Are the Russians providing all the technicians to run the steel works in Communist China, or are the technicians Chinese?

Mr. FRANCIS JONES: There are many Soviet technicians in China; how many, it is hard to say; estimates of the numbers vary, but there are certainly several thousand. They are there to assist the Chinese and, unlike the Japanese, they do train the Chinese. The Japanese provided their own technicians and kept things in their own hands. The Russians do seem to be training the Chinese to do the job and the technicians are willing to return to the U.S.S.R. when the Chinese know how to do the particular job. That seems to be the situation in Manchuria and in China generally. There are many technicians helping the Chinese to install the equipment in the steelworks and so on.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I would like to say how much I agree with Dr. Lindgren's tribute to the masterly way in which the lecturer has summarized the happenings in this area so clearly

and lucidly in forty-five minutes. It was a most interesting lecture and we are grateful for all the trouble Mr. Jones has taken to come and deliver it. We thank you very much indeed, Mr. Jones.

Mr. FRANCIS JONES: I thank you all very much; it has been a privilege to address the Society.

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