

Viewpoint: The Japanese

Teacher Created Materials, Inc. World War II.

Diplomatic negotiations between our nations (Japan) and the United States have reached a point where each side is unwilling to make further concessions. Our trade with the U.S. is essential, and we especially need the imported raw materials which are vital to Japan's industries and our expansion on the Asian mainland. It is the struggle with China and the *Kuomintang*, the Nationalists of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, which is creating the greatest difficulty. Our Emperor's Imperial Japanese Army has been unable to make the Chinese sign a treaty and concede to our demands. We have become mired down in the China conflict, and victory is as elusive in 1940-1941 as it was in 1937 when we first advanced into the northern provinces of China. In 1937, we took the Nationalists capital of Nanking, but Chiang Kai-shek moved further west to Chungking. This struggle between China and Japan must be brought to a conclusion. Hundreds of thousands of Japanese soldiers are tied down, moving farther into China to bring Chiang Kai-shek to battle.

We need the oil, petroleum products, steel, lead, scrap metal, copper, metal-working machinery, and other essentials that trade with the United States provides. Yet FDR and the American people are committed to helping China. They have given official recognition to the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek. They provide funds to the Chinese to stabilize their currency and also give them aid through the American Lend-Lease program. An American Air Corps officer, Clarie Chennault, leads a group of American flyer call the "Flying Tigers," hired mercenaries of the *Kuomintang*. They attack our military formations and have a nasty habit of shooting down our bombers and fighters flying missions over China. The Americans make unrealistic demands.

Our presence in French Indochina, the result of concessions from France to occupy strategic bases, is vital to waging our campaign in China. The United States continues to make insistent demands that we remove ourselves from Indochina. The American government has instituted an embargo on certain materials over the past year, and we are no longer getting the oil we need. Our military experts maintain that we have a two-year reserve supply, but in the eventuality of an all-out war, it shrinks down to an 18-month supply. The United States cut off the shipments of scrap metal and steel in the early part of the year. Soon after, aviation gasoline was placed on the embargo. Now, the United States insist that the Imperial Japanese Army must withdraw from China before any satisfactory negotiations can take place.

Our military leaders are divided as to which path the Japanese Empire should take. Those who wish to go "north" point out that Russia is the traditional enemy of Japan in Asia, and the German-Soviet war that broke out in June of 1941 is our opportunity to strike the death blow by attacking in Siberia. But attacking the Russians will not give Japan the supplies and the materials that it needs to expand. The militarists who see Southeast Asia as the area to strike are correct. Moving south will give Japan all the raw materials it will need to sustain the empire. The oil fields of the Dutch East Indies will supply the needs of our military. Malaya will furnish the rubber and the tin. The Philippines must also be taken to safely anchor our conquests throughout Southeast Asia. Thailand, Burma, and Indochina will be the source of a steady food supply for Japan. Our policy will be Asia for the Asians, and the Japanese Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere will remove the arrogant European colonialists from a part of the world that they have dominated far too long. To secure our conquests in Southeast Asia, Japan will have to eliminate the American military presence in Asia and that means the American Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. If we effectively eliminate the American battle fleet in the Pacific, Japan will be able to secure all its other conquests and possessions into a defensive perimeter that will be impenetrable.