

Dr. Jenks Sees China as Powerful Nation

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Out of the kaleidoscopic changes which are today taking place on the map of the East there may arise a united China differing sharply from anything known to recorded history. South of the Great Wall, where lies the vast area of the old Kingdom of China, a population of some 375,000,000 people is turning toward a common political and economic leadership.

This is the belief of Dr. Jeremish W. Jenks, president of the Alexander Hamilton Institute and long an expert on Oriental affairs. He recently returned from revisiting scenes with which he has been familiar since he served on the International Monetary Reform Commission in China twenty-five years ago. While there he met General Chiang Kai-shek and other Nationalist leaders and learned at first hand the plans they have made for consolidating the interests of the Chinese people.

North of the Great Wall, and not for the present included in Nationalist China, lies Manchuria, with possibly 20,000,000 people. This was the stronghold of Chang Tso-lin, war lord who held Peking until a few days ago. If Chang passes from the scene, it is possible that this area may also be added to the Nationalist domain, for it has long been known that the people there sympathize with the Southern cause.

Though Dr. Jenks is not prepared to advise that the United States immediately recognize the Nationalist government, he says that within a few weeks conditions may make this far-reaching step advisable. Then, for the first time in a generation, the government of the United States will be able to deal with authorities speaking in the name of all China.

If the Nationalists are able to consolidate their position and to instill a measure of harmony into the strife-torn atmosphere which has long retarded all progress the nature of our relations with China may well become a dominant factor in our foreign affairs, he believes. For should a stable government be established, it will mean the blossoming of a nation of untold potential wealth and power.

The Nationalist Program

"Apparently," said Dr. Jenks "the Nationalists are approaching the end of the first stage in their program. It will be recalled that Sun Yat-sen, father of the Nationalist movement, stated that the reform would come in three stages.

"The first of these was military. That, we may hope, is nearly ended.

"The second was political. That meant the establishing of firm governmental control over all of China. The third is connected with the second, and involves the elevation of the common people economically as well as politically. This third step must, of course, be a gradual development extending over years.

"If the second phase is now about to be inaugurated, it will be important to the people of the United States to know what form of government there will be.

"It will probably take about the same form of the regime which has held sway in the South. It will be made up of a national congress of delegates from the various districts and provinces and overseas citizens and called to meet once each year. At the beginning, at least, the delegates will probably largely be selected through appointment.

"A central executive committee of thirty-five members will meet every three months. It in turn will name a political committee of fifteen members; a standing committee of the central executive committee of nine members; and a military

council of sixteen members. Of the latter, nine will be military leaders and seven non-military.

"Already this form of committee government is functioning. A meeting of the central executive committee was held in late February and early March.

"Possibly the most influential man in the Kuomintang served as chairman of this meeting. He is Tan Yen-kai. He has shown great ability in bringing together the leaders of factions, which have been only too ready to quarrel.

"It is easily to be seen that this form of committee government is not adapted to quick decisions, and it remains to be seen if it can be made to function efficiently.

"During the military operations the committee has been disposed to remove generals at will, and to demonstrate that it intends not only to keep a close rein on executive matters, but also to insure the supremacy of the civil authority over the military.

"It is to be noted that for the first time since 1911 there may be a single government for all of China. Of course, no definite statements can be made at this time, but it is possible that the success of the Nationalists in their Northern drive will inspire the permanent adherence of factions which have heretofore made unification impossible.

An Era of Harmony

"The placing of Yen Hsi-shan in charge at Peking augurs well for harmony, for he has never shown a desire to extend his authority, and may prevent disputes from arising between Chiang Kai-shek and Feng Yu-hsiang.

"This is the situation that confronts our government:— There has come into power, for no one can say how long, a Nationalist group which holds nominal, momentary sway over all of old China south of the Great Wall. Already it has shown such confidence in its power that it has advised Minister MacMurray that our troops are no longer needed at Peking and Tientsin. For the time, however, American citizens will probably feel safer if the troops are not withdrawn.

"Within a few weeks the situation may take a more definite form, and it is possible that by that time the Nationalists will have shown their ability to retain power.

"In that case we may have witnessed the birth of a nation which will eventually take its place among the greatest and most powerful nations on the earth.

"It cannot, of course, develop into a nation of mills and factories overnight, but the possibilities are there, though the assistance of foreigners and foreign capital will be necessary for years to come."

Dr. Jenks has long been research professor of government and director of the division of Oriental commerce and politics at New York University. He is now engaged in preparing a series of articles on China for the Alexander Hamilton Institute.