

HISTORY

Jap Totalitarianism Is Not Copied From the Nazis

JAPANESE totalitarian nationalism has its psychological and historic roots in the remote past of its present enemy, China, and is not copied from the modern Fascism of Germany and Italy as frequently assumed, the Harvard Institute on War Problems meeting was told by Edwin O. Reischauer of the Harvard University faculty.

Ancient China, the speaker said, was a totalitarian state with an absolute emperor. The country never had a Magna Carta or a Bill of Rights; the idea simply did not occur to anyone. The idea of the empire was carried to Japan soon after the beginning of our era, along with almost all other elements of Japanese civilization. Prior to that time Japan had been a mass of warring petty feudal states, like Europe in the dark ages.

However, the Chinese absolutism was never militaristic. It was built around a civil-service bureaucracy. The Japanese added the idealization of war and the worship of the warrior out of their own primitive feudal background to create their own brand of medieval totalitarianism.

Recognizing China as the source of all their culture, the Japanese developed an inferiority feeling toward the great mainland country, Mr. Reischauer continued. They tried to escape from this in the sixteenth century by conquering China and assuming its place of leadership, but they failed.

This national inferiority complex cropped up in Japan again in the nineteenth century, this time directed toward Occidental culture, and the reaction has been quite similar—an effort to assert superiority by force of arms where they feel inferiority and indebtedness in the matter of culture.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1942

Japan Unlike China

DR. George E. Taylor, who spoke at the same session, stressed the historic dissimilarity between Chinese and Japanese. "There is less likeness between the two nations," he said, "than there is between Germany and France."

In general, he asserted, it is "historical

rubbish" to speak of "Orientals" as if they were all alike. There is no more uniformity among peoples in the Orient than there is in the Occident. Like peoples in the West, Orientals have a tendency to rally to proven leadership.

China is supplying such leadership in the struggle to prevent Japanese hegemony from becoming the successor to European capitalist imperialism and may well become the rallying point for the real new order in Asia.

It will be worth America's while, he declared, to pay any reasonable political price for the continued friendship and support of China.

Science News Letter, July 4, 1942

Deaths from *scarlet fever* have dropped more than 80% since 1900.



A New Star over America

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