Recently in history has a single military event of a few hours' duration exercised so strong an influence upon the existing political situation as has the Japanese attack on Hawaii in the early morning of December 8. The losses inflicted on the United States military machine, which are dealt with in the preceding article, have immediately begun to take effect on the whole war situation.

Japan's repetition of her attack on Hawaii a few days later shows that the events of December 8 cannot be taken for a solitary hit-and-run affair. It is to be expected that Hawaii will from now on appear again and again in the news. We present in the following pages an essay on the strategic importance and military position of Hawaii. Some of the ideas to be found in this essay have been expressed by the author in earlier articles in "The Geographical Review," "Geopolitik," and other publications.

"We Americans could not have chosen a better spot for the Hawaiian Islands than the Lord has done for us." With these words General Drum, one of the most able leaders of the US Army and former commander in chief of Hawaii, has pertinently formulated the importance of the islands for the United States. Indeed, Hawaii is militarily the most important group of islands in the world, whose strategic radius dominates an enormous part of the largest ocean. No other naval base has a controlling position over an equally vast area.

With Hawaii intact at his rear, any attack by an Asiatic opponent on the American West Coast, thousands of miles from the nearest of his own naval bases, would entail a heavy risk. On the other hand a serious attack by the American fleet on Asia would be unthinkable without the naval port of Pearl Harbor with its docks and supplies. The Stars and Stripes over a fortified Hawaii have shifted the western frontier of America from California to the middle of the Pacific, to the advantage of the United States and the disadvantage of Asia. Hence the beautiful islands have been for years, although today more than ever, a focal point of international politics and one of the deciding positions in world strategy.

As if it had a foreboding of what was awaiting it when its existence became known to the world, Hawaii remained hidden as long as possible from the eyes of humanity. For tens of thousands of years the little volcanic islands lay there in the middle of the endless Pacific without anyone, except for a few Polynesians, aware of their existence, and for more than 250 years Spanish ships crossed and recrossed the Pacific without suspecting the presence of the archipelago.

WINDS AND VOYAGES

In 1521, aided by the friendly trade winds, Magellan with three ships made the first crossing of the Pacific by a European. Others followed him; and when, after many vain attempts by the Spaniards to buck the east winds, Urdaneta discovered in 1565 a way to recross the Pacific by a northerly route, a regular service of "Manila galleons" was inaugurated. Their yearly voyages passed only a few degrees to the south of the Hawaiian chain, westbound, and only a few degrees to the north, eastbound, but the prevailing winds and the east-west elongation of
the archipelago preserved the solitude of Hawaii. (See Map I.)

The first south-north navigation of the Central Pacific, performed by Cook, was intercepted by this island net that stretches over 23 degrees of longitude. Toward the end of 1777 Cook sailed from Tahiti in search of the Northwest Passage. On this his third voyage of exploration, he not only discovered Hawaii in 1778 (and paid for it with his life) but also cleared the way for a trade that within a few years was to lure more ships than had crossed the Pacific before in a whole century — the fur trade between the American Northwest and the eager markets of China.

FUR, SANDALWOOD, WHALES,
AND RELIGION

To the sailing vessels that transported furs over one of the world's longest sea routes, the Hawaiian Islands were an ideal port of call. Here, after months of hunting and dealing with Indians on the fur coast, the men found sunshine, rest, fresh food, friendly women, and, if the ships were shorthanded, young Hawaiians ready to go to sea. Soon the skippers discovered one more reason for calling at the islands: sandalwood was found and added to the cargoes of China-bound ships. So violent was the exploitation of the sandalwood of the islands that by 1829 the supply was practically exhausted.

When the fur and sandalwood trades declined, a new factor emerged to make the islands a rendezvous for an increasing number of ships — Pacific whaling. In 1819 the first whalers appeared in Hawaii, and soon they increased from dozens to hundreds a year. Whalers became the commercial mainstay of the islands, until the discovery of petroleum, the American Civil War, and the loss of a whaling fleet in the Arctic in 1871 combined practically to ruin the industry. They visited the islands in spring and fall, for supplies, recruits, and repairs. Summers were spent in the North Pacific, in the Japan, Okhotsk, and Bering Seas, and in the Arctic. Winter found them along the equator. They stimulated commercial life and contributed to the decline of native peoples and customs. Later, one motive for the forcible opening of Japan by the United States was the plight of shipwrecked American whalers.

Through a curious coincidence, the first missionaries, who were also to affect the life of the islands in a most profound way, arrived almost simultaneously with the first whalers. These two groups represented bitterly conflicting principles and forces: devout New England Puritans, who covered the native women with chaste "Mother Hubbards," opposed to lusty sailors who yearned for whisky and girls. Another coincidence favored the missionaries in their effort to introduce Christianity. Unknowingly they had arrived at the opportune moment when the Hawaiians, upset by the vigorously intruding West, had overthrown their ancient gods and taboos. The missionaries acquired followers slowly at first, but with increasing rapidity after the early years. In 1840 the King of Hawaii ordered in the constitution "that no law shall be enacted which is at variance with the word of the Lord Jehovah." Protestantism, as a historian of Hawaii has ably expressed it, had become the state religion of the islands, until it was challenged by the arrival of Roman Catholic missionaries.

ENGLAND
AND THE RUSSIAN BEAR

As a port of call on the fur route between America and China, as a producer of foodstuffs and sandalwood, as a rendezvous for whaleboats, and as a battleground of rival creeds, Hawaii could not help being drawn, soon after its discovery, into the great game of international politics played by Great Britain, France, and the United States.

For several decades England was paramount in the islands. Her prestige
resulted not only from the discovery by Cook but also from the three visits of Vancouver, in 1792-1794, on his voyage to the American Northwest. During Vancouver's last stay in the islands there took place a "cession" of the island of Hawaii to Great Britain, which might have established a kind of protectorate. For a time the Hawaiians referred to themselves as kanaka no Beritane (men of Britain) and counted on British protection. But Vancouver's independent action was never recognized by the British Government, which at that time did not wish to take on any commitments so far away from home.

The first challenge to England's position in the islands came from her ubiquitous rival of the nineteenth century—Russia. In quest of fur, Russians had established themselves on the northeastern shores of Asia and in the Aleutian Islands and Alaska and were reaching down the American coast toward California. The complementary relationship of fur-producing north and food-producing south encouraged such expansion. Russia was thus the white power most directly concerned with the North Pacific, and Russian adventurers dreamed of a North Pacific empire with Hawaii as a connecting link. Scheffer, a physician in the service of the Russian American Company, gained a foothold on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, the chief of which declared himself, in 1816, a vassal of Tsar Alexander I. But the Russian Government refused to sanction either Scheffer's action or several similar attempts by later adventurers. The Russian rule on Kauai was only an episode; and, after the sale of the Russian fort in California to Sutter and of Alaska to the United States, Russian interest in the Hawaiian Islands waned. (For details see the author's The Russians in Hawaii, 1804-1819, Honolulu, 1939.)

OTHERS ARE INTERESTED TOO

A new political rival soon appeared—France. The French lent their sup-
port to the Roman Catholic missionaries, who had stubbornly tried to establish themselves in the islands. The threatening guns of the frigate L’Artémise forced the Hawaiian king in 1839 to revoke his “Ordinance rejecting the Catholic religion.” But no French annexation took place, and when a British naval officer, acting on his own, annexed the islands and ruled them for several months, he was officially disavowed. The delicate balance of power in these islands made the powers watch one another narrowly, each hesitating to annex the islands but sufficiently interested to prevent any other from doing so.

Notwithstanding the excitement of the French interventions, the most serious rivals of the British were the Americans. The Americans possessed only shadowy treaty rights in Hawaii; for the “articles of arrangement” of 1826, although respected by the Hawaiian Government, were never ratified by the United States—evidence of a lack of interest in the Pacific not surprising at that early date. Treaty or no, the American position grew stronger from one decade to the next, while English influence slowly declined.

Most of the whalers and Protestant missionaries were Americans. The Americans, including the missionaries, came from a society in which changes of occupation were common, in contrast with the consecrated Catholic priesthood. Americans acquired the main share of the general business of the islands and led in the growing sugar industry. When the United States obtained its Pacific coast, when the gold rush brought thousands of Americans to California, when transcontinental railroads were built, the islands were tied to North America with bonds so close that Hawaii became almost literally part of it. Sugar, rice, and even citrus fruits were shipped to California. Californian children were sent to Honolulu for schooling when the sea voyage to Hawaii was easier than the mountain- and desert-crossing to the eastern states. On the second regular steamer voyage from San Francisco, Mark Twain arrived to pen a series of letters that helped establish both his and the islands’ fame.

Last to enter the melee over Hawaii was Japan. The emergence of Japan as a modern nation in the second half of the nineteenth century placed a new weight on the Pacific balance of power. Sensing the situation, King Kalakaua of Hawaii visited Japan on his world tour in 1881, diplomatically calling himself an “ Asiatic” and planning the betrothal of a Hawaiian princess to a Japanese prince. Toward the end of the century Japan’s Rising Sun played a part in warming annexation sentiment in the United States.

KING CANE AND THE END OF FREE HAWAII

It was due to commercial and strategic reasons that Hawaii finally lost its independence. Of many commercial crops tried in the islands, sugar cane was the first to achieve unqualified success. Although pineapples are now a good second, sugar retains its leadership in Hawaiian agriculture. The islands raise, on six per cent of their 6,400 square miles, about three per cent of the world’s supply. This copious yield is by no means nature’s bounty but has been obtained by unremitting scientific, technical, and—not least—political enterprise.

The fundamental political goal of Hawaiian sugar interests has been access to the United States market. Reciprocal free trade with the United States was the great desire of the planters under the Hawaiian kingdom. Attainment of this, in 1875, led to a rapid growth in the industry. A clause of the treaty is indicative of one American reason for signing: the Hawaiian king pledged himself to lease or alienate no land to other foreign powers. Renewal of the treaty in 1887 required the additional inducement of a concession on Pearl Harbor for an American naval base. This thin edge of the American wedge was feared, not without reason, by the future queen, Liliuokalani. An Amer-
ican-led revolution forced her to resign. Thus the dynasty of Kamehameha, which had ruled the islands for over a century, came to an end. Shortly afterwards Hawaii lost its independence. The Spanish-American War had tipped the scale. With Guam, taken from Spain, and Wake and Midway, already American, Hawaii was to be a steppingstone. It was annexed by the United States in the years 1897-1898.

**TENSION WITH JAPAN**

It was at this point that serious tension developed between Tokyo and Washington over the question of Hawaii. With 25,000 Japanese living in the islands in 1897, Japan, after her victory over China in 1895 the leading nation in Asia and a new world power, was bitterly opposed to the annexation of Hawaii by the United States. In 1897 about 1,000 Japanese immigrants were refused admission to the islands, for which violation of her treaty rights Japan demanded an indemnity from the Hawaiian Government. The Japanese envoy in Washington even urged his government to dispatch a strong Japanese naval squadron to Hawaii in order to prevent the annexation.

But Japan was too much concerned with her main rival in Eastern Asia, Russia, and eventually withdrew her protest against annexation, receiving US $75,000 from the Hawaiian Government to settle the immigration controversy.

**TRADE AND TRANSPORT**

Ever since its discovery and up to the outbreak of the present war Hawaii has been a crossroads of Pacific navigation. Practically all lines operating in the Pacific called at the islands. There was a steady coming and going of magnificent luxury liners, of sturdy freighters, and many an elegant private yacht. Hawaii was the hub of a wheel whose spokes were shipping lines in all direction of the compass. However, this wheel would have very unequal spokes if they were drawn in proportion to the value of the trade along them. The spoke pointing toward the mainland of the United States would be five thousand times as thick as that pointing toward Australia. Even the second most important spoke, that to Japan, would have but one seventy-fifth the thickness of the American spoke. Of Hawaii's total overseas commerce all but two to four per cent was with the US mainland. In the overseas trade of the United States, Hawaii ranks high. Its sales to the mainland States usually exceed those of such countries as Germany, France, Italy, and China, and its purchases were larger than those of Argentina, Italy, Brazil, and China.

**TRANS-PACIFIC AVIATION AND TELEGRAPH**

For air travel Hawaii was still more the hub of the Pacific. A trans-Pacific air line to Asia has completed over six years of service, and more recently a route to the antipodes came into operation. Until the dream of non-stop stratosphere flights becomes reality, Hawaii is indispensable to aviation across the Central Pacific. Although it is far from the great-circle route between the United States and Asia, its location in the trade-wind belt provides safer flying than the foggy and stormy north. The stops on the Asiatic route were San Francisco, Pearl Harbor, Midway, Wake, Guam, Manila, and Hongkong. The Hawaii-California leg of about 2,100 nautical miles is by far the longest, limiting pay loads and emphasizing the importance of the Hawaiian steppingstone. The antipodean line employs Canton Island, Noumea in New Caledonia, and Auckland as stops beyond Hawaii, with Suva in Fiji as a possible addition. Joint occupancy of Canton Island by the United States and Great Britain (neither party renouncing its claims to this ring of sand) and permission to use French New Caledonia have made possible the abandonment of less satisfactory, though American, steppingstones at landless Kingman Reef and mountain-locked Pago Pago. In its
first four years the Asiatic line has flown more than three million air miles and nearly twenty million passenger miles, an indication that trans-Pacific aviation has passed the experimental stage.

At the close of the World War cable communications were important enough to stir up a teacup tempest over the island of Yap. Extraordinary improvement in radio has made the possession of insular cable and wireless stations less significant today. The American cable to the Orient makes use of Oahu, Midway, and Guam. The British line to the antipodes follows its flag from Canada to Fanning Island, avoiding Hawaii. Four commercial transoceanic wireless systems have stations on Oahu, and there are navy, army, inter-island, and broadcasting stations in the archipelago.

**A FORTY-NINTH STAR?**

Annexation as a fully incorporated territory has not settled all political relationships with the United States. The islands are in most matters a *de facto* forty-ninth state; yet there are many points of misunderstanding. To the islanders, trade with the mainland is the great objective. To the mainlanders, the islands are primarily a Pacific spearhead. On this latter point both imperialistic and isolationist mainland politicians agreed, though they differed as to the purpose of the spear. The white-dominated mainland mistrusts a territory that boasts of its race mixture. To be sure, an immediate effect of annexation was the application of American laws stopping Chinese immigration, and immigration from Japan was diminished by the gentlemen's agreement of 1907 and stopped by law in 1924. Yet almost forty per cent of the islands' population is Japanese—a source of constant uneasiness to the naval and military authorities. And these authorities became the real bosses of Hawaii when it was decided to make the islands the American Gibraltar of the Pacific.

**PEARL HARBOR**

The Hawaiian Archipelago, which takes its name from the largest and most southern of its islands, Hawaii ("the big island"), extends 1,500 miles in a northwesterly direction from Hawaii to Midway. In the whole archipelago there is but a single harbor that can be seriously considered for a navy, Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu, on which is also the city of Honolulu. Hence military establishments are concentrated here. The other islands have been left practically defenseless in the presumption that the fast bombers and fleet units of Oahu could always guarantee their protection.

The center of the Hawaiian naval base, and in war time America's most important sheet of water in the Pacific, are the roughly six square miles of Pearl Harbor. From the air the naval port looks like a tree. Its trunk is the only entrance from the sea. Its branches—West, Middle, and East Loch—are the protected inner parts of the harbor, large enough to shelter the entire US Fleet, and so spacious that even with almost 150 warships in it it still looks empty. (See Map II.)

The Elysian security of this harbor, quiet even during the wildest storms, has two serious disadvantages. First, should the adversary succeed—and in case of war all possibilities must be allowed for—in destroying the only entrance to the harbor by bombs or through sabotage, Pearl Harbor would be nothing but a huge trap for the American fleet, and the latter would be of no more use to Uncle Sam than a few thousand tons of scrap. And secondly, the movements of the fleet through the one narrow entrance take considerable time. In spite of the greatest possible speed the entry of the main body of the fleet during one of the last maneuvers took more than five hours, much too long in an era of blitzkrieg. Naval circles have for years demanded the construction of a second entrance channel. But their opinion did not prevail.
The strategic position of Pearl Harbor, 2,000 miles from the Californian coast, indicates that its significance is not to be seen only in its sheltering the American fleet, but in the existence of an efficient supply and repair base. About 300 million dollars have been spent on its construction. Huge oil tanks, lately of the underground type, and large ammunition dumps in West Loch of Pearl Harbor and in the valley of Lualualei on the west coast of the island have been built.

For a number of years the port has had a dry dock large enough to hold, with its length of 1,000 feet and its width of 138 feet, any American warship with the exception of the broad airplane carriers and the new 35,000 ton battleships. Lately new docks have probably been added, but exact data are not available owing to the veil of military secrecy surrounding them. The naval workshops, covering a wide area in the territory of Pearl Harbor and employing thousands of civilians, were equipped for everything except the building of ships. For the army of employees and workmen whole cities of bungalows have mushroomed out of the ground during the last year and a half.

ONE EIGHTH OF THE US ARMY

The island of Oahu is shaped roughly like a parallelogram with two parallel mountain ranges and a valley between them. (See Map II.) Originally the two ranges were two rows of volcanoes projecting from the sea. They have, however, been so long extinct that craters can hardly be found now. They drop very steeply toward the outer side and are separated from the sea only by a narrow coastal strip. The valley between them — formerly lying far under the surface of the sea, but gradually filled up, first by the streams
of lava, later by erosion—is a shallow trough. This inner part of the island is like a wide corridor, open to the sea in the north and south and protected in the east and west by two mountain ranges rising up to 4,000 feet.

In spite of the small area to be defended in Oahu—598 square miles—the military authorities responsible for Hawaii did not deem it right to surround the island with a rigid concrete ring of fortifications, but have given preference to a system of mobile defense. This explains the importance of the 300 mile network of excellent and constantly improved roads—over both mountain ranges lead roads visited by all tourists because of their incomparable vistas; the position of the main military encampment, Schofield Barracks, approximately in the center of the inner valley; and the surprisingly extensive motorization of the troops. When during a parade of the Hawaiian division I saw only a part of the infantry marching past on foot, while the rest came dashing along on trucks, on motorized guns, and in tanks, this appeared to me, in view of the smallness of the island, an exaggerated sign of American comfort. Even the most distant points of the island are hardly 30 miles away from Schofield. But the motorization is explained by the intention of being able, in case of the landing of enemy troops, to oppose them at any point on Oahu.

Only the southern face of the island—where Pearl Harbor is located—is protected by a chain of the most powerful fortifications with 12, 14, and 16-inch coast artillery. The ammunition dumps of the army have been blasted in deep galleries into the rock of the extinct volcano Aliamanu at a cost of two million dollars and contained ammunition to the value of twenty million dollars.

What is hidden in the crater of Diamond Head, the beautiful landmark of Waikiki, is kept secret. From the plane that flies daily between Honolulu and the island of Hawaii one can see nothing but the crater and a few buildings. Amongst the non-initiated opinions differ: some believe mighty fortifications to be there, while skeptics think that the steep rocks contain nothing but fortified observation posts to direct the fire of other forts.

Schofield Barracks and the various forts probably form the most beautiful troop encampment in the world. More like health resorts than military posts, with wide lawns shaded by palms, they have spacious houses for officers and noncommissioned officers, one for each family, and airy and comfortably furnished barracks for the men. Before the introduction of the draft a year and a half ago the number of US Army troops stationed in Oahu was approximately 20,000 men, at that time one eighth of the entire US Army.

HAWAII'S AIR FORCE

During the last few years the air arm has gained growing importance in the defense system of Oahu. Unlike the German or British it is not a single unit, but is partly under the command of the navy and partly under that of the army. Hawaii was especially proud of the naval air force. It was composed exclusively of quite new models, the greater part of which were flown from California to Oahu. The Americans saw a proof for the reliable efficiency of their air force in the success of the group flights constantly carried out during the last few years from the West Coast to Hawaii.

Of the three most important airports the oldest one (1918) is located on Ford Island in Pearl Harbor and is named Luke Field after a flying officer who fell in the Great War. In 1922 the Army's Wheeler Field (Wheeler was an air force major who had crashed there) was opened at the southern end of Schofield Barracks, about six miles northwest of Pearl Harbor. And since 1935 Hickam Field (named after a lieutenant-colonel who lost his life in 1934 in an airplane disaster) has been established on the east side of Pearl Harbor. Hickam Field was specially provided
for bomber squadrons and became one of the largest and best equipped military airports of the USA, with a landing field 800 by 4,000 feet in size. At various places in Oahu and the other islands secondary airports were established.

**HOW TO FEED HAWAII?**

On December 22 the US Navy Department announced that the 5,645 ton freighter *Lahaina* of the Matson Navigation Company was sunk eleven days before by a submarine while en route to California. This news must have been a severe shock to the people of Hawaii, not just because it was a Hawaiian ship named after a Hawaiian town, but because its loss conjures up a terrible possibility — Hawaii cut off from the mainland. Meanwhile Tokyo declared that up to Christmas ten American merchantmen totaling 70,000 tons have been sunk off Hawaii and another 30,000 tons heavily damaged. How is Hawaii going to exist?

When General Drum was in command of the troops stationed on Hawaii he started a campaign for economic self-sufficiency of the Hawaiian archipelago, especially the island of Oahu. Economic self-sufficiency is an idea so foreign to the American — he is accustomed to consider the German attempts at it as a disagreeable mixture of German stupidity and wickedness — that Drum at first found little sympathy. But in the autumn of 1936 the great American shipping strike, which cut off Hawaii for months from the mainland, opened the people's eyes.

Drum's ideas, which have meanwhile been generally accepted as correct and necessary, amounted to the following. A war in the Pacific will render transport facilities to and from Hawaii very difficult, if they are not entirely destroyed. On Oahu, the most densely populated island of the archipelago and the center of its defense, there are roughly 220,000 civilians and 50,000 members of the armed services. 85 per cent of the foodstuffs necessary for their maintenance comes either from the other islands or — and that mainly — from the States. While the army and navy can lay in (and probably have laid in) enough supplies to be able to feed their members for a lengthy period, the supplies available for the civilian population at any given time would be sufficient for about sixty days.

To alleviate this possible emergency a number of measures have been carried out. Hawaii consists almost exclusively of huge plantations of sugar cane and pineapple. Powerful concerns, the "Big Five," have gradually acquired all good soil and hence made the existence of small individual farms practically impossible. Under the influence of Drum's ideas and with the support of the army, the number of small farms has been slowly increased during the last few years.

A change-over from the almost exclusive cultivation of sugar and pineapple to the production of various foodstuffs is necessary in time of war. In close co-operation between plantations and army, extensive agricultural experiments have been carried out and stocks of seeds laid in. On paper everything is cut and dried, down to the instructions where celery is to be grown. If the plans have not remained on paper, large areas were withdrawn on December 8 from the sole cultivation of sugar and pineapple and have been planted with the laid-in seed-stocks of potatoes, vegetables, rice, corn etc. With the speed at which everything grows in the climate of Hawaii, the first crops might be harvested around February 1942.

**HOW WAS IT POSSIBLE?**

Aside from the food problem the military position of Hawaii seemed strong beyond all doubt and equal to any possible attack — until the morning of December 8. Then came those stunning blows, almost impossible to conceive, which will go down in history as one of the most important events of the present war.

How was it possible?
The answer, it seems to us, is clear. It lies not so much in an insufficient training of American soldiers and sailors, nor in the war material’s quality, nor in the possibility that Hawaii had too few planes or anti-aircraft guns. It lies above all in the spirit of America and of its armed forces. Once again it was that same Maginot spirit, which the opponents of the Axis powers have to thank for so many of their defeats up to now. The Maginot spirit—that is the overestimation of material and the underestimation of man. Just as the investment of billions of French francs and the use of countless tons of concrete in the Maginot Line proved to be useless against the spirit of assault, the originality, the thoroughness, and the enthusiasm of the German armies, the gigantic fortifications of Hawaii, built up over a period of years with America’s wealth of money and material, failed against the boldness and self-sacrificing spirit of Japanese sailors and airmen. What are the finest armored plates against human torpedoes and suicide bombers?

When considering in America today the bitter question, “How was it possible?” one should study, in one of the many good American history books, the background and events of the Russo-Japanese War and especially its first twenty-four hours. One would discover startling parallels. Both the Russia of Nicholas II and the America of Roosevelt attempted, as outside powers, to hinder the leading nation of the Far East in its growth. Both believed that they were dealing with a wholly inferior adversary, and both had similarly contemptuous expressions for their Japanese opponents. “We shall finish them by throwing our caps over them,” said the Russians in 1904; “We shall blast the Japanese Navy out of the Pacific,” it was said in America in 1941. Both Russia then and America now believed that Japan was “just bluffing” and failed to take her as seriously as she deserved. The American historians of the Russo-Japanese War were with their sympathies almost all on the side of Japan and exposed with utmost clarity the mistakes of the Tsarist policy. How are they going to describe the road to the present Pacific war?

At bottom what we are witnessing between America and Japan today is a repetition of what took place between Russia and Japan nearly forty years ago. And we remember, when reading about the Japanese attack on Hawaii, that the Russo-Japanese War began by the Japanese fleet unexpectedly attacking the Russian fleet asleep off the first-class naval port of Port Arthur and dealing it a blow at the very start (2 out of 7 battleships and 1 out of 6 cruisers were destroyed) from which it never recovered.

A friend from Hawaii once suggested that the islands should be turned into an international park, a sort of Pacific Switzerland, its neutrality sacred to all. This suggestion has not much chance of being fulfilled. For it is the stern fate of those beautiful islands to lie in a focal point of tremendous strategic and political importance and that in recent years they have become the outpost of American imperialism.

At one time the fact that they lay in the center of the largest of all oceans was their blessing, for it enabled them to carry on a peaceful existence hidden in its vastness. Since their discovery this circumstance has become their misfortune, and today they are caught in the maelstrom of a gigantic struggle.

It is easy to say that both America and Asia would be better protected if the Hawaiian Islands did not exist and if unbroken ocean rolled from continent to continent. But here they are, and here they are likely to remain. And whoever is in possession of the islands will fill them with guns and planes.