THE

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By

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: This is a study of the Japanese role in the events leading up to the creation of the state of Manchoukuo in 1932, with the emphasis of the study being placed on domestic Japanese politics.

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PREFACE

"An adequate understanding of the problem requires a two-fold analysis: an examination of the politico-economic situation in Manchuria preceding the crisis, and an analysis of the economic and social forces which dominated the Japanese body politic at the time..." (Takeuchi T.).

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation will deal with the Japanese 'annexation' of Manchuria in 1932. The word annexation is placed in quotation marks to indicate that in a legalistic sense Japan did not annex Manchuria, she merely set up a puppet regime in that country and was content to rule by means of 'advisers'. The word is retained, however, since, as defined by the Pocket Oxford Dictionary. the verb 'annex' means:

> "to add, append... as a subordinate part; take possession of (territory etc.) "

Whatever the legal niceties of the situation, there is little doubt that in 1931-32 Japan did in fact 'take possession of' the area known as Manchuria.

The implications of this takeover were great and they affected not only Japan herself but also the League of Nations and the whole international community.

The League of Nations was designed by the Allied powers in the wake of the First World War, primarily as a system of collective security, aimed at the collective prevention of aggression and intended to prevent the outbreak of another world conflagration. The importance of the Manchurian Incident to the League of Nations is underlined by the two following quotations:

> "...the menace of war between China and Japan suddenly confronted the League with its first opportunity to intervene in a dispute between first-class powers." [1]

> "The League will have a hard task in bringing this militarist conspiracy to heel. If it shirks the task it is hard to say how far Japanese aggression may go. But one thing is certain, it will be a heavy blow to the credit of the League of Nations as a guarantee of international justice or an effective agency for world peace." [2]

These were prophetic words indeed from the editor of the Manchester Guardian. It is now past history how first Japan, then Italy, then Germany defied the League's authority, culminating in the breakdown of the twenty years 'peace' in 1939.

One aspect of the importance of the Manchurian Incident, therefore, is that it was the first occasion on which the League was forced to intervene between two big powers - and on its first intervention, it failed, as it was to do repeatedly, later in the decade.

The Manchurian Affair had important implications for Japan also. It is generally agreed that the episode marked the end of the period of experimentation which had begun in Japan with the Meiji Restoration[3] of 1868. It is this aspect of the Manchurian crisis which will be the focus of this dissertation.

The method used in this dissertation is primarily historical. This is not necessarily the only useful approach to the problem - for example, a 'decision-making'[4] approach to the power struggle within Japan in 1931-32 would probably yield interesting results.

The historical method was chosen, however, because the Manchurian Incident was not an event in isolation - its occurrence and the gravity of its effects are very largely accounted for by the political and social history of Japan between 1868 and 1931. Not all of the political and social currents sweeping Japan during these years have been dealt with - nevertheless it is hoped that in Chapter I (dealing with the failure to establish a truly liberal-democratic system of government in pre-1931 Japan), Chapter II (dealing with the rise of intense nationalism), and Chapter III (outlining the importance of Manchuria to the three most concerned powers), sufficient background material has been provided for the events of 1931 and 1932 and the actions of the participants, to be adequately explained.

CHAPTER I: THE FAILURE OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN JAPAN 1889-1931.

It will be argued in this Chapter that there were three basic reasons for the failure to establish a system of representative government in Japan during the years 1889 to 1931. These reasons were:

(1) the constitutional environment.

(2) the impact of Japanese capitalism.

(3) the social environment.

These are not intended to be mutually exclusive, the division into three categories being analytical only; also the 'social environment' category will be found to overlap into the Chapter dealing with revolutionary nationalism. (Chapter II)

The term 'constitutional environment' includes not only the actual Meiji constitution of 1889 but also its accompanying laws and, what may be termed constitutional conventions - that is, unwritten customs and practices which are important in understanding the post-1889 system of government. An example of this would be the Genro, which was an extra-constitutional body but which is of central importance in the Japanese politics of this period.

The Meiji Constitution of 1889 was principally the work of Ito Hirobumi[1] who drafted it according to three

guiding principles or ideas. First, the constitution must be the gift of the sovereign and must not imperil his powers or status. Second, it must preserve the power of the oligarchy in whose hands the transition of Japan from a traditional to a modern state had been and was taking place. Third, it must meet the popular demand for a representative assembly.

In theory, the Meiji Constitution was a gift from the Emperor to the Japanese people. This had two important consequences:

(1) initiation of constitutional amendments became an Imperial prerogative.

(2) liberalism had been robbed of its basic premise - popular sovereignty.

The constitutional rights of the Emperor were wide-ranging,[2] but were to be exercised only on the advice of his counsellors, that is to say, in accordance with Japanese tradition the Emperor was to reign but not to rule.

The constitution provided for a bi-cameral legislature or Diet - the House of Peers and the House of Representatives (the latter being elected). Before the passage of the Universal Manhood Suffrage Act[3] in 1925 there were high property qualifications for both candidates and franchise. All statutes required approval by the House of

Representatives as well as by the House of Peers but the Diet as a whole had only limited control over the national finances. An article of the Constitution provided that:

> "When the Imperial Diet has not voted on a budget, or when the budget has not been brought into actual existence, the government shall carry out its budget of the previous year."

The House of Peers[4] was a generally conservative body and had an effective veto on legislation passed by the elected House, which, in addition, was faced with other well-established centres of power usually hostile to it. These included the civil bureaucracy, (of particular importance was the Imperial Household Ministry since it was through this agency that an audience with the Emperor might be secured); the Privy Council, which was the highest constitutional advisory to the Emperor; and the military. After 1900 it became law that the Ministers of War (Army) and Marine (Navy) - (which any cabinet must include) always had to be selected from the active lists of the Army and Navy respectively. As Vinacke has pointed out:

> "The consequences of this was that no cabinet could be completed unless the Satsuma and Choshu military men, and this meant primarily Yamagata, were willing to support the cabinet." [5]

By far the most important group, however, were the Genro or Elder Statesmen. (See Table I.1). This group was composed of men who had taken the leading part in the transformation of Japan. The group included Ito, Yamagata,

Inouye, Oyama, Matsukata, and later Katsura and Saionji. These were the real decision makers in post-1889 Japan. From the outset then, as Langdon has argued:

> "...the government system was heavily weighted against the elected Diet members and their political parties which were anathema to most bureaucrats." [6]

Thus the movements for 'liberalism' and representative government were faced with an unpromising constitutional environment. The subsequent history of these movements within this environment will now be examined.

From 1889 until around the time of the first Sino-Japanese War 1894/1895 there was almost complete opposition between the clan leaders entrenched in the cabinet[7] and the parties controlling the House of Representatives. The parties were pledged to the implementation of the parliamentary system and to the establishment of party controlled cabinets whereas the clan leaders held the view that government, being the 'Emperor's government' must stand outside the political parties, as a harmonizing factor in the nation. Commenting on these early post-Constitution years Vinacke has written that:

> "It soon became evident that the Diet had been given sufficient power to enable it to obstruct but not control, and no provision save resort to the Imperial rescript, had been made for a composition of differences between the two branches of government.(i.e. executive and legislative)." [8]

The parties'[9] tactics were to use the only real weapon they

had, that is their limited power over the budget, to strike at the salaries and pensions of the lesser bureaucracy, which constituted the ultimate power base of the oligarchy. The government stood firm on the constitutional provision prohibiting reduction of expenditures already fixed and resorted to intimidation, manipulation of elections, and bribery to 'persuade' members to pass more favourable budgets.

R.A. Scalapino has argued that:

> "The Meiji Constitution was essentially an attempt to unite two concepts which, when viewed in the abstract were irreconcilable: Imperial absolutism and popular government. Consequently, if the Meiji Constitution were to be workable in any degree these abstract concepts had to be compromised in the practical operation of government."[10]

By 1894/95 there was acceptance among individuals of both sides that this head-on conflict could not continue indefinitly and that, therefore, some compromise system must be worked out. It became a source of serious concern to elements among the 'bureaucrats' as to how long they could rely on the use of Imperial prestige to overrule the opposition of the parties. Compromise held its attractions for the liberals too; after five years of conflict it had become apparent that their only weapon (limited power over the budget) had not been effective against the entrenched oligarchy and that after five years they were stuck with their principles but lacked the power to implement them.

The Sino-Japanese War brought internal peace to Japanese politics for the first time since the Restoration. In the aftermath of the war a split began to develope in the ranks of the oligarchs between the 'civil' and 'military' factions led by Oto and Yamagata respectively. This development

TABLE I.1

MEMBERS OF THE GENRO, OR ELDER STATESMEN

NAME	YEAR OF DEATH	CIVIL OR MILITARY	CLAN ORIGIN
Ito Hirobumi	1909 (assassinated)	Civil	Choshu
Inouye Kaoru	1915	Civil	Choshu
Katsura Taro	1913	Military	Choshu
Matsukata Masayoshi	1924	Military	Satsuma
Oyama Iwao	1916	Military	Satsuma
Saionji Kimmochi	1940	Civil	Kuge
Yamagata Aritomo	1922	Military	Choshu

ushered in a period of temporary alliances or ententes between one of the factions of the oligarchy and one or other of the 'liberal' parties. The first of these ententes was between the Ito cabinet and the Jiyuto. What was involved was (a) party support for the government's programme and (b) the party received a post in the cabinet, 'spoils' for

party members and contributions to party funds. This system of alliances was, however, unsatisfactory to both sides - the cause of party government was not advanced nor was political stability attained. By 1900:

> "...it was overwhelmingly clear that neither the alliance system nor 'pure' cabinets, be they party or oligarchic based, could work very satisfactorily within the Japanese institutional framework." 11

In 1900 Yamagata was for the moment Premier and the 'military' faction of the oligarchy in control. This state of affairs resulted in a coalition of the political 'outs' - that is, Ito ('civil' faction) and the leadership of one of the major parties - the Kenseito. There were advantages in the coalition for both - Ito needed a power base outside of the oligarchy, and the Kenseito leaders, after ten years of operating inside the Meiji constitutional structure had reached the conclusion that the only possible access to political power was under the auspices of the Genro. A new party was formed under Ito's leadership - the Rikken Seiyukai (Association of the Friends of Constitutional Government). It should be noted that the Kenseito made the greater concessions in the union, agreeing to the Imperial interpretation of the Constitution and, in effect, committing themselves in advance to an undeclared policy. Thus, faced with the dilemma of a choice between their principles and access to power (or, more accurately, to the trappings of power) the 'liberal' parties opted for the

latter:

> "...not being able to control the government and, consequently, to determine its constitution and the distribution of the spoils, the parties began to compete with one another for the privilege of an alliance with the government of the day in order that they might reap some of the rewards of political life and activity."[13]

To what extent was the constitutional environment responsible for the 'liberals' decision? Certainly the institutional structure had an effect - it rendered unity (among the parties) useless, because even united they had not the power to control the administrative machinery. By placing power in the hands of the (anti-liberal) Genro it made the parties subject to tactics of 'divide and rule' employed by the oligarchy - tactics which were only too successful; and by obscuring the real centre of power it contributed to intrigue and secret decision-making processes- both inimical (in theory) to a system of representative government. In addition, because real power lay, not with the people but with a small group, the parties, once they had commenced their pursuit of power were forced to shift their attention away from the people, thus isolating themselves from their only natural power base.

Despite these factors, the parties were, on occasion, able to exert great pressure. For example, in 1913 they successfully challenged oligarchic misuse of the Emperor and forced the resignation of Katsura as Prime

Minister.[14] This represented perhaps the best opportunity for the 'liberal' parties to effect substantial changes in the way Japan was being governed. There was a great deal of antagonism toward the oligarchy amongst the intellectuals, the newspapers, and the general public. When, in 1914 Okuma (who had consistently condemned the party leaders for compromising their principles in their dealings with the bureaucracy) became Premier, there seemed real hope that the party movement might break out of the bureaucratic web into which it had been drawn. The story of Okuma's ministry is, however, depressingly similar to what had gone before. R.A. Scalapino has well described the situation as it existed at this time:

> "Under the Japanese institutional structure there seemed indeed, no alternative. The Genro were entrusted automatically by the Emperor with the selection of each new Premier, a selection which need bear no relationship whatsoever to the prevailing majority party in the House of Representatives. The only real necessity which a Premier faced was that of placating the various groups that controlled the vital parts of the administration. A compromise had to be reached with the Genro in the first place and then with the army and navy, which controlled two cabinet posts, and also with the House of Peers which could not be dissolved. As for the House of Representatives, any cabinet as the Okuma ministry was to show, could enter a hostile Diet, dissolve it, and manipulate the elections in such a manner as to come out with a controlling majority." [15]

The parties continued to face hostility from the greater part of the bureaucracy - civil and military, whilst, at the same time. absorbing state officials, mili-

tarists, and peers into their membership, and indeed leadership. Thus Hara Takashi, Prime Minister from 1918 to 1921, was widely hailed as the 'Great Commoner' whilst being in fact a member of the nobility.[16] By the 1920's the parties had reached their greatest strength and party cabinets became the order of the day. However, in the course of twenty-five years the 'realities' of power had wrought important changes:

> "The desire for office rather than principle was the unifying factor." [17]

The situation was perhaps best stated by the Japanese newspaper Yomiuri (22 June 1922):

> "What the Seiyukai wants is not the establishment of party government, but the perpetuation of Seiyukai government. For this purpose it is more expedient for it to leave power in the hands of the Genro and thereby facilitate the alternate transfer of government between the Seiyukai and the bureaucrats rather than to wrest power entirely from the Genro."[18]

Thus the parties of the 1920's were different from those of 1889. They had compromised their principles all along the line in the pursuit of power and, in so doing, had lost sight of their original raison d'être.

By 1930 the party movement had become isolated from public support and a series of financial scandals had discredited the 'liberal' parties in the eyes of many. The parties themselves were equivocal in their support for the principles on which representative government could be

based, and, despite the fact that all save Saionji of the Genro were gone, the principles of oligarchic government had not died with them.

There can be little doubt that the Meiji Constitution and the institutional structure were obstacles in the path of liberalism and representative government, as has been outlined above. However, the constitutional environment was not the only, or indeed, the most important factor in the failure of these movements. It is necessary next to consider the impact of Japanese capitalism on the party movement.

In tracing the development of Japanese capitalism it is important to note the social discrimination which had existed against the commercial classes during the Shogunate. This social stigma was not to be cast off easily and accounts to some extent for the disparity between the economic power of the business class and their lack of political influence in the years before the Russo-Japanese War. The government however, attempted to destroy the stigma attached to commerce and encouraged the ex-nobility to go into business. This policy was effective and a large number of the new industrial leaders were men of the old samurai class.

The development of capitalism in Japan followed a different path from that of the West with important con-

sequences for the political system. In Britain and the U.S. capitalism and liberal-democracy were mutually reinforcing factors and gave rise to a 'free-enterprise', competitive ethic, both in economics and politics.[19] The Japanese 'industrial revolution' occurred much later than that of the West and was largely carried out from 'above' rather than below. That is, the industrialization of Japan was mainly the result of state rather then private finance and initiative. One of the consequences which dependency on the government had on the embryonic business class, was a great reluctance to attack the power or purposes of the state. This reaction was also partly one of self-defence in that actions which could be interpreted as hostile to the government might well lead to a loss of business:

> "If a businessman speaks out against the Government, officials carry their custom elsewhere." [20]

Up until 1904/5 the emergent business class played virtually no part in politics. After this time the business elite was concerned mainly to try to ensure a united government which would maximize their profit opportunities. To this end the industrialists played a key role in promoting the cooperation between the party leaders and certain of the oligarchs. The large industrial concerns (especially Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, and Yasuda)[21] used the contacts they had with both groups of political leaders in order to enable them to combine into a workable coalition. It should be re-

membered that even when industry was well established, the zaibatsu (and the other capitalists) still suffered from a feeling of insecurity, partly economic and partly social. The economic insecurity was essentially a function of the inability of the domestic market to absorb the large Japanese G.N.P. - socially the 'anti-business' pressure exerted by the propertied agrarian classes was considerable. As Scalapino has commented:

> "What the landowners lacked in concentrated wealth or state priorities they made up in votes." [22]

This insecurity, coupled with a tradition of dependency upon the state had an important effect upon the political behaviour and ideas of the Japanese business class. Although some elements of this class were sympathetic to Western liberal-democratic ideas, by reason of education and international contacts, generally speaking their political philosophy was that of the organic theory of the state - a theory which was not at odds with the familial-paternalist tradition in Japanese philosophy. Many of the political actions of the zaibatsu then, were directed toward the integration of the parties, the bureaucracy and the Emperor, in an attempt to fulfil their ideal.

There is therefore a direct contrast between Japanese and Western capitalism - the one asserting the virtues of individualism, the other of paternalism. Where Western

capitalism developed with and supported the liberal representative theories of government (involving a system of checks and balances) Japanese capitalism was generally opposed to such theories and advocated the interdependence of the various parts of the state.

To turn now to the specifics of the impact of the zaibatsu[23] on the 'liberal' parties in Japan, it has already been noted that the industrialists attempted to maintain close relations with both the party leaders and the bureaucracy in order to promote the unity and harmony of the state and, it may be surmised, in order to ensure a stable political situation which would be 'good for business'. This unifying function was carried on behind the scenes and it may be argued that this was one stage in the retreat of the parties from 'open' parliamentary politics to a backstage bargaining type of politics.

One important factor, which must not be neglected, is the opprobrium with which the parties came to be regarded as a result of the frequent bribery scandals. There can be little doubt that the zaibatsu were deeply implicated in the widespread political corruption, though, as has been pointed out:

> "The businessmen who gave bribes were usually smaller businessmen who were not powerful enough in themselves to command favourable treatment from the government. On the other hand the greatest source of political donations as distinct from bribes, was popularly

supposed to be the zaibatsu, the Mitsui supporting the Seiyukai and the Mitsubishi the Minseito."[24]

In this context however, the distinction between a 'bribe' and a 'donation' seems to be rather a fine one. In the so-called 'era of party governments' in the 1920's there was an ever increasing tide of public disgust at the spectacle of widespread corruption, especially at this time of economic recession and considerable distress among the urban and rural working classes.

In summary then, Japanese capitalism had two major deleterious effects on the development of representative government:

(1) its philosophy of the organic nature of the state was a negation of the liberal theory of government.

(2) by the methods it used in attempting to put its philosophy into practice (large scale bribery) it contributed to the discrediting of the 'liberal' parties and the movement for representative government.

The social environment contributed to the failure of liberalism in a number of ways. In the first place it must be remembered that the Western theories were at odds with much that was important in the Japanese political culture. Except for a tiny minority of intellectuals, there was no attachment to the values and principles which were essential for the liberal-democratic system of government

to work properly. This is not to say that by a process of education and socialization a liberal-democratic value structure could not have been built up in Japanese society. Such a policy would undoubtedly have been a slow and difficult process but it was quite within the realm of possibility.

In practice education was used as an instrument of state policy to perpetuate the old ideas and values. Langdon has argued that:

> "...traditional principles of a diffuse, affective, and superstitious kind were used to indoctrinate or socialize schoolchildren."[25]

Also, as was noted by a contemporary observer of the Japanese scene:

> "The present system of education makes for the perpetuation of an Oriental type of despotic government: it is no preparation at all for the adoption of constitutionalism of a western type."[26]

This was in keeping with the policy of the leadership group after about 1880, by which time they were trying to:

> "...adopt only European industry, technology and armament - 'the material civilization' of the West - and restrict the infiltration of various undesirable political influences such as Christianity and liberal-democracy to a minimum."[27]

By about 1890 the government had brought into existence an educational system which was aimed at inculcating obedience and traditional ethical principles into the mass

of the people and at expounding the national virtues and the supremacy of the 'Japanese Way'. (For a further discussion of education in connection with the rise of revolutionary nationalism see Chapter II below). In the present context there can be little doubt that the education system was a major factor behind the failure of liberalism.[28]

The legal situation in Japan must also be taken into account. The civil rights sections of the Meiji Constitution were nearly always accompanied by the phrase "...subject to the provisions of law." That is, the Constitution afforded no real protection for civil liberties. Indeed, many laws were passed which severely limited such 'rights' as freedom of speech and freedom of association. The culmination of this legal restriction of liberty by the government came in 1925 (the same year as the Universal Manhood Suffrage Act was passed) with the passage of the Peace Preservation Law:

> "Anyone who has formed a society with the object of altering the national polity or the form of government or denying the system of private ownership, or anyone who has joined such a society with full knowledge of its objects shall be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a term not exceeding ten years."

The law was originally aimed at communists and anarchists but it was capable of being interpreted in such a way as to apply to social democrats or anyone else who questioned the Japanese way of life. As time went on the law did come

to be interpreted in this way and was used, for example, to impose press censorship. It must be noted that in the matter of suppression of civil liberties, the parties showed themselves to be just as, if not more reactionary than the bureaucracy.

This raises questions as to just how liberal the 'liberal' parties actually were. However, since the main emphasis of this dissertation will be on foreign policy, it is sufficient in this regard to state that in foreign affairs the 'liberal' parties had a long record of advocating nationalistic and aggressive policies. Clyde and Beers point out that the difference between the 'liberal' politicians and the militarists was a difference about 'means' rather than 'ends', the 'liberals' being:

> "...more sensitive to the implications of direct action and often more disposed to seek solutions through diplomacy rather than force."[29]

CHAPTER II: THE RISE OF ULTRA - NATIONALISM IN JAPAN

In Chapter I, the failure of liberal-democracy to establish firm roots in Japan has been discussed. The other major current in Japanese society during the period 1889 - 1931 was the growth of extreme nationalist movements and ideology.

Prior to describing the development of Japanese nationalism and attempting an explanation of that development, it may be useful to discuss some of its main characteristics and in particular to indicate why Japanese nationalism often evoked such epithets as 'ultra' and 'extreme'. Firstly, the story of Japanese nationalism is also one of the territorial expansion of the Japanese Empire and of increasing military involvement in the affairs of government, culminating in a virtual military dictatorship in the 1930's. The list of wars and expeditions which have generally been described as aggressive and imperialistic is a long one - the Sino-Japanese War 1894/5; the Russo-Japanese War 1904/5; the Siberian Expedition; the Manchurian Incident 1931; (this list is by no means an exhaustive one) - eventually culminating in the attacks on China and later on the U.S. at Pearl Harbour. The second major characteristic of Japanese nationalism has been its anti-individualistic nature. To quote from the

instruction manual "The Way of the Subject":

> "...we must never forget that even in our personal lives we are joined to the Emperor and must be moved by the desire to serve our country."[1]

In other words contrary to Western liberal ideas, there was no clear line of distinction drawn between that which concerned society as a whole, and that which was of individual concern only. A third factor was the belief that the Emperor was the embodiment both of absolute morality and absolute power - this belief lent itself to the equation of power with morality:

> "What determined the everyday morality of Japan's rulers was neither an abstract consciousness of legality nor an internal sense of right and wrong, nor again any concept of serving the public; it was a feeling of being close to a concrete entity known as the Emperor..."[2]

Thus Japanese nationalism was characterized by expansionism, anti-individualism (and its corollary-regimentation), and an elite that was prone to identify power with morality.

The development of modern Japanese nationalism[3] really started with the shock produced by:

(a) the internal struggle over the Meiji Restoration.

(b) the fear of foreign encroachment such as had occurred in China.

These events led to the growth of a feeling of national awareness or consciousness at least amongst a part of the

samurai class. The initial reaction of the ruling class towards the Western impact may be characterized as one of "Oust the barbarians!" combined with a reliance on the agrarian society and the agrarian virtues. This agrarian primitivist heritage was of continuing importance in the development of Japanese nationalism and will be dealt with in more detail later. At this point however, it is sufficient to note that the leadership of Japan during the Meiji era fell to that part of the samurai class which advocated technological modernization in order to build a strong and prosperous nation, as being the only way by which Western domination of the country could be avoided. The consciousness of the concept of the 'nation' which affected part of the samurai class, permeated the rest of Japanese society in the thirty or so years following the Meiji Restoration. This process was a result, partly of the deliberate and conscious policy of the ruling elite and partly of the reaction of the Japanese to various foreign stimuli.

A vital factor in cultivating a feeling of nationality was the decision of the post-Restoration leaders to disestablish Buddhism and to reinvigorate Shintoism as the state philosophy. The three essential tenets of State Shintoism were:

(a) an unbroken, divine, imperial sovereignty.

(b) the belief in Japan as the 'land of the gods' i.e. that Japan was endowed with special qualities because

of divine ancestors.

(c) a belief that Japan had a benevolent mission or destiny.

Richard Storry has commented that:

> "...the three elements - loyalty to the throne, sense of mission, and belief in the possession of superlative inborn qualities - constituted the essential national character or polity of modern Japan. This 'national polity' was known as kokutai." [4]

Storry sees the ideology of kokutai as being at the source of Japanese nationalism.

Several students of Japanese history and politics have noted that the educational system was efficiently used to inculcate nationalism into the masses of the population. After some initial hesitation the government in 1890 opted for a system of education based largely on the German model.[5] The emphasis on the curriculum drawn up by the Department of Education was on hinsei toya, (i.e. character education). In practice this meant the inculcation of traditional ethical principles with the interests of the state in mind.[6] The Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890 set forth the basic principles which were to govern education in Japan. All moral and civic instruction after 1890 was based on the ideas - mainly Confucian - set out in this document:

> "Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue;...advance public good and promote common interests; always respect

> the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the state; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne..." [7]

As time progressed the Japanese educational programme came more and more to emphasize the indoctrination of the basic principles coupled with vocational training. That the programme was aimed at the masses can be seen from the figures presented in Table II.1.

TABLE II.1.

YEAR	PROPORTION OF CHILDREN AT SCHOOL*
1894	61.7 per cent
1903	93.2 per cent
1907	almost 100 per cent

* i.e. at primary school

The results of this system of primary education have been well described by Scalapino:

> "...the average student went to his life work stamped with the traits of complete reverence for the Emperor; unquestioning obedience to the state; and ignorance combined with fantasy concerning the social sciences. Nor did these traits characterize the common people only; ... in varying degree they were to be found in the elitist elements as well." [8]

In addition to the formal education system it can

be argued that compulsory military service performed an educative function in some respects. Firstly, it completed the process of instilling patriotism, obedience, and loyalty to the Emperor which was begun in the schools and secondly it performed an integrative function for the Japanese nation by increasing the mobility of the typical peasant recruit who, during his military service realized, perhaps for the first time, that Japan did not end at the boundary of his village.[9] In this connection it is interesting to note the argument by D.M. Brown that:

> "By a conscious and determined effort on the part of the elite, the samurai code of ethics (Bushido) tended to become the code of ethics for all loyal citizens of the Japanese state, but particularly for the soldiers in the new national army...in the hands of the post-Restoration leaders Bushido not only became a powerful cohesive force within the army but served gradually as a very effective means of directing the loyalties of all Japanese citizens to the Emperor, the symbolic head of the nation."[10]

Although Brown does not mention conscription in this connection, there can be little doubt that the presence of all adult males in the armed forces for some period (where they were available for indoctrination purposes) helped to spread the tenets of Bushido throughout the population and thus increased the homogeneity of Japanese society.

Although it may seem paradoxical to say that the high degree of factionalism and sectionalism in pre-Restoration society was of assistance later in developing

nationalism, this may well have been the case in Japan. The rationale for this statement is that the local nobility in 'traditional' Japan demanded a great deal of loyalty from their 'subjects'. At the time of the Restoration when the local lords surrendered their lands to the Emperor, there may also have been a transference of loyalty from the local level to the national.

There can be little doubt too that the business classes contributed to national unity. The fact that, initially at least, it was state initiative and finance which gave impetus to the industrialization process made the zaibatsu and other business interests extremely sensitive to pressure from the political and military leadership. Although they were always aware of the anti-business elements of Japanese nationalism, especially in its agrarian forms, many facets of the nationalistic doctrines (e.g. the organic theory of the state) were looked upon with favour by big business.

As can be seen above the Meiji elite made considerable efforts to preserve and reinvigorate certain features of the Japanese traditional culture. In order to do this however, they adopted Western techniques and know-how; for example, the educational system was based on the German model but what was taught was in accord with Japanese tradition. Many writers have pointed out this

conscious attempt on the part of the Japanese leaders to use superior Western technology and methods in order to preserve:

(a) the independent existence of Japan.

(b) the essentials of Japanese culture and spiritual life.

D.M. Brown has argued, validly, in the opinion of this writer that:

> "The driving force behind the entire Meiji reform programme was the urge, on the part of the young leaders of the new government to achieve greater national strength. The pattern of the reform movement was accordingly dominated by a military theme and it carried, to an amazing degree, the imprint of government sponsorship."[11]

A strong, well-equipped army and a modernized, industrial economy became the symbols of national strength in Japan, the initial goal of the elite being the revision of the unequal treaties.[12]

The intensity with which the struggle to revise these treaties was fought seems to be a function of several factors, probably interacting together. At first sight the obvious explanation is that the elite was determined not to allow the Western powers to encroach upon and dominate Japan as they had done in China. However, A.E. Hindmarsh adds another dimension to this usual interpretation:

> "In spite of their extraordinary practicability, the Japanese people are deeply swayed by intangibles in their relations with the Western world.

> The ardent nationalism of the nineteenth century which induced an entire people to remodel its social, political, and economic institutions in a generation was motivated as much by the bushido doctrine of 'renchishin' or consciousness of shame, as by a desire to achieve a modern state organization in order to fend off the dangers of Western aggressiveness by which China had been so clearly victimized."[13]

Another factor which may have played an important role is proposed by E.O. Reischauer who thinks that:

> "...a sense of inferiority - the contrast of the lesser unit with the obviously greater unit - has had a larger share in the shaping of this tremendous modern force (i.e. nationalism) than has often been recognized."[14]

As can be seen above there were a variety of factors at work in the creation of a Japanese national consciousness. By the 1890's, and especially by the time of the Sino-Japanese War (1894/5) there was a level of consciousness that for the first time could be described as modern nationalism:

> "In previous decades there had been nationalist thought and action, but it was limited principally to one section of the ruling class."[15]

In the 1890's there appeared for the first time in Japan a strong sense of mass identification with the nation that is typical of modern nationalism. The intensity of this feeling of nationalism continued to grow until after the Russo-Japanese War (1904/5) partly in response to the threat to Japan perceived as coming from Russian imperialism, and partly as an expression of resentment against

actions by the Western powers such as the Tri-partite Intervention of 1895 whereby Russia, France, and Germany forced Japan to return the Liaotung Peninsula to China. The announcement of the war with Russia in 1904 was greeted with tremendous popular enthusiasm which was intensified by the victory over the Western power. Although there was some popular dissatisfaction with the peace terms obtained, the victory over Russia marked the beginning of a new period in Japanese nationalism, a period, in which the emphasis was more on pride in what had been achieved so far, combined with a mood of confidence for the future, rather than on the aggressiveness of earlier years which had been partly a function of a feeling of inferiority to the West. This period in Japanese nationalism lasted until the end of the First World War, after which time growing feelings of external insecurity and domestic dissension resulted in the development of a more strident, almost hysterical, nationalism.

The external stimuli which contributed to the growth (or re-growth) of aggressive nationalism after 1918 were a series of events which were damaging to the national pride of large sections of the Japanese population and which led to a decline in respect for the 'parliamentary' system of government. Storry lists nine of these events as being of major importance between 1919 and 1930. They were:

(1) the failure, at Versailles, to secure the inclusion of a racial equality clause in the Charter of the League of Nations - the practical effect of such a clause would have been to imply the right of emigration to Japanese citizens.

(2) the termination by Britain of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

(3) the Nine Power Treaty (which provoked a great deal of opposition among nationalists because it put restraints upon an aggressive policy towards China).

(4) the humiliating evacuation from Siberia in 1922.

(5) the U.S. racialist 'exclusion' legislation of 1924.

(6) the reduction of the strength of the standing army by 20% in the mid-1920's.

(7) the military debacle in Shantung 1927-8.

(8) the ratification of the Kellogg Pact - which was widely regarded as an encroachment on the prerogatives of the Emperor.

(9) the terms of the London Naval Treaty of 1930.[16]

It is important to note in connection with the above, the vital importance of foreign trade to the Japanese economy. Since Japan's industrial development had occurred later than that of the West she found herself in competition with more advanced nations and had tended to

rely to a great extent upon special commercial rights and privileges on the Asian continent, especially in Manchuria and China. Note also that Japan's leaders were conscious of a rapidly increasing population with which food supply was not keeping pace.[17] The solution for this problem was perceived to be either mass emigration to other countries or territorial expansion and colonization (of the Asian mainland). Of Storry's list of nine events, all but number eight bear directly on either the foreign trade or the population problem.

In addition to external factors, there was considerable economic and social unrest in post-war Japan which played a part in the resurgence of nationalism. The wholesale price index rose by 80% in a period of ten months (December 1917 to September 1918) whilst wages rose only 20% in the same period. The result was mass discontent expressed in the form of widespread rural riots and an ever increasing number of labour strikes, often marked by considerable violence. At around the same time support for Western ideologies such as socialism, syndicalism, and communism was increasing rapidly. These developments provoked a nationalist reaction, sometimes taking the form of societies established to oppose Western ideas (e.g. the Dai Nihon Kokusuikai or Greater Japan National Essence Society established in 1919) and sometimes of movements aimed at the removal of the causes of discontent.

So far Japanese nationalism has been treated as a relatively homogeneous movement. In fact, however, there were at least three identifiable strands. To make any rigid distinction between the strands would be incorrect, there being considerable overlap in terms of both personnel and ideas, nevertheless there were certain distinctive features and some incompatibility between them.

As has already been mentioned above, there was an important agrarian element in the makeup of Japanese nationalism. As Scalapino has pointed out:

> "Since 'industrial' Japan was separated by only a few decades from the Tokugawa era, the pre-industrial heritage was certain to weigh heavily upon the entire society and especially upon the lower economic classes."[18]

The influence of agrarianism was strong in the formative period of Japanese nationalism. At a time when the embryo commercial classes were weak - socially and politically - the agrarian interests raised up a nationalist movement to counteract the commercialization of Japan by emphasizing the superiority of 'traditional' institutions - for example, Shintoism and Emperor worship. For the purpose of this dissertation however, of greater interest is the revival of agrarian nationalism after World War I. The writings of Gondo Seikei (1866-1937) were particularly influential in this revival:

> "The bureaucracy, the zaibatsu, and the military became the three supports of the state, the

> political parties attached themselves to them and the scholars fawned upon them...When the plutocrats conspire with those who hold political power the resources of the people fall under their control...When this happens the common people fall upon evil times: they are pursued by cold and hunger, and unless they work in the midst of their tears as the tools of the plutocrats and those holding political power they cannot stay alive. When the people are pursued by hunger and have to work tearfully in the face of death, what sort of human rights do you suppose remain? Already the country's resources - land, raw materials, the machinery of transport and finance, mines, fishing grounds - are for the most part becoming the private property of a small number of powerful capitalists."[19]

Gondo's analysis is strikingly similar to the populist response to industrial America. The agrarian sector of the nationalist movement called for a return to an agrarian centred economy although they did not entirely renounce industrialization and machinery since both were necessary to national defence.

The Gondo concept of a decentralized agrarian society was one major strain of revolutionary nationalism in the 1920's - the other was the Kita Ikki (1884-1937) concept of a highly centralized, industrially oriented state. Although the two concepts appear to be diametrically opposed, there were certain linkages between the two and in this respect it is important to remember that:

> "...the sources of disunity were not always ideological, for personalities and group conflicts were as omnipresent in the nationalist as in other movements."[20]

Kita's brand of nationalism, which is usually described as national socialism, was largely a product of the urban misery caused by large-scale capitalism. Kita expounded his ideas in the book "An Outline Plan for the Reconstruction of Japan". The book proposed to alleviate discontent in Japan by means of social reform and redistribution of wealth, to solve the population pressure by means of territorial expansion, and called for a military coup d'etat to usher in an 'interim period' in which the work of national reconstruction could begin.

Co-existing, throughout the 1920's, with the revolutionary strains of a modern nationalism was the conservative, status quo movement which was composed of various bureaucratic, military, and business forces, which subscribed to the organic theory of the state, Shintoism, the'national polity' and the rest of the basic tenets of the Meiji Restoration.

The growing revolutionary nationalistic fervour in the 1920's manifested itself in various ways - one being the sources of nationalistic societies that were established each year. Similar societies had been established earlier, for example the Amur River Society, whose basic aim was 'expansion abroad, social reform at home', the emphasis being on the former. However, the sheer number of societies which sprang up in the 1920's

was unparalleled by anything that went before. Of special interest were the Gyochisha (The Society to Realize the Way of Heaven on Earth) which had a policy based on Kita although it also incorporated some of Gondo's philosophy; among its members were Generals Araki and Watanabe; and the Kokuhonsha (National Foundation Society) which had many military and bureaucratic members, including Araki and Saito.

As the 1920's progressed there was a growth in the influence of men like Kita Ikki and Okawa Shumei over many of the young officers in the army and navy. The reason for this growth of revolutionary nationalism in the armed forces was undoubtedly the increased proportion of officers (30% by 1927) who were of lower middle class background and hence both sympathetic to the problem of peasant farmers and of small businessmen, and hostile to the zaibatsu. The increasing sympathy between the military and civilian elements in the radical nationalist movements of the 1920's was clearly indicated by the membership of Okawa's Gyochisha - a good proportion of which was composed of Junior military officers.

The culmination of the rise of revolutionary nationalism and collaboration between civilian and military elements was the terrorist campaign of the 1930's. In conclusion to this Chapter it may be stated that Japan, in 1930, was a society in which liberal-democratic ideas

of representative government had failed to take root and where the existing conservative elite was being challenged by forces of the radical right akin in some respects to the European fascist movements.

CHAPTER III: THREE POWER RIVALRY IN MANCHURIA

So far, this dissertation has dealt with some of the important currents in Japanese politics during the years before the Manchurian Incident. Such a discussion is a necessary background to the analysis of the events in Japan and Manchuria between 18 September 1931 (the initial 'incident', involving the sabotage, allegedly by Chinese soldiers, of a part of the Japanese controlled South Manchuria Railway) and 15 September 1932, when Japan recognised the newly created state of Manchukuo.

The present Chapter will attempt to provide further background to the Manchurian crisis of 1931-32 by analysing the international rivalries which centred around Manchuria - involving primarily the U.S.S.R., Japan, and China itself. The interests of each of these powers in Manchuria will be outlined and some analysis of the issues and disputes between the three powers will be given. Greatest emphasis will be placed upon the rivalry between Japan and China since these were the two powers most involved in the clash of 1931. Soviet interests in Manchuria and the Japanese attitude toward these interests must also be dealt with in some detail.

Manchuria occupies an area of about 380,000 square miles and contained in 1931 according to the Lytton Report,[1] a population of about 30,000,000, of whom an estimated 28,000,000 were Chinese or assimilated Manchus. Other population groups in Manchuria were the Koreans (about 800,000), Russians (about 150,000), and the Japanese - (approximately 230,000) who were mainly concentrated in settlements beside the S.M.R. and in the Kwantung Leased Territory (Liaotung Peninsula).[2] The reasons why Manchuria became an area of international rivalry were basically twofold:

(i) its strategic importance. It was commonly believed that occupation of Manchuria placed a nation in a position of dominance in the Far East.

(ii) its economic resources. Manchuria was potentially rich in food, minerals, and timber.

The disputes over Manchuria between the powers were complicated by the special relationship of that area to the rest of China. Ever since the appointment of Chang Tso-lin as military governor of Fengtien Province[3] in 1916 Manchuria had been a virtually autonomous region of China. In fact, in July 1922 Chang announced the independence of Manchuria vis a vis the rest of China. In December 1928 Chang Hsueh-liang[4] declared his allegiance to the Central Government and thus normalized relations to some extent. Nevertheless, Manchuria continued to have a special relationship to the rest of

China, and Chang Hsueh-liang had greater autonomy than military governors in most other regions.

The major interest of Tsarist Russia in Manchuria had been Russian control of the Chinese Eastern Railway (the C.E.R.), which was located in the northern half of the area. In a declaration of policy made in 1919 and repeated in 1920, all rights and interests gained by the Tsarist Government at the expense of China's sovereignty were renounced by the new Bolshevik Government.[5] The Chinese understood the declaration to mean that no compensation would be demanded for the railway and proceeded in 1920-22 to take over control of the C.E.R. However, the Russians took the view that a treaty should be made concerning the C.E.R. and other matters. On 31 May 1924 a Sino-Soviet agreement was reached with the following major provisos:

1. all treaties between China and Tsarist Russia which effected the sovereignty of either country were declared void.

2. propaganda against the status quo in either country was not to be carried out by or permitted by the other country.

3. the U.S.S.R. was recognised by China and normal diplomatic relations were established.

4. the C.E.R. dispute was to be settled on the following basis:

a) the C.E.R. was to be recognised as a purely commercial

company.

b) Chinese administrative authority was to be maintained.

c) the right of China to redeem the railway with Chinese funds was acknowledged.

d) the settlement of the whole matter was to be the concern of China and Russia to the exclusion of all third parties.

In September 1924 Chang Tso-lin, distracted by political difficulties, was induced to sign a very similar treaty with the U.S S.R., thus making the agreement effective (since Chang de facto controlled Manchuria). Whether or not Chang was a 'third party' as defined by the agreement is a moot point since Chang's acquiescence was necessary if the agreement was to be implemented.

Relations between China and the U.S.S.R. did not proceed smoothly however, due to a series of incidents resulting from disputes over the C.E.R. In the famous Ivanov Incident[7] in January 1926 the Russian manager of the C.E.R. was arrested because of his refusal to allow China the right to transport her troops on credit in her own territory during a time of emergency. This action on the part of the Chinese (a response, as they saw it, to an infringement of Chinese sovereignty) produced a serious crisis - which was averted only when Chang Tso-lin gave way before Soviet pressure. Other incidents occured, for example, raids by Chinese police on Soviet consulates; the seizure of the

C.E.R. flotilla on the Sungari (August 1926), an action by the Chinese which denied the Soviet claim to a right of navigation on that river.

One of the most serious charges laid against the U.S.S.R. by China was that the former had engaged in communist propaganda, an action explicitly prohibited by Articles VI and II of the Peking and Mukden agreements of 1924 respectively. The situation deteriorated, until by 1929 a state of undeclared war existed on the Manchurian-Soviet frontier. The extent of the fighting can be judged from the fact that:

> "It was estimated that Marshall Chang Hsueh-liang despatched some 60,000 men to the frontier regions with aeroplanes, armoured trains, tanks etc."[8]

The official Chinese position was that:

> "...Soviet Russia has been conducting organized propaganda and other activieties to instigate the Chinese people to take destructive measures against the interests of the Chinese Government and society...
> The National Government of China has repeatedly received reports from the Three Eastern Provinces to the effect that the Soviet Manager and other important Russian officials of the C.E.R. from the very beginning have never observed the terms of the 1924 Sino-Russian Agreement on the Provisional Management of the C.E.R. For the past several years, the said Manager and others have on numerous occasions acted illegally and exceeded their lawful authority, making it impossible for the Chinese officials of the railway to carry out their duties according to the Agreement. Furthermore the Soviet members often utilized the said Railway for propaganda, thereby intentionally violating the stipulations of the Sino-Russian Agreement."[9]

The Soviet Union argued that:

> "...the dismissal of the Manager of the Railway and his replacement even temporarily by a Chinese citizen as well as the arbitrary dismissal of the Assistant Manager and a number of other officials of the Railway violates the basic clauses of the Agreements of 1924...According to the spirit and letter of the Peking and Mukden agreements of 1924 the C.E.R. is an object of joint management between the U.S.S.R. and China, and the C.E.R. may become the property of China either upon the expiration of the time fixed by the agreement or before the expiration of the time by the redemption of the Railway by China by the agreement of both parties. The...illegal actions...sanctioned by the Chinese Government mean in effect seizure of the Railway and an attempt at one-sided cancellation of existing agreements."[10]

A full discussion of the rights and wrongs of the Sino-Soviet dispute over the C.E.R. would be out of context in this dissertation but it seems to the writer that the Chinese had the stronger case. A noted authority on Soviet policy in the Far East has written that:

> "During the years 1924-29 the Soviet railway policy in North Manchuria, in the name of joint management, had in fact pursued the traditional Russian ambition of getting control in the area through the C.E.R. In addition, Communist propaganda and activities, with the alleged aid of the personnel, funds, and facilities of the C.E.R. and the Soviet consulates in Manchuria, presented a potent threat to the tranquility of China's social and national life."[11]

Of great importance in the present context is the impact of the U.S.S.R.'s policy with regard to Manchuria, upon its relations with Japan, and of the effect of this impact upon Japan's international behaviour. The lessons

for Japan which the victory of the U.S.S.R. over China held were briefly that:

(i) Soviet Russia was as prepared to fight to safeguard her interests in North Manchuria as Tsarist Russia had been before her.

(ii) the Chinese Nationalist Government at Nanking was incapable of exerting much power in the north-east provinces.

Russo-Japanese relations had long been marked by suspicion and conflict. The legacy of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 still had a potent influence on policy makers, particularly in Japan.

> "Deep in the mind of every Japanese is the memory of their country's great struggle with Russia in 1904-5, fought on the plains of Manchuria... The facts that a hundred thousand Japanese soldiers died in this war and that two billion gold yen were expended have created in Japanese minds a determination that these sacrifices shall not have been made in vain."[12]

Ogata[13] has argued, convincingly in this writer's opinion, that two of the strongest reasons behind Tanaka's 'strong' foreign policy[14] involved fear of the U.S.S.R. Firstly, Tanaka was convinced that the Russian desire for southward territorial aggrandisement was a permanent feature of her policy. For strategic reasons therefore, Tanaka believed a vast buffer zone between Japan and the U.S.S.R., consisting of Manchuria, Korea, and part of Siberia, to be necessary. In accordance with this belief he had been one

of the strongest advocates of the Siberian Expedition in 1917. Secondly, Tanaka feared Communism - in the U.S.S.R., in China and in Japan itself. Since the Kuomintang was identified to some extent, in Tanaka's mind, with Communism, he was determined to prevent the Kuomintang or the Soviet Union exercising influence in Manchuria.

The Siberian Expedition was another source of conflict between the two powers. Although Japan withdrew its forces from Siberia by the end of 1922, no treaty was signed with the U.S.S.R. until 20 January 1925. Even when the treaty was made it was with a surrounding atmosphere of distrust and suspicion.

> "It was with great hesitancy that Japan re-established treaty relations with Russia. No government had looked with greater fear or distrust on the Revolution than had that of Japan. And certainly none showed a greater fear of such 'dangerous ideas' as those embodied in the Soviet philosophy. It was only considerations of continental politics, and perhaps a feeling that possible subversive propaganda could be controlled more effectively if an agreement with Moscow was made, which produced a willingness to recognise and deal with the Soviet Government."[15]

It is interesting to note that a major factor which induced the Japanese to come to some kind of agreement with the Soviet Union was a feeling of diplomatic isolation brought about by the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1922 and the success which Soviet Russia appeared to be having with the Chinese Nationalists -

(the Peking and Mukden Agreements were signed during 1924). As the Lytton Report points out:

> "The Russian Revolution of 1917, followed by the declarations of 25 July 1919, and of 27 October 1920, regarding its policy towards the Chinese people and, later, by the Sino-Soviet Agreements of 31 May 1924, and 20 September 1924, shattered the basis of Russo-Japanese understanding and cooperation in Manchuria."[16]

The phrase 'Russo-Japanese' understanding and cooperation in Manchuria' refers to the tacit agreements of the two powers, during the last years of the Tsarist Government, to divide Manchuria into two 'spheres of influence' - Russian in the north and Japanese in the south.

Article V of the treaty signed between Japan and the U.S.S.R. is worth quoting in full. It deals with propaganda and the stringency of its terminology shows the importance which Japan attached to restraining Soviet propaganda activities.

> "The High Contracting Parties solemnly affirm their desire and intention to live in peace and amity with one another, scrupulously to respect the undoubted right of a state to order its own life within its own jurisdiction in its own way, to refrain and restrain all persons in any governmental service for them and all organisations in receipt of any financial assistance from them from any act, overt or covert, liable in any way whatever to endanger the order and security in any part of the territories of Japan and the U.S.S.R."

One of Japan's great fears at this time was the

spectre of an alliance between a Communist Soviet Union and a Communist, or Communist influenced China - a distinct possibility in 1925. Even as relations between China and the Soviet Union worsened however, Japan remained suspicious and distrustful of the U.S.S.R. and its intentions in China and Manchuria. Japan had some grounds for her suspicions since there can be little doubt that despite the treaty of 1925, the Soviet Union continued to carry out anti-Japanese propaganda in Manchuria, Korea, and in Japan proper. Disputes also arose about Soviet infringements of the Fisheries Convention of January 1928 and the seizure by the Soviet Government in December 1930 of the Vladivostok branch of the (Japanese) Bank of Chosen.

Thus it can be seen that Japan perceived the U.S.S.R. as a threat to its position in Manchuria on both strategic and ideological grounds. There is some evidence[17] that the Kwantung Army's strategic thinking was directed against the Soviet Union and that the Kwantung Army advocated Japanese occupation of North Manchuria on the grounds that if the U.S.S.R. remained in control of the C.E.R. any future Japanese-Soviet war would be fought in the plains of Manchuria, whereas, if North Manchuria were occupied, Japan would have natural boundaries to defend in the Khingan Mountains. That this obsession with the Soviet threat to Japan was not confined to the Kwantung

Army can be seen from a quotation from K.K. Kawakami (Washington Correspondent of the "Tokyo Hochi Shimbun"):

> "In Soviet Russia to-day Japan sees the singular spectacle of a power, not only armed as no other nation has ever been, but also marshalling forces of disruption and disorganization, against those institutions which, right or wrong, the other Powers hold essential and even sacred."[18]

It can be seen from the above that certain elements in Japan perceived a real threat to Japanese interests in Manchuria from the U.S.S.R. Was this perception justified in 1930-31? Given the internal conditions in the Soviet Union, especially the concentration on the First Five Year Plan, it seems that there was no immediate threat to Japan. Stanley High quotes an (unnamed) Soviet official as asking rhetorically:

> "Which is of greater importance to Russia: the Five Year Plan or a thousand miles of railroad located at the far end of Asia?"[19]

The obvious answer is 'the five year plan' and this constitutes, in this writer's opinion, a strong argument why there was no immediate threat to Japan from the Soviet Union. The reverse seems, in fact, to be the case. That is to say, the internal conditions of the U.S.S.R. seemed to present Japan with an opportunity to oust the Soviet Union from Manchuria and to create a buffer state against both the communism of the U.S.S.R. and the chaos and anarchy of China.

In the remainder of this Chapter the relationship between China and Japan prior to the Manchurian Incident of 18 September 1931 will be examined.

In this examination of Sino-Japanese relations during the years 1922-1931, an important factor to bear in mind is that a civil war was raging in China until at least 1928, by which time the Kuomintang had succeeded in establishing, by military means, a nominal national unity. The important point here however is that China was weak and divided and obviously so.

A second background factor which is of significance in this discussion is the fact that:

> "During the quarter of a century before September 1931, the ties which bound Manchuria to the rest of China were growing stronger and, at the same time, the interests of Japan in Manchuria were increasing. Manchuria was admittedly a part of China, but it was a part in which Japan had acquired or claimed such exceptional rights, so restricting the exercise of China's sovereignty, that a conflict between the two was a natural result."[20]

One of the features of the closer links between China proper and Manchuria was the increase in Chinese immigration into that region. Between 1923 and 1929 net Chinese immigration into Manchuria was 2,340,000 - a large figure for any area whose total population was only 30,000,000. A significant fact is that a fairly high proportion of the immigrants were women and

children - this indicates that the new arrivals were home-seekers rather than transients. The Lytton Report, moreover, produces evidence[21] to show that the immigrants maintained links with their relatives, and their villages and towns of origin. The total Japanese population in Manchuria was about 230,000 (i.e. less than the average annual number of Chinese immigrants) and few of this number were settled on the land. Despite encouragements from the Japanese Government, the Japanese were, by and large, reluctant to emigrate to Manchuria. The reasons for this reluctance were threefold:

(i) the cold Manchurian climate

(ii) extensive farming was best suited to Manchurian conditions and this type of agriculture was unfamiliar to the Japanese - used to intensive cultivation of small areas.

(iii) Japanese farmers in Manchuria would have to compete with Chinese and Korean farmers whose standard of living was lower than that of the Japanese.

Despite the low number of emigrants to Manchuria however, Japan was increasing her stake in the region. In 1928 Japanese investments in Manchuria amounted to 1,500 million yen - a figure which rose to 1,715 million yen by 1931. The way in which this investment was distributed is shown in Tabe III.1.

TABLE III.1[22]

INVESTORS	ITEMS OF INVESTMENT	AMOUNT (YEN)
S.M.R. Co.	Direct*	742,069,206
	Indirect**	320,735,342
	TOTAL	1,062,804,548
Japanese Govt. Guarantee	Loans to Chinese Govt.	98,730,823
Japanese Corporations	" " " " and individuals	20.282,080
"	Capital Funds invested	439,003,410
Japanese Individuals	" " " "	94,991,560
		554,277,050
	GRAND TOTAL	1,715,812,421

*= e.g. railway, rolling stock, and similar.
**= e.g. loans, cash advances and securities.

A comparison of Japanese investment in Manchuria with that of certain other countries shows the extent of the predominance of Japanese economic penetration in the area. (see Table III.2)

TABLE III.2[23]

COUNTRY	AMOUNT ($)
Japan	750,000,000
U.S.A.	13,000,000
U.K.	19,000,000

Thus it can be seen that Japan's economic interests in Manchuria were large, by any standards, and it was her determination to protect these interests against threats, or perceived threats, to them that contributed to some of the many disputes between China and Japan.

As has been mentioned previously, however, the importance of Manchuria to Japan was not only economic. Strategically, Manchuria was seen as a buffer zone against the U.S.S.R. and as potentially performing the same function against a rejuvenated China. There is also what may be termed Japan's emotional stake in Manchuria:

> "Feelings and historical associations, which are the heritage of the Russo-Japanese War, and pride in the achievements of Japanese enterprise in Manchuria for the last quarter century, are an indefinable but real part of the Japanese claim to a 'special position'."[24]

The Chinese attitude toward Manchuria can be summarized into four main points:

(i) Manchuria was regarded as being an integral part of China.

(ii) Manchuria was seen as a region capable of absorbing at leat some of China's population.

(iii) in economic terms a large proportion of China's grain supply came from Manchuria. Also, seasonal employment was available in that area - which eased the problems of neighbouring provinces such as Hopei.

(iv) strategically, Manchuria was an excellent base for a foreign power to launch an invasion of China proper. Chinese strategic thinking therefore, perceived in Manchuria a potential buffer zone against both Japan and the U.S.S.R.

Legally there can be little doubt that the Chinese contention that Manchuria was an integral part of China, was valid. C.Walter Young has written that:

> "Whatever the forces of internal devolution in China, or the forces of external pressure which have combined to give certain foreign powers a privileged position in Manchuria, the fact remains that, for all international legal purposes, these provinces are but a part of China over which the central government has always had de jure authority." [25]

There can be little doubt either that Japan's claim to a 'special position' in Manchuria involved the

infringement of Chinese sovereign rights. For example, any nation's 'sovereign rights' would include the maintenance of law and order within its own borders. In May 1928 it seemed possible that the civil war raging in China might spread north of the Great Wall. The Japanese government sent the following message to Chinese generals:

> "The Japanese government attaches the utmost importance to the maintenance of peace and order in Manchuria, and is prepared to do all it can to prevent the occurrence of any such state of affairs as may disturb that peace and order, or constitute the probable cause of such a disturbance.
> In these circumstances should disturbances develop further in the direction of Peking and Tientsin, and the situation become so menacing as to threaten the peace and order of Manchuria, Japan may possibly be constrained to take appropriate effective steps for the maintenance of peace and order in Manchuria." 26

Clearly the Japanese message showed no respect for Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria - a de jure sovereignty which even the Japanese had never denied existed.

One of the fundamental issues between Japan and China then, was the challenge to Chinese sovereignty which Japan presented in Manchuria - a challenge that was particularly irking to a country like China in a period of national awakening and intense national feeling.

The specific causes of conflict and dispute between the two nations can be subdivided into five main

groups:

(i) disputes over railways.

(ii) disputes over Japanese loans to China.

(iii) disputes over the Sino-Japanese Treaty of 1915.

(iv) disputes over the Korean minority in Manchuria.

(v) disputes over the Chinese boycott of Japanese goods.

There was also the Nakamura Incident[27] of mid-summer 1931 which precipitated the crisis. This latter was not of fundamental importance in itself but was merely the spark which set off the crisis.

There are two important general points which must be made about railways in Manchuria. The first is that railway construction in that area was carried out largely for political and strategic - not economic reasons. Secondly, the S.M.R. was never regarded by the Japanese as a primarily commercial undertaking - it was the political and administrative arm of the Japanese, in Manchuria.

The main dispute about railways was that over the building of 'parallel' railways. The Japanese case was that in 1905 the Chinese agreed to the following statement:

> "The Chinese Government engage, for the purpose of protecting the interest of the S.M.R.,

> not to construct prior to the recovery by them of the said railway, or any branch line in the neighbourhood of and parallel to that railway, or any branch line which might be prejudical to the interest of the above-mentioned railway."

Although the Chinese later denied that they had agreed to any such statement Sokolsky provides fairly convincing evidence that they had in fact made the agreement.[28] The Lytton Commission agreed that the statement had been made but pointed out that it was merely a protocol statement and not part of the Treaty of 1905. What exactly constituted a 'parallel' line was never defined and in 1909 Japan refused a Chinese request for a definition of this term. Nevertheless, the Japanese protested the building, by the Chinese, of railways after 1924, on the grounds that these lines, especially those between Tahushan and Tungliao and Kirin and Heilungchan[29] as being 'parallel' to the S.M.R. The number of interpretations that can be put upon a term that is not defined are infinite and it is not in any way surprising that there was serious disagreement between Japan and China on the railway issue.

This disagreement about railways was compounded by the disputes arising over the loans made by Japan for the construction of Chinese Government Railways. Japanese capital to the value of 177 million yen[30] had been expended in the building of four major lines[31] and other

types of loans, Japan accused China of reneging on repayments and interest payments and of refusing to honour an agreement to allow Japanese capital to participate in the building of a rail link between Kirin and the Korean railway system. The Chinese countercharged that the loans were of a strategic and political character and therefore felt no moral committment to repay them. The Nishihara loans are the best known of the political loans made by Japan to China. As C. Walter Young has shown:[32]

> "...Mr. K. Nishihara, once a member of the board of directors of the Bank of Chosen and, at that time, the personal representative in China of Premier Count Terauchi, left a heritage of currency reform, reorganization, railways and 'industrial loans', certain of which are well known to have been announced with the full understanding that they were to be immediately squandered by a military clique in control in Peking. The problem of passing judgement upon the question of valid options and China's legitimate obligations to repay such loans is, in consequence, no small one." [33]

One of the Nishihara loans involved the figure of 30 million yen (i.e. nearly 20% of the total loans made at this period). This was the 'Kirin and Heilungkiang Gold Mining and Forest Agreement" negotiated between Nishihara and Ts'ao Ju-lin, Chinese Minister of Finance. The latter subsequently made the statement[34] that this loan, far from involving gold or forests, was actually made in connection with a military campaign to be launched against the South, and that the agreement was

dubbed an 'industrial' loan to evade the provisions of an agreement between the Chinese government and the Six-Power Consortium[35] bankers. The situation as regards the loans therefore was complicated by moral considerations. The important point here is that disagreement between Japan and China was almost total and Japanese pressure for repayment intensified in 1930-31 when a rate-cutting 'war' between the Chinese-run railways and the S.M.R. errupted at the instigation of the Chinese.

The Sino-Japanese Treaty of 1915 was signed by China after the receipt of an ultimatum from Japan threatening war unless agreement was reached.[36] The Lytton Report listed as controversial in Manchuria, the following provisions:

> "(1) the extension of the terms of Japanese possession of the Kwantung Leased Territories to 99 years.
> (2) the prolongation of the period of Japanese possession of the S.M.R. and the Antung-Mukden Railway to 99 years.
> (3) the grant to Japanese subjects of the right to lease land in the interior of 'South Manchuria' - i.e. outside those areas opened by treaty or otherwise to foreign residence and trade.
> (4) the grant to Japanese subjects of the right to travel, reside, and conduct business in the interior of South Manchuria and to participate in joint Sino-Japanese agricultural enterprises in Eastern Inner Mongolia." [37]

The Japanese position on the extension of lease terms is of some interest:

> "With regard to the extension of the leaseholds in Manchuria, it was natural that Japan should claim the term of 99 years which was granted by China to most of the foreign leaseholders. It was still more to be expected that Japan should ask China for an extension of the term of her railways in South Manchuria, so long as the term of the C.E.R. of Russia remained at eighty years." [38]

It is interesting to note also that Japan obtained the long leases by exactly the same method as the other powers - i.e. by threat of force. It was on the grounds that the Treaty had been signed "...under coercion of a Japanese ultimatum threatening war" that the Chinese denied that the Treaty (and its accompanying notes) were binding on them. Here again one is presented with the spectacle of total impasse between Japan and China - the Chinese denying any validity to a treaty that Japan held to be binding since it had been signed and ratified.

Translated into practical terms this legalistic disagreement involved China in refusing to carry out the provisions of the 1915 Treaty relating to Manchuria unless it was expedient for them to do so. This was interpreted by the Japanese as illegal refusal to carry out the terms of the Treaty. Disputes broke out about land ownership, the right of taxation in the railway areas, the stationing of 'railway guards' (in reality regular Japanese troops) along the S.M.R., about Japanese consular police and almost every other provision of the treaty.

In the case of the railway guards Japan defended their use, less on the grounds of legality than of their necessity to protect life and property from bandits:

> "Mounted banditry in Manchuria and junk piracy on the sea coasts have been common since time immemorial. The frequent occurrence of such activities at the present day seems to indicate that it is beyond the abilities of the Chinese authorities to eradicate the evil. Banditry is one of the undesirable features of life in Manchuria." [39]

Article II of the Additional Agreement of 22 December 1905 (an annex to the Sino-Japanese Treaty signed at Peking 1905) provided that:

> "...When tranquility shall have been re-established in Manchuria and China shall have become herself capable of affording full protection to the lives and property of foreigners, Japan will withdraw her railway guards simultaneously with Russia."

China claimed that tranquility had been restored and that Chinese troops were capable of maintaining order - Japan, as shown in the above quotation, completely denied both claims.

As mentioned previously Manchuria had a Korean minority population of about 800,000. The Koreans possessed Japanese nationality (under Japanese law at least) and their presence in Manchuria accentuated the disputes between China and Japan since there was disagreement over such matters as: the Japanese refusal to recognize the naturalization of Koreans as Chinese

subjects; the Chinese refusal to extend the provisions allowing Japanese to purchase or lease land, to Koreans; and the Japanese use of their Consular Police for both protective and anti-Korean independence movement functions. China's discriminatory policy toward the Koreans led to a chain reaction which was a major provocation to the Japanese. A dispute between Koreans and Chinese at Wanpaoshan[40] led to anti-Chinese riots in Korea which in turn were a major motive behind the anti-Japanese boycott in China - a boycott which many Japanese regarded as being of the utmost importance.

The main principles of the boycott were as follows:

> "(a) To withdraw the orders for Japanese goods already ordered;
> (b) To stop shipment of Japanese goods already ordered but not yet consigned;
> (c) To refuse to accept Japanese goods already on the godowns but not yet paid for;
> (d) To register with the Anti-Japanese Association Japanese goods already purchased and to suspend temporarily the selling of these goods." [41]

TABLE III.3

JAPANESE TRADE WITH CHINA PROPER* IN 1930

Total Japanese Exports	1,469,852,000	Yen	100%
Exports to China	260,826,000	"	17.7%
Total Japanese Imports	1,546,071,000	"	100%
Imports from China	161,667,000	"	10.4%

* = excluding Hong Kong and the Kwantung Leased Terr. These figures do not indicate the extent of Japanese trade with Manchuria which passed mainly through the port of Dairen.

The importance of China as a trading partner for Japan can be seen from Table III.3 (above). The effectiveness of the boycott can be seen from the following figures given by Vinacke.[42] In the month of September 1931 Japanese exports to China were 12,706,000 Yen. In the month of December 1931 the comparable figure is 4,299,000 Yen. There was a psychological reaction to the boycott among Japanese public opinion which became exasperated by the Chinese action and markedly more willing to support a 'stronger' foreign policy with regard to China.

Thus relations between Japan and China were strained almost to breaking point by 1931. Despite the differences between 'strong' and 'conciliatory' foreign policies in Japan, there was general agreement that

Japan's 'special position' in Manchuria should be maintained. Differences were so deep however about how this aim might be achieved and over what form the 'special position' should take that the existing Japanese political system was unable to withstand the pressures which were generated by the disagreement.

The next Chapter will deal primarily with this aspect of the crisis.

CHAPTER IV : THE CRISIS OF 1931

I

It has often been argued[1] that the conflict within Japan in 1931 over what course of action to take in Manchuria, was simply one between the civil and military authorities - that is, a conflict between two parties or 'actors'. While this explanation contains a grain of truth, it is the argument of this dissertation that this point of view is an oversimplification and that the Manchurian Incident and its aftermath can be more accurately dealt with within the following framework.

It is hypothesized in this Chapter that there were three major locations or sets of decision-making which affected the Manchurian situation. These have been designated as: I Manchuria, II Japan, III External. Each of these sets was divided into its component parts - (since no framework can include every possible factor which may have influenced an event, the framework is necessarily imcomplete, but it is hoped that most of the important factors have been included).

The division and sub-division of the three major

sets of decision-making can be summarized as follows:

I. MANCHURIA

1. Kwantung Army - a) Commander-in-Chief
   b) Staff Officers
2. South Manchuria Railway Company
3. Japanese Consulate General (Mukden)
4. Japanese settlers

II. JAPAN

1. Central Government Apparatus - a) Cabinet
   b) Parties
2. Central Military Authorities - a) Army
   b) Navy
3. Extra - Constitutional Forces
   a) extreme nationalist groups and societies
   b) zaibatsu
   c) other

III. EXTERNAL

1. League of Nations
2. Chinese authorities - a) Nanking
   b) local (i.e.Manchuria)
3. other powers.

It should perhaps be emphasized at this point that the above division and sub-division is an analytical device only. The writer recognizes that there were many overlaps, both of personnel and of interest, between the various 'actors'. Some of these overlaps will be dealt with below, but the treatment will not be exhaustive.[2] The use of the word 'interest' does not imply that the above actors behaved as interest groups. For some pur-

poses, some of them undoubtedly did behave, from time to time, as interest groups but this Chapter does not adopt an interest group approach to the problem.

The treatment, in this Chapter, of the Manchurian Incident and its aftermath, will not be chronological[3] but will be organized along the lines given below. It will be noted that although the influence of the League of Nations and the Great Powers on the Manchurian affair has been recognized (category III), it has been given less attention than either of the other categories. This is because the focus of this dissertation is intended to be upon Japan and not upon the failure of the League[4]; therefore category III (External factors) has been largely ignored.

In the next section of the Chapter the situation in Manchuria will be discussed. The Kwantung Army, its internal power structure, and its relationship with the S.M.R. and the Consulate General, together with some of the attitudes of its officers will be examined. In the subsequent section the situation within Japan will be discussed in a similar fashion. That is, the power structures and interrelationships of each of the actors in category II will be examined. In the final section the interrelationships between various actors in different categories will be discussed.

II

Military organizational theory depicts a neat hierarchical structure with the upper echelons of the hierarchy making the major decisions and passing orders down the ladder, with subordinates unquestioningly putting into effect orders received from above. S.E.Finer, in his book "The Man on Horseback", lists this hierarchical structure as one of the major advantages of the military, vis a vis a civilian government, when they decide to intervene in the political affairs of a nation. Whether this theory of organization ever applies perfectly in any army is open to doubt - in the Japanese army of 1931 it is certain that the theoretical structure was subject to great strain and at times broke down completely.

It has been stated above that it is incorrect to speak of the military as a unified faction opposing a 'civilian' faction. Some tension existed in relations between the two services - the Army and the Navy (this will be dealt with below). Within the Army, further stresses and divisions existed between the Central Army Headquarters (Tokyo) and the Kwantung Army Headquarters. This is still an oversimplification however, since neither of the above bodies were internally united. The internal divisions of the Kwantung Army will now be dealt with, followed by comments on the position of the South Manchuria Railway

Company and the Consulate General in Mukden.

The formal leaders of the Kwantung Army were Lieutenant General Honjo Shigeru, the Commander-in-Chief, and Major General Miyake Mitsuharu, his Chief of Staff. In the events of September 1931 however, and in the subsequent months, the actual leadership of the Kwantung Army was not exercised by the formal leadership. Instead we have the phenomenon of leadership from below - that is to say, the actual leadership of the Kwantung Army was exercised by officers inferior in rank and position to Honjo and Myake - the most important of these 'junior' officers being Lieutenant Colonel Ishihara Kanji, Staff Officer in charge of Operations, and Colonel Itagaki Seishiro, Senior Staff Officer. The fact that Honjo did not exercise leadership during the Manchurian affair does not mean, necessarily, that he was not in favour of the course of actions taken, but it seems likely that he would not have undertaken such actions on his own initiative.

On September 18th., the day of the initial incident, Honjo was on a troop inspection tour in Port Arthur. After the explosion a message was sent to Honjo informing him of the incident. There is some evidence that the transmission of this message was delayed by the Army Special Service Agency in Mukden until the Incident was well

under way. Evidence has also been produced which shows that at the time he received the news of the Incident (about 11.40 p.m. on the night of the 18th., or about one and a half hours after the explosion) General Honjo was taking a bath[7] - this seems to indicate that he was unaware of the incident which was taking place at this time.

A delay in transmitting news of the Incident to Honjo has been mentioned above. The length of this delay was approximately one hour and occurred at the Special Service Agency where Itagaki was issuing mobilization orders - orders that should have been issued by Honjo. Honjo later ratified these orders with the words:

> "Let the matter be carried out on my own responsibility." [8]

This account of the events of September 18th., 1931, seems to bear out what Richard Storry has argued about the role of General Honjo:

> "Undoubtedly, at Kwantung Army headquarters in 1931, neither Lieutenant General Honjo nor his Chief of Staff exercised real power, unless it was by the consent of Itagaki and Ishihara. At Port Arthur, on the critical night of 18th. September, Honjo's part was to approve what had already been decided." [9]

It must not be supposed that Honjo's role was that of a mere rubber stamp however, and the lengths to which Ishihara and Itagaki went to prevent Honjo from receiving complete information about the situation seems

to indicate this. The delay in transmitting news of the incident has already been mentioned. Notable also in this respect is the interception of Tatekawa[10] (probably with his connivance) who was on his way to Honjo with an Imperial injunction (made on 11th. September) to restore discipline in the army and in particular within the Kwantung Army. Thus it seems that the conspirators feared a negative intervention by Honjo before the incident got well under way - once the conflagration had started they surmised that Honjo would either lend them his support or that they would be able to control his actions to such an extent that he would be unable to voice disagreement. The attitude of the plotters in the initial stages however, was one of apprehension as has been described by Yoshihashi:

> "If the letters...embodying the Emperor's admonition were to reach simple and honest Honjo it would spell the end of the plot." [11]

After some dispute among the conspirators it was decided to stage the incident on the night of 18th. September 1931, i.e. before Tatekawa had time to deliver his message.

How widespread knowledge of the plot among Kwantung Army officers was, is hard to say. It appears that Honjo and his personal staff officers did not know of it and it seems quite possible that even the officers at the site of the incident may not have known of it

either. The Lytton Commission, although concluding that:

> "The military operations of the Japanese troops during this night (18th.September)... cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defence."

goes on to remark:

> "In saying this the Commission does not exclude the hypothesis that the officers on the spot may have thought they were acting in self defence." [12]

It is this writer's opinion that the Manchurian Incident was planned and masterminded by a small group of officers, mainly holding positions in the Kwantung Army Special Service Agency and that the great majority of the Kwantung Army officers, including Honjo had no prior knowledge of the plans. On the other hand, however, there can be little doubt that the vast majority of the Kwantung Army wholeheartedly supported the actions of the plotters and were in general sympathy with their aims.

The attitudes and aims of the conspirators in general, and of Ishihara and Itagaki in particular can be summarized as follows:[13]

1. to establish, beyond dispute, Japanese leadership in Manchuria by means of the annexation of the territory.

2. Itagaki and Ishihara both viewed Manchuria as a bastion against the perceived menace of the U.S.S.R. and Communism.

3. both, however, saw the greatest potential

danger to Japan's expansion in Asia as coming from the U.S.A. The outbreak of any war between Japan and the U.S.A. was however, predicted only for the distant future.

4. Manchuria was seen as a source for raw materials and as a potential market for an economically depressed Japan.

5. ostensibly also. Itagaki believed that complete control of Manchuria would be in the interests of the welfare of the Japanese people:

> "Manchuria is of course, important from the point of view of Japanese capitalism. From the standpoint of the proletariat who would find it necessary to demand equalization of national wealth, no fundamental solution could be found within the boundaries of naturally poor Japan that would assure livelihood for the people at large." [14]

5. the Chinese population of Manchuria was to be won over to support Japanese hegemony by the suppression of banditry, the provision of law and order, reductions in taxation, and by policies of economic development.

The perception of threat from the U.S.S.R. can be seen in the following quotation from Ishihara (written after World War II in a somewhat self-exonerating tone):

> "Though the Kwantung Army was not concerned in making demands or comments on our diplomatic policy, it was seriously concerned with the establishment of peace and the defence of Manchuria...and its commander could not but consider the advisability of establishing a defensive position against the

> Soviet Union from a military standpoint. Of course...it was not our intention to attack the Soviet Union with Manchuria as a base of operations." [15]

Thus it would appear that the Kwantung Army staff officers who planned and carried into effect the Manchurian Incident were motivated by a mixture of anti-communism combined with a belief in the strategic importance of Manchuria; a belief that at least part of the solution to Japan's economic distress lay in control of Manchuria's resources; and a vague kind of national socialism involving a paternal interest in the welfare of the people. (For the growth of this type of thinking in Japan see Chapter II of this dissertation).

The other actors in the Manchurian section of the framework outlined at the beginning of this Chapter were the S.M.R.Co., the Japanese immigrant settlers in Manchuria and the Japanese Consulate General in Mukden. These will now be briefly examined.

The Japanese population in Manchuria was a constant source of pressure for radical military action in Manchuria. This pressure was directed at the Kwantung Army, the S.M.R. Co., and the Japanese Government by means of public meetings, speechmaking tours, petitions, and other forms of agitation. Part of the reason for this may be:

"...the greater sense of danger, of inter-

> national rivalry, felt by persons living overseas as compared with those at home. There is also a greater emphasis on the prestige of the home state, on nationality, and the flag." [16]

The S.M.R. Co. had long subsidised expansionist propaganda activities, for example the work of the 'research' unit under the direction of Okawa Shumei. In 1931 before the crisis however, the directors of the S.M.R., including the President, Uchida Yasuya, were generally uncommitted to the expansionist aims of the Kwantung Army. In fact Uchida was generally counted as a supporter of Foreign Minister Shidehara until the time of the crisis when he apparently had a change of mind, partly no doubt in response to pressures from the Army and from such citizens organizations as Manshu Seinen Renmei (Manchuria Youth League), many of whose members were employees of the S.M.R.Co. At any rate, as Yoshihashi has commented:

> "...it is quite clear that Uchida, while recognising the necessity for Japan to conduct her foreign relations within the framework of the League and other treaty committments, nevertheless shared the objectives of the Kwantung Army in respect to Manchuria, which were wholly inconsistent with those of the foreign office." [17]

The practical effect of this was that both major power structures in Manchuria, the Kwantung Army and the S.M.R. Co. were in general agreement as to aims and objectives after the crisis had started, and these aims and

objectives were vocally and actively supported by the Japanese immigrants in Manchuria. This left to the Tokyo government only one available agency with which to attempt to restrain the Kwantung Army - the consulate at Mukden. That the Consulate was singularly ineffective in its attempts to do this is not surprising since it was isolated from any support in Manchuria and subject to harrassment by both the civilian population (Japanese) and the Kwantung Army:

> "Relations between the Kwantung Army and the Consulate General became increasingly strained, as the former considered that Tokyo's disapproval,...was caused by reports of the latter." 18

The relations were so bad in fact that the safety of the Consul General, Hayashi Hisajiro was in doubt since it was known that:

> "...some of the extremist members of the Kwantung Army who were annoyed by Hayashi's interference harbored designs on his life." 19

III

Japan in September 1931 was being governed by a Minseito cabinet led by Prime Minister Wakatsuki Reijiro. Although the cabinet was mainly composed of Minseito party members there was little of a united response to the Manchurian Incident. General Minami Jiro, the War Minister, was, naturally, the nominee of the central army

authorities. His freedom of action can be gauged from the following episode related by Yoshihashi. After presenting a report to the cabinet:

> "Shidehara then pressed Minami, saying 'There isn't much that can be done about what has happened already, but 'hope'; mere wishful thinking will not do. Can you guarantee that the conflict will not be further enlarged?'. The Minister of War said 'Wait a moment', and left the room with the written report. After a while he came back with the same report to which the notation 'will be guaranteed' had been added...This episode illustrates that it was not within Minami's power to determine the course of the Manchurian crisis but that he was speaking in behalf of a powerful group which manipulated him from behind the scene." [20]

The War Office position was supported in the cabinet by Minami and Adachi Kenzo (Home Minister) whilst Shidehara, supported by Inouye Junnosuke (Finance Minister). led the opposition to the War Office. It was Adachi who finally brought about the downfall of the Wakatsuki government by his action on 21 November 1931 of issuing a public statement to the press, advocating a 'national government' because of the international situation. An unauthorized statement of this nature by a senior cabinet minister was an obvious attempt to wreck the government and the attempt was successful. On 11 December the Wakatsuki cabinet fell to be replaced by a cabinet led by Inukai (the President of the Seiyukai party).

It has already been narrated (in Chapter I of this dissertation) how the political parties in Japan, had strayed far from their early idealistic principles in the pursuit of power, and how by 1930 they had become little more than corrupt associations of office-seekers. The extent of this degeneration of the parties as components of a (supposedly) liberal-democratic, representative system of government, can be judged by the behaviour of the opposition Seiyukai party in the months following the Manchurian Incident.

> "The Seiyukai, the leading opposition party, did not fail to take every opportunity to discredit the China policy of the Minseito administration and to exert all its influence to bring about its downfall. On November 10, President Inukai, in his address before his party, vigorously criticized the Shidehara policy of 'cooperation' for allowing the League to take up the dispute, for failing to take appropriate steps to make clear to the world the prevailing situation in Manchuria prior to the outbreak of the incident. He even charged the Minseito with giving an impression to the world that the Mukden crisis had actually been instigated by the army." [21]

The essential accuracy of an observation of the Japanese newspaper Yomiuri in 1922 (quoted in Chapter I) was now revealed:

> "What the Seiyukai wants is not the establishment of party government, but the perpetuation of Seiyukai government." [22]

The very fact that the party was willing to support the unauthorised actions of the army against

the legitimate government of the day indicates that support for a representative democracy had long since been abandoned or that support for such a system of government ran a very poor second in the minds of Seiyukai supporters, to feelings of nationalism and patriotism.

It must be remembered that the events of 1931 took place against the background of a rising tide of nationalist feeling and activity (as described in Chapter II). The flames of nationalism were fanned by statements made during October and November by people such as Mori Kaku (who had supported the annexation of Manchuria since at least 1928), referring to Manchuria as Japan's'life-line', and by Lieutenant General Araki declaring that Japan must be prepared to show her determination not to allow any further disturbance in the Far East. As the Manchester Guardian commented:

> "That the Japanese military have taken charge in Manchuria is certain, but though it is equally certain that the Foreign Office is distressed and chagrined, it cannot be said at all that the rest of the Government disapproves. Nor is there any sign that the press is inclined to criticize the army. All one can say is that some abuse the Chinese more volubly than others." [23]

The civilian authorities in Japan were thus bitterly divided amongst themselves as to what course of action to take in response to the Manchurian In-

cident and were faced with a public opinion which steadily veered towards support of the Kwantung Army. The central military authorities in Japan presented a far from monolithic front but were considerably less divided about the issue than were the civilian authorities.

Ever since the Meiji Restoration there had been a certain degree of rivalry between the Army and the Navy in Japan, based to a certain extent upon clan rivalry - the Choshu clan having come to dominate the Army whilst the Satsuma were concentrated in, and the dominant force within, the Navy. This differentiation between Army and Navy was accentuated by the different Western examples upon which each service had based itself - a difference important in the context of 1931 with the spectre of the military, or sections of it, successfully challenging civilian hegemony in politics.

> "...while the Japanese Army was modeling itself first on the French Army and then, after the Battle of Sedan, on the Prussian Army, the Navy, obliged to start, almost from the Tokugawa edicts, almost from nothing, was absorbing from the British not only engineering, seamanship, and gunnery but something of political philosophy and tradition - a tradition in which military meddling in affairs of state has for centuries been kept to a minimum." [24]

Having made the point that the 'military' were composed of two different services, with different attitudes to the role of the military in politics, it must be stated that this point should not be over-emphasized - undoubtedly there were many in the Navy who wholeheartedly supported the actions of the Kwantung Army - in any event, to be realistic, the Army was far more important in the realm of domestic politics than the Navy could ever be.

The dominance of the Choshu clan within the army declined after World War I and members of less influential clans, having ties with small landowners and the lower middle classes came to predominate. The new officers were largely anti-Choshu in sentiment, partly for clan reasons, but partly also because the Choshu military leaders were traditionalists in an age of advancing military technology, which the younger officers espoused. The influence of Kita Ikki, Gondo Seikyo and other thinkers upon the young officers has been discussed in Chapter II of this dissertation and the flourishing of nationalistic and reform-minded societies among this group was also mentioned there. Ogata discusses the effects of similar influences upon naval officers in the following terms:

> "The navy did not rival the army in promoting the movement for reform, although it, too, had its radical young officers... under the leadership of Fujii Hitoshi. The London Naval Disarmament Treaty divided the navy leadership into two opposing groups, the 'Treaty faction' and the 'Fleet faction', the former representing those who consented to the conclusion of the disarmament treaty and the latter representing those who fought against it...However, the navy dissatisfaction never reached the point at which key officers thought in terms of taking over the government or of exerting organized pressure upon it." [25]

Within the Army the existence of societies of revolutionary-minded officers served to undermine the hierarchical structure posited by military theory and to create a power structure in which, if power did not actually flow upwards from the lower ranks of the officers, then at least sufficient pressure was exerted from that group so that the formal leadership was unable fully to control the actions of the lower and middle-grade officers.

This inability to control the junior officers is demonstrated conclusively by the aftermath of the October Plot.[26] The participants in the plot were medium grade officers. Their punishment for participation in the plot was light by any standards - by military standards incredibly so. The rationalization behind the light punishments was that severe retribution would be followed by

public scandal which might result in damage to the prestige of the Army. While this was almost certainly one of the reasons for the absence of disciplinary action, it seems likely that a more important reason was that the central military establishment was uncertain as to how far it could go in disciplining the officers without provoking unmanageable dissension within the service. The effects of this attitude on the part of the army authorities have been well summarized by Yoshihashi:

> "The army's inability to do its own housecleaning had an unhealthy effect on itself and on the nation. Instead of bringing to trial the army officers who had conspired to overthrow the government, the leaders of the army defended the young officers on the ground that they were sincere and well meaning, but in the same breath they condemned the corrupt practices of party government. This attitude by officers in high places only fostered the notion that as long as revolutionary activities were committed in the name of national reconstruction punitive action would not be taken. The upshot was that while discipline in the army deteriorated woefully, the fever to engage in direct action was heightened among the young officers." [27]

Richard Storry[28] supports the view that the October Plot was entirely the initiative of junior officers and this picture of the locus of power within the Japanese Army having shifted down the ranks is further supported by Yale C. Maxon[29] who argues, convincingly, that within the army the centre of power lay, not with

the Chief of Staff but with his subordinates:

> "No explanation of the events of the 'thirties that does not deal with the powers and activities of the field grade staff officers... would come even close to the real state of affairs." [30]

These field grade officers had access to the decisional process. Maxon explains, through the Military Affairs Bureau (of the War Ministry), the Chief of which:

> "...had come to function as the spokesman for the aggressive ambitions of the field grade officer group in the General Staff." [31]

It is interesting to note that it was not until 1936 that the upper echelons of the Army finally cracked down on the activities of the medium rank officers and restored the theory of a hierarchical command structure to something approaching a reality.

In the next part of the Chapter the interrelationship between the Army and the Government, during the crisis, will be discussed. In this discussion the dissension within the government and the parties, and the diffusion of power within the army must always be remembered. This was not a mere conflict between two parties - the one "civilian' and the other 'military' but an extremely fluid situation in which many diverse groups within each category were trying to influence the course of events.

The issue of the London Naval Treaty[32], signed on 22 April 1930 and ratified on 1 October of the same year, has often been represented as a victory for the forces of parliamentary government over the forces of militarism, Whilst this is true to some extent it was by no means such a resounding victory as has often been argued. E.E.N. Causton, for example, has stated that

> "By the end of 1930, therefore, party government had won an overwhelming victory, and was in a position far stronger than it had ever occupied before..." [33]

Yale C. Maxon has also supported this view:

> "By 1930 the civil forces in Japan held an almost unprecedented degree of power and influence in government." [34]

Both writers then go on to describe the decline of the parties from the zenith of their power in conjunction with military conspiracy and insubordination.

To this writer however, the statement that the parties enjoyed their greatest power in 1930 seems incorrect. Power being relative, it sems that the power gap between the forces in favour of party government and those opposed to it was considerably narrower in 1930 than it had been, for example, in the early 1920's.

In the first place the'victory' of the parties in the case of the London Naval Treaty was precarious

at best and resulted from two factors which were unlikely to operate in any future dispute.

1) the absence of the Navy Minister enabled the civilian Prime Minister, Hamaguchi, to legally act as Navy Minister, in his absence.

2) the Navy had a tradition of non-defiance of the civil government and this operated to some extent during the London Naval Treaty crisis.

Maxon points out that:

> "The end result of the naval controversy ...was a repudiation of the claim of the Supreme Command to a position of autonomy and a vigorous assertion of the overriding authority of the Navy Minister for the preservation of discipline. But this result had not come about without vigorous efforts on the part of high ranking naval officers within and without the government who understood the value of discipline." 35
>
> (my italics)

Neither of the above conditions - absence of the service minister or vigorous support by high ranking officers, was likely to apply in the event of a dispute between the Army and the civil government, and, in gauging the relative power of the civil government in 1930 it is important to note that the Navy presented a far less formidable opponent than the Army. In addition, the ever rising tide of discontent with government by parties perceived to be power-oriented and corrupt, described in Chapters I and II must not be forgotten. The 'victory'

of the civil government in this dispute had its feedback effects as Yanaga has described:

> "The signing of the London Naval Treaty in 1930 presented a wonderful opportunity to the ultranationalistic organizations, which were bent on inciting public opinion against the government for its weak diplomacy and alleged encroachment on the imperial prerogative of the 'supreme command'." [36]

In the crisis of 1931 two possible sources of stability in an extremely fluid situation were the Emperor, and the Genro, which had previously played a decisive role in Japanese politics (see Chapter I). By 1931 however, the latter was virtually defunct, the only surviving member being Prince Saionji, and he, although still an influential person, realized himself that the 'golden age' of the Genro had passed - his main concern during the crisis was to ensure the survival of the Imperial institution and his advice to the Emperor, to ensure this, was, in effect, to stay as aloof as possible from the power struggle taking place. This advice from Saionji was consistent with that received by the Emperor from his other counsellors. Speaking of the Emperor's advisers, Hugh Byas has written that:

> "Their first duty is to preserve the security of the throne and the unity of the nation..." [37]

These aims, they felt, could best be achieved by keeping

the Emperor out of the political sphere as much as possible and by lending Imperial support to the most powerful faction, that is, that faction most able to guarantee the security of the throne and the unity of the nation.

Thus the power struggle in 1931 occurred in a situation where none of the factions could claim legitimacy, since the source of legitimacy in the Japanese system - the Emperor, was maintaining a stance of non-involvement in the struggle. This was particularly damaging to the civilian governments of Wakatsuki and Inukai since Imperial sanction would have been one of their greatest strengths - without it they relied upon a vague notion of electoral mandate, an insecure foundation, since, as was pointed out in Chapter I, Japanese elections were notoriously corrupt.

Thus, in 1931 the political situation in Japan was one in which the civil government was internally divided and, despite, or perhaps because of, the victory over the Navy regarding the London Naval Treaty, in a not very strong position vis-a-vis the military. The military themselves however, had their internal divisions and as has been shown above the locus of power within the army had shifted from the highest ranks towards the middle ranks.

The interaction between the Japanese Government, Army Headquarters (Tokyo), and the Kwantung Army, after the Manchurian Incident of 18 September 1931 will be discussed in the next section of the Chapter.

IV

The initial reaction of the central army headquarters in Tokyo to news of the Mukden Incident was one of cautious support for the Kwantung Army. This was partly because of frustration with Shidehara's foreign policy - 'direct action' had long been advocated in some circles and this group was quick to rally behind the Kwantung Army. Some of the support however, and its cautious nature, is accounted for by the rumours spread in Tokyo that unless support was forthcoming, the Kwantung Army might secede and establish an independent regime in Manchuria. Thus it seems that at least some of the support given to the Kwantung Army by army headquarters was given from a position of weakness - motivated by the fear that the Kwantung Army would defy any orders which ran counter to the aims of the Itagaki-Ishihara group of conspirators.

As the Manchurian crisis developed it became clear that these were not idle fears. The Kwantung Army repeatedly defied both the civil government and the

central authorities.

The first act of defiance came on 21 September 1931 when troop reinforcements were sent from Korea to Manchuria without cabinet approval and against the orders of the Chief of the General Staff, Kanaya Hanzo, and Minister of War, Minami Jiro. Ogata has commented on this incident that:

> "From the point of view of military discipline, the arbitrary despatch of the Korean Army to Manchuria was indeed a major disaster. The despatch of troops to Kirin was, of course, a case of expanded interpretation of his authorized function on the part of the Commander-in-Chief of the Kwantung Army, for Kirin was neither in Kwantung nor adjacent to the railway zone entrusted to his command. The Korean Army was assigned to defend Korea, and only the Supreme Command could legally order it to Manchuria." [38]

A further example of defiance on the part of the Kwantung Army is provided by the Nonni Bridges operation.[39] The Chief of the General Staff repeatedly ordered the Kwantung Army not to advance in North Manchuria. The reason behind these orders was basically a desire to avoid provoking the U.S.S.R. On November 4th. however, hostilities broke out at the Nonni Bridge and the Kwantung Army pressed northward.

On 16 November Prime Minister Wakatsuki made the following statement (to Baron Harada, Prince Saionji's

private secretary):

> "At the cabinet meeting the Minister of War tried to push through a proposal to increase the number of troops in Manchuria, but he failed. At the time I told him firmly to halt the Kwantung Army this side of the Chinese Eastern Railway. So far I have made every effort to maintain our country's face by offering to the League explanations regarding the Kwantung Army's actions which, though at times rather flimsy, still had some semblance of truth. But if the army should ever advance beyond the Chinese Eastern Railway and attack Tsitsihar, I can no longer assume responsibility for its actions." [40]

On November 19th. Tsitsihar was occupied by the Kwantung Army. This total disregard for Wakatsuki's policy is indicative of the amount of influence the civil government was able to bring to bear on the Kwantung Army. In point of fact it took a very concerted and determined effort by Kanaya, the Chief of the General Staff, to compel the Kwantung Army to withdraw from Tsitsihar.[41] The compliance of the Kwantung Army was in doubt for some time but finally the intransigence of Kanaya prevailed and the troops were withdrawn. The fact that such efforts were required on Kanaya's part however, indicates the difficulty the central army headquarters faced in enforcing its orders in Manchuria. In most instances such great efforts were not made and a statement of Wakatsuki (made after World War II) reveals the situation he faced:

> "I was shown maps daily on which...General Minami would show by a line a boundary which

> the army in Manchuria would not go beyond, and almost daily that boundary line was ignored and further expansion was reported, but always with assurances that this was the final move." [42]

Another statement by Wakatsuki (made to Saionji's private secretary on 12 October 1931) reveals the same state of affairs:

> "I would summon the Minister of War to explain to him at great length the necessity of maintaining orderly conduct of our troops abroad. He would then agree, 'Indeed, it is as you say. I shall send out an instruction right away'. Then what would happen? The troops stationed abroad would commit acts which would run completely counter to the agreement that the Minister of War and I has just made. This is followed by immediate repercussions at Geneva. I am as good as betrayed. Too, they are blemishing Japan's reputation. I am at a loss as to what to do. I cannot go on like this. Yet, I cannot very well resign at this point. Indeed, matters have come to a serious pass." [43]

Clearly, by October of 1931 Wakatsuki and his strife-ridden cabinet had lost all control of the situation.

An interesting view of the Manchurian crisis is provided by the reports of the situation in the Manchester Guardian for 1931-32. On 24 September 1931 General Minami is quoted as saying:

> "As soon as circumstances permit, Japan is prepared to withdraw her troops, who are engaged in intermittent hostilities with the Chinese in South Manchuria." [44]

Was this deliberate deceit on Minami's part or was it lack of information as to the intentions of the Kwantung Army which prompted this statement? It seems likely that Minami's statement was made both in ignorance and with the intention of alleviating suspicion of Japan. It is interesting to report also that as early as September 29th. reports appeared in the Guardian of an independence movement taking shape in Manchuria.

A report from Tokyo on 27 November 1931 is revealing of the situation within Japan:

> "The instructions of Baron Shidehara, the Japanese Foreign Minister, to the Japanese delegate at the League of Nations Council inform him that the Government cannot... order the suspension of hostilities in the Chinchow area. It is pointed out emphatically that the Government cannot issue instructions to the military commanders, as such power is part of the Imperial prerogative. It is believed that this reply was sent under pressure from the military authorities." [45]

An editorial in the same newspaper on the following day summarizes the situation completely:

> "It has long been obvious that one of the difficulties in the way of the League Council's attempt to settle the dispute by peaceable means has arisen out of the fact that the Japanese government has no control over the military authorities responsible for the actual campaign in Manchuria." [46]

Thus, the government of Wakatsuki was plainly unable to restrain the Kwantung Army. The only body which

might have done this was the central army headquarters. It did not do so for three reasons:

1) most of the general staff officers were in general agreement with the aims of the Kwantung Army although its methods were not always approved of, nor the extremism of some of its officers.

2) discipline within the army was not good and even those senior officers opposed to the actions of the Kwantung Army were endeavouring to 'tread lightly' in an attempt to minimize disunity within the army and to keep it intact as a cohesive force.

3) there was a great deal of vociferous support from influential segments of the public for the 'direct action' of the Kwantung Army. Takeuchi has commented that, by November:

> "...the rank and file of the people were convinced that all the operations in Manchuria has been prompted by sheer necessity of self-defence. They were now ready to support any move their army might make on the continent calculated to enhance their 'life-line'." [47]

For these reasons the central army headquarters did not take a strong stand against the Kwantung Army but merely tried to influence the results of the 'direct action' away from the danger of war with the U.S.S.R. and away from outright annexation of Manchuria (as originally advocated by the Kwantung Army).

It was stated earlier that the Emperor was strongly advised to stay aloof from the struggle as much as possible. By and large he accepted this advice but there is some evidence that he opposed the actions of the Kwantung Army and tried to influence the government to oppose them. For example he stated to Saionji (after the fall of the Wakatsuki cabinet):

> "The person to lead the next cabinet must be earnestly cautioned by Prince Saionji on the matter of the mismanagement and high-handedness of the army. The army's meddling in domestic and foreign politics, trying to get its own way, is a state of affairs which, for the good of the nation, we must view with apprehension. Be mindful of my anxiety. Please convey the full import of it to Inukai. After that I will summon Inukai". 48

Although Inukai had always publicly supported a 'strong' foreign policy and continued to do so, it seems that he made a secret attempt to negotiate a settlement with Chiang Kai-shek. A tentative agreement to a solution of the problem based on mutual withdrawal of troops was reached, but the question remained of how to compel the Kwantung Army to withdraw. Inukai apparently thought that this could be achieved by an Imperial order to the Kwantung Army to withdraw to the railway zone. There was some doubt however whether even an Imperial command would have been obeyed. Saionji is known to have been of the opinion that there was a very real danger that the Emperor would have been disobeyed -

an event which would have been disastrous to the Imperial institution, the preservation of which was Saionji's main concern. Inukai's peace-making initiative collapsed therefore, simply because the civil government had not the authority to put the agreement reached into operation.

The Kwantung Army originally intended that Manchuria be formally annexed by Japan. As a compromise however, they agreed to the creation of an independent state, which was, however, to be closely supervised by Japan. Thus the Kwantung Army was prevented from implementing their orginal plan. This was largely because the Tokyo authorities (civil and military) were unwilling to so blatantly flout world opinion. However, although the Kwantung Army undoubtedly did make a concession in settling for less than their ideal, it is obvious that the greater concessions were made by Tokyo. As Ogata has observed:

> "The creation of an independent state based upon a popular movement for autonomy but controlled by Japan through international agreements and incorporating national-socialist principles was a settlement that far exceeded the imagination and approval of civil and military leaders in Tokyo." [49]

Manchoukuo was officially established on 9 March 1932. The Inukai cabinet withheld recognition of the new state hoping meanwhile to negotiate a settlement which would be acceptable to international opinion. This non-

recognition of Manchoukuo served to influence the nationalist movement against Inukai, as did the government's action in negotiating a cease fire at Shanghai[50], and Inukai's attempts to mobilize moderate opinion behind the Seiyukai party - an action which was anathema to all shades of nationalist opinion. On 15 May 1932 Inukai was assassinated in broad daylight by a group of men in military uniforms.[51] With the assassination of Inukai the last semblance of party government in pre-war Japan ended.[52] Richard Storry has stated, referring to the incident of 15th. May:

> "...the affair put an end to party government in Japan, until after the Surrender of 1945. It accelerated the trend towards what has been called 'fascism from above'.
> The 15th. May Incident had a significance for modern Japanese nationalism second only to that of the Manchurian Incident eight months earlier. After 15th. May, 1932 liberalism, as a factor in official life, was a spent force. There could be no turning back from the path of overseas expansion opened up by the seizure of Manchuria, or from the course of increasing authoritarian control at home." [53]

Thus, it has been argued in this Chapter that the leading actors in the Manchurian Incident and its aftermath were a conspiratorial group of nationalistically motivated, field grade officers in the Kwantung Army. The actions of this group were generally supported, but not always, by the central army authorities in Tokyo who were, in the main, sympathetic to the aims of the Kwantung

Army but who were, in any case, uncertain as to how much authority they possessed over their junior officers (either in the Kwantung Army or in Japan proper). The civil government was reduced to a state of impotence - the parties had become discredited in the years before 1931 and were disunited and powerless during the crisis. As Maxon has written:

> "...the civil government's primary foreign affairs function became that of enunciating policy statements which were ignored in the field and ridiculed abroad for their apparent duplicity." [54]

Thus the Manchurian Incident and its aftermath marks a turning point in Japanese history. It is important to remember, however, that the Incident was but the spark which set off the explosion, the 'explosive materials' had been long in the making.

CHAPTER V : SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

In Manchuria in 1931 a clear conflict of interest can be seen between China, Japan, and the U.S.S.R. Manchuria, legally Chinese and in this century predominantly populated by Chinese, was an area in which both the Soviet Union and Japan had large economic and strategic interests. The list of particular issues between Japan and China (and to a lesser extent the U.S.S.R.) is a long one, and the most important of these issues have been dealt with in Chapter III.

The situation in Manchuria in 1931 was, thus, an explosive one, and, it can be argued that an armed clash was inevitable. But the reasons why events took the course they did, culminating in a Japanese takeover of Manchuria, despite a hostile world opinion, must be sought in the political, economic, and social history of Japan since its first encounter with the West and the ensuing Meiji Restoration. Because of this a basically historical approach to the problem was taken.

In Chapter I the failure of a liberal-democratic system of government to establish itself was outlined. From the very first the centre of power under the

Meiji Constitution was obscure, the most powerful body being the Genro, an extra-constitutional group of Elder Statesmen. The close links between the state and capitalism, and the consequent failure of big industry to provide a countervailing weight to the power of the state was also mentioned, as was the use made by the Meiji elite of the education system to inculcate and strengthen traditional values and beliefs. The inordinate amount of power given to the military by the provision that the service ministers must always be military officers was also pointed out.

These factors coupled with the increasing corruption of the political parties meant that the crisis of 1931 came to a Japan in which liberal-democracy was a facade, without deep roots in the society. It has often been assumed that if democratic government had really become established in Japan then the events of 1931-32 would have been very different. There is some truth in this assumption in that it is unlikely that a democratic government would have so blatantly flaunted world opinion. It also seems unlikely that Japan would have acted in such an extreme fashion - i.e. 'annexing' Manchuria. But it would be dangerous to make too much of this point for the following reasons:

1) Nationalistically inspired liberal-democratic governments had often taken part in imperialist actions.

For example, the U.K. had fought the Boer War, World War I, and, under Disraeli had taken part in the 'grab for Africa'. The U.S.A. had acted in an imperialistic manner in Cuba and the Philippines.

2) Nationalist feeling in Japan was so strong that no government could have appeared to stand back while Japanese interests in Manchuria were threatened. Thus, even if democratic government had taken root in Japan, it is likely that the most that could have been achieved would have been a more moderate policy, which would however have had the same ends, preservation of Japan's 'special position' in Manchuria.

Thus the answer to the Japanese behaviour in Manchuria seems to lie in the rise of nationalistic feeling described in Chapter II and elsewhere in this dissertation. The ingredients of this extreme nationalism were the threat from the West, kokutai, the education system, the injury to national pride, agrarian discontent and economic distress. The philosophical background to the movement was provided by Kita Ikki, Gondo Seiki and others.

Certainly therefore, the conditions for military adventure were present in 1931 - weak civilian control, mass nationalistic feeling which would support an aggressive policy, provocations on the part of the Chinese, strategic and economic interests in Manchuria, and a sense of

injured national pride.

It is this combination of objective and subjective factors which motivated the Kwantung Army conspirators, and many others in Japan proper, towards 'direct action', and which ensured a popular reception for these actions.

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. despatch from Geneva, Manchester Guardian, 23rd. September 1931.

2. editorial in Manchester Guardian, 30 October 1931

3. for a discussion of the Meiji Restoration see Chapter I of this dissertation.

4. see Snyder R.C., Bruck H.W., and Sapin B. "The Decision-making Approach to the Study of International Politics" in Rosenau J.N. (ed.) "International Politics and Foreign Policy" pp. 186-193.

CHAPTER I : THE FAILURE OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN JAPAN 1889 - 1931.

1. While Ito was primarily responsible for the Meiji Constitution there is no doubt that he and the drafting committee were considerably influenced by German advisers, notably Herman Roessler and Albert Mosse.

2. "He possessed the right of sovereignty and exercised them within the Constitution, convoked and prorogued the Diet, dissolved the House of Representatives, issued ordinances, determined the organization of the government, and acted on appointments and dismissals of all officials, save in those cases where other provision was made by the Constitution. He exercised the administrative and command powers over the army and navy, declared war, made peace and concluded treaties, proclaimed martial law, conferred all high official ranks and honours, appointed and removed judges." Clyde P.H. and Beers B.F. "The Far East: A History of the Western Impact and the Eastern Response 1830 - 1965." p. 128

3. This act extended the franchise to all adult Japanese males.

4. This body, the upper house of the legislature included:
   a) all Princes of the Blood who had reached majority;
   b) princes and marquises over twenty-nine years of age;
   c) representatives of counts, viscounts, and barons elected by their orders for terms of seven years;
   d) Imperial appointees selected for life because of distinguished service to the state or in recognition of scholarship;
   e) representatives of the Imperial academy elected by their colleagues for seven year terms;
   f) elected representatices of the highest taxpayers from each prefecture.

5. Vinacke H.M. "A History of the Far East in Modern Times". p.328

6. Langdon F. "Politics in Japan". p.41

7. and in the other centres of power e.g. the bureaucracy and the military.

8. Vinacke op. cit. p.113

9. The two main parties in this period were the Jiyuto (Liberal party) led by Count Itagaki and the Kaishinto (Progressive party) led by Count Okuma. Their policy was similar in most respects but they were unable to amalgamate largely because of personality differences among their leaders.

10. Scalapino R.A. "Democracy and the Party Movement in Pre-War Japan." p.150

11. ibid. p.178
    For a period of four months in 1898 there had been a 'pure' party cabinet led by Okuma and Tagaki, who had amalgamated their following into a new party, the Kenseito or Constitutional party. This government broke up because of internal dissention.

12. Ito's purpose was to find a means through which a political party might be created as an administration party, thus providing support for the oligarchy. This was not a new idea on his part. Since the elections of 1892 he had hoped that a situation would arise in which he could put his idea into practice.

13. Vinacke op.cit. p. 330

14. see Scalapino op. cit. pp. 192-196 for a detailed coverage of this crisis.

15. ibid. p. 206. The manipulation of elections was rendered especially easy by the restricted franchise. Large scale bribery and intimidation was thus quite feasible.

16. By this I mean that although it is true that Hara did not possess a noble title, he was in fact of noble birth, and lacked a title only because he had declined one.

17. Tsunoda R. "Sources of Japanese Tradition Vol.II" p.214

18. quoted in Scalapino op. cit. p. 223

19. There are, of course, other and less favourable interpretations of the rise of capitalism in the West. Nevertheless I feel that the interpretation used is correct as far as it goes.

20. Inukai quoted in Scalapino op.cit. p.258

21. generally referred to as the zaibatsu. See also footnote 23 of this Chapter.

22. Scalapino op.cit. p.254.

23. Although in Japanese industry small operating units or plants were typical, these small units were often dependent on larger concerns which, in turn, were controlled, if not owned, by a few huge financial-industrial complexes known as the zaibatsu (trans, financial cliques). The 'big four' zaibatsu were the family concerns of Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, and Yasuda. Lesser but powerful groups often referred to as zaibatsu included the following: Okura, Asano, Kuhara, Ogawa-Tanaka, Kawasaki, Shibusawa, Furukawa, and Mori.

24. Tsunoda op.cit. p.215

25. Langdon op.cit. p. 37

26. Professor Okita quoted in Scalapino op.cit. p.217

27. Maruyama Masao quoted in Langdon p.25

28. for a fuller discussion of the failure of the socialist movement in Japan see Scalapino Ch.8

29. Clyde and Beers op.cit. pp.296-297

CHAPTER II: THE RISE OF ULTRA-NATIONALISM IN JAPAN

1. quoted in Maruyama M. "Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics" p.7

2. ibid. p.13

3. since this dissertation deals only with the modern period, earlier manifestations of national consciousness and nationalism will be referred to only when relevant to the subject under discussion.

4. Storry R. "The Double Patriots: A Study of Japanese Nationalism" p.5

5. a Professor Hausknecht, a German scholar at Tokyo Imperial University, was a particularly influential adviser to the government.

6. see Scalapino op.cit. pp. 296-297

7. extracts from the Imperial Rescript on Education 1890.

8. Scalapino op.cit. p.298

9. this is not to say that the effect of increasing integration was necessarily intended by the elite.

10. Brown D. "Nationalism in Japan" p.98

11. ibid. p.111

12. i.e. treaties with Western powers which Japan had been compelled to sign by methods of 'gunboat diplomacy'. Rights such as extra-territoriality were granted by these treaties. They were finally revised in 1899.

13. Hindmarsh A.E. "The Basis of Japanese Foreign Policy" p.193

14. Reischauer E.O. "The U.S. and Japan" p.113

15. Brown op.cit. p.129

16. Storry op.cit. Ch.2

17. between 1872 and 1922 the population of Japan increased by about 70%.

18. Scalapino op.cit. p.343

19. Gondo Seikei quoted in Tsunoda op.cit. pp.264-265

20. Scalapino op. cit. pp.357-358

CHAPTER III: THREE POWER RIVALRIY IN MANCHURIA

1. This was the Report of the Commission of Enquiry, set up by the League of Nations, under the chairmanship of Lord Lytton, to report to the Council of the League of Nations, on an appeal made by the Chinese Government, charging aggression by Japan in Manchuria. In the text of the dissertation it has mainly been referred to as the Lytton Report.

2. figures drawn from League of Nations. Report of the Commission of Enquiry p.25

3. the area known as Manchuria was composed of the Three Eastern Provinces of Fengtien, Heilungkiang, an Kirin plus the province of Jehol.

4. son of Chang Tso-lin and his successor as ruler of Manchuria.

5. these were the Karakhan Declarations.

6. see Vinacke op.cit. p.410

7. see P.H.S. Tang "Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia 1911-31" pp.186-88 for a detailed account.

8. The China Year Book 1931 p.432

9. extracts from the text of a note from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the National Government of China to the Soviet commissar for Foreign Affairs

16 July 1929 printed in English translation in The China Year Book 1929-30 pp.1220-1222.

10. extracts from the text of a note from the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. to the Mukden Government and the National Government of China at Nanking 14 July 1929 printed in English translation in The China Year Book 1929-39 op.cit. pp.1217-1220.

11. Tang op.cit. p.193

12. League of Nations op.cit. p.39

13. Ogata S.N. "Defiance in Manchuria" Ch.I

14. Tanaka Giichi, Prime Minister of Japan 1927-29. For a discussion of Tanaka's 'strong' or 'positive' policy and Shidehara's 'weak' policy see Ogata pp.7-13.

15. Vinacke op.cit. p.406

16. League of Nations op.cit. p.36

17. see Ogata op.cit. p.42

18. Kawakami K.K. "Manchoukuo: Child of Conflict" pp.268-69

19. High S. "The New Crisis in the Far East" p. 98

20. League of Nations op.cit. p.37.

21. ibid. p.124

22. adapted from a table showing Japanese investments in Manchuria contained in The South Manchuria Railway Company: "Third Report on Progress in Manchuria to 1932" p.48

23. compiled from information given in Sokolsky G.E. "The Tinderbox of Asia" p.144

24. League of Nations op.cit. p.39

25. Young C. Walter "Japan's Special Position in Manchuria" p.1

26. League of Nations op.cit. p.42

27. Sokolsky op.cit. pp.146-47

28. see Map 3 of the Lytton Report.

29. see S.M.R. op.cit. p.42 for details.

30. Kirin-Changchun, Kirin-Tunhua, Ssupinkai-Taonan, Taonan-Angangchi.

31. for a full discussion see Young op.cit. Ch.VIII

32. ibid p.239

33. in Far Eastern Review August 1918 p.336 example given in Young pp.254-55

34. Great Britain, U.S.A.. France, Russia, Japan, and Germany.

35. for a discussion of the Twenty One Demands and the Treaty Provisions of 1915 see Vinacke op.cit. pp.366-72.

36. League of Nations op.cit. p.49

37. S.M.R. op. cit. p.41

38. ibid.p.19

39. League of Nations op.cit. pp.61-62.

40. ibid. p.117

CHAPTER IV : THE CRISIS OF 1931

1. for example Takeuchi T. "War and Diplomacy in the Japanese Empire" p.346 and Causton E.E.N. "Militarism and Foreign Policy in Japan" pp.146 and 181

2. this is because an exhaustive treatment of all possible interrelationships would involve several thousand cases.

3. for a good narrative treatment of the events of September 1931 and onwards see the Lytton Report Ch.IV

4. see Smith S.R. "The Manchurian Crisis" for a good treatment of the role of the League.

5. Finer S.E. "The Man on Horseback", particularly the early Chapters.

6. see Yoshihashi T. "Conspiracy at Mukden" pp.160-61

7. Ferrell R.H. "The Mukden Incident: September 18-19, 1931". Journal of Modern History v.27, no.1, March 1955 p.72

8. quoted in Yoshihashi op.cit. p.167

9. Storry op.cit. pp.84-85.

10. for an account of the Tatekawa mission see Ogata op.cit. pp.58-59.

11. Yoshihashi op.cit. p.156

12. League of Nations op.cit. p.71

13. see Ogata Chapters II and III for a fuller description.

14. ibid. p.45

15. quoted in Maxon Y.C. "Control of Japanese Foreign Policy" p.80

16. ibid. p.16

17. Yoshihashi op.cit. p.185.

18. Ogata op.cit. p.64

19. Yoshihashi op.cit. p.189

20. ibid. pp.176-77

21. Takeuchi op.cit. p.365

22. see Chapter I, footnote 18

23. despatch from the Japanese correspondent of the Manchester Guardian 30 October 1931.

24. Maxon op.cit. p.21

25. Ogata op.cit. p.33

26. for a good brief account of the plot see Crowley J.B. "Japan's Quest for Autonomy" pp.131-135

27. Yoshihashi op.cit. pp.205-206

28. Storry op.cit. p.86

29. Maxon op.cit. pp.17-47

30. ibid. p.44

31. ibid. p.47

32. see Takeuchi pp.283-336 for a good narrative account

33. Causton op.cit. p.137

34. Maxon op.cit. p.73

35. ibid. p.78

36. Yanaga C. "Japan Since Perry" p.497

37. Byas H. "Government by Assassination" p.302

38. Ogata op.cit. p.65

39. League of Nations op.cit. pp.73-75

40. quoted in Yoshihashi op.cit. pp.212-13

41. see Ogata pp.112-13

42. quoted in Maxon p.84

43. quoted in Yoshihashi p.193

44. Manchester Guardian 23 September 1931.

45. Manchester Guardian 27 November 1931.

46. Manchester Guardian 28 November 1931.

47. Takeuchi op.cit. pp.366-67

48. quoted in Storry p.109

49. Ogata op.cit. pp.131-32

50. see Lytton Report p.84-88

51. the assassins received extremely lenient punishment for their deeds.

52. there were some party members in cabinets up until about 1937, but the party movement was, in effect, dead.

53. Storry op.cit. p.124

54. Maxon op.cit. p.86

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