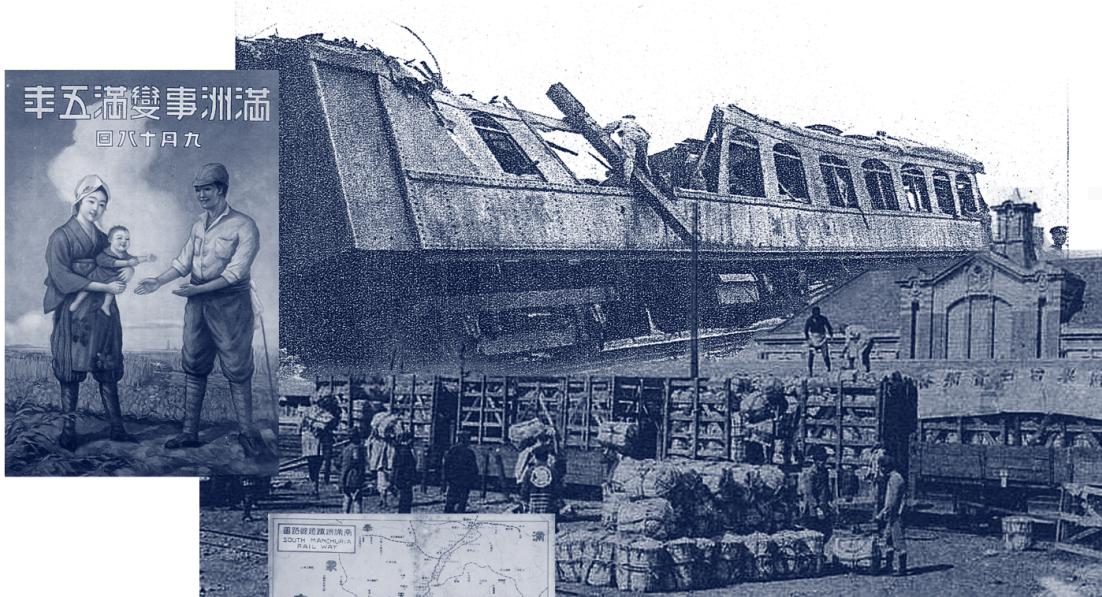




# The Manchurian Incident

*Westwood MUNC VII*



滿洲事變

Delegates,

Since WestwoodMUNCVII is being run as an entirely crisis-based conference, it is crucial for newcomers to be familiar with the rules of procedure, as it does diverge from some of the more traditional general assembly procedures. Please see below for a quick rundown of most of the rules we will be following for the duration of the conference:

#### I. Overview:

Crisis committees are run differently from “normal” Model UN committees. Because they run at a very fast pace, each committee is run in a series of moderated caucuses, designed to maintain a rapid flow of debate, helping delegates adjust to crisis updates and such. The rest of the committee follows normal parliamentary procedure with a few notable exceptions.

#### II. Format:

As previously stated, the format of debate differs slightly from a general assembly in a crisis simulation. There is no speakers list and therefore, the default method of debate is the moderated caucus. Chairs will require the first motion being a round robin so as to ascertain the positions of others in the committee. This will serve as a good jumping off point to see who delegates are most likely to work with and who is most likely to get in the way of achieving their goals. After that, delegates will be able to motion for the “traditional” (un)moderated caucuses, round robins, straw polls, voting procedure, etc. In order to make any of these motions, a delegate must be recognized by the chair after raising their placards. Points and motions may be made between speakers, though note

that right of replies are rarely granted and are only allowed when serious insult to national or personal integrity has occurred.

### III. Public Directives:

Delegates do not work to pass resolutions. Rather, they will pass a series of directives that are binding, take effect immediately and can potentially alter the course of events for the entire crisis simulation. A directive is a specific action that the committee wishes to take. Unlike resolutions, directives do not include preambulatory clauses; instead, delegates will directly state specific orders, similar to operative clauses, following the title and the sponsors and signatories list.

### IV. Personal Directives:

Additionally, individual members of the committee may pass personal directives depending on their particular position, potentially contributing to individual crisis arcs. These directives can range from allocating funds for renewable energy to carrying out assassinations. These actions do not need to be passed by the committee at large and their effectiveness is determined by their feasibility and the crisis staff. It is suggested that delegates refrain from sharing what personal directives they are planning as they should be used to achieve personal objectives that might not always align with the interests of the committee as a whole. These directives are sent to the crisis backroom, who determines whether or not the directive will change the course of the committee.

### V. Communication:

Communication is an essential part of any crisis simulation, and is especially a vital tool when delegates are required to respond to crisis updates. At the beginning of the conference, delegates will be provided with a pen and a pad of paper. They may use the paper to write notes to each other, write up directives, or organize thoughts. Regarding note passing: delegates may pass notes to each other during committee while other members are speaking, but this privilege may be revoked by the chair should it distract from the debate. Specifics about note passing will be addressed at the beginning of the first committee session by the chair. Technology, like computers and cell phones, are not allowed during debate.

## VI. Conference Prep:

In order to prepare for this conference, it is *strongly* recommended that each delegate consolidate their thoughts and strategy by writing a position paper. Delegates that do not submit a paper by the deadline below will not be eligible for awards. Position papers should:

- Be 1-2 pages in length single spaced, 12 point font
- Describe your role's position and what they contribute to the issue
- Address specific questions from the Background Guide that are relevant to your role
- Outline your role's likely optimal resolution and steps you need to take to achieve it
- MLA or Chicago style citations along with a Works Cited or Bibliography

Please email your position paper to your chairs no later than ***11:59 pm on Sunday, April 21st*** so that they have adequate time to read them. To qualify for any awards you must submit a position paper by emailing it to [24elu@wpsstudents.org](mailto:24elu@wpsstudents.org) or [25jxu@wpsstudents.org](mailto:25jxu@wpsstudents.org). Once again, please feel free to email your chairs or crisis director with any questions you may have regarding conference policies or procedures.

Best,

WestwoodMUNCVII Staff

Dear Delegates,

My name is Ethan Lu, and I am elated to be your chair for the Manchurian Incident committee this year. I'm a senior at WHS, and apart from Model UN, I participate in French Club and founded my school's Quizbowl Club. I love history to death, and MUN is an excellent opportunity to engage in and share my enthusiasm with you all.

The leadup to World War II is often analyzed from the perspectives of North American and European countries, but the situation of pre-war Japan is almost as ignored as it is unique and fascinating. Japan's complex political and military struggles, combined with the contradictions of its foreign and colonial policies in China, herald precious insights about the disposition of Asia before WWII and a society torn between the ideals of liberal democracy and militarist nationalism. As fascinating as the subject is, however, it is also fraught with controversial and traumatic legacies whose impacts still reverberate through the world to this day. I ask delegates to refrain from using offensive or discriminatory language in debate and in other proceedings, to be sensitive to the topic and to others overall, and to work together to make this committee fun and rewarding for everyone involved.

MUN allows us to engage in important topics that hold valuable lessons in domestic and international affairs. I hope you will find this topic as illuminating as I find it. I can't wait to see all of your creative, nuanced, and thoughtful proposals, actions, and research. Please feel free to email me at [24elu@wpsstudents.org](mailto:24elu@wpsstudents.org) with any questions or to submit your position paper. Remember that all papers are due by Sunday, April 21st in order to be considered for awards.

Best,

Ethan

Dear Delegates,

My name is Jasper Xu and I am a junior at Westwood High School. This is my second year doing Model UN, and I'm excited to co-chair this committee. Outside of MUN, I enjoy hiking, playing tennis, and reading. I hope everyone is exuberant for this conference, and I look forward to seeing everyone in person. If you have any questions or are looking to submit your position paper, feel free to contact me at [25jxu@wpsstudents.org](mailto:25jxu@wpsstudents.org).

Best,

Jasper

## Note on Names

All East Asian names in this background guide are written with the family name first (i.e. Wakatsuki Reijirō, not Reijirō Wakatsuki). All Chinese names are rendered in Pinyin, unless the traditional Wade-Giles romanisation is more famous (i.e. Chiang Kai-Shek, not Jiang Jieshi).

## Committee Overview

In 1931, the Empire of Japan is a major world power, boasting one of the largest navies in the world and holding dominion over colonies across the Asia-Pacific.<sup>1</sup> Among Japan's many overseas holdings is the South Manchuria Railway, a rail network running through the major cities of the Northeast Chinese region of Manchuria. It is the primary instrument of Japanese control in the area, overseeing most of its economic activities and protected by the Kwantung Army, a formation of the Imperial Japanese Army.<sup>2</sup> On September 18, 1931, an explosion occurs near the main rail corridor near Mukden (modern-day Shenyang). Kwantung Army elements swiftly blame local Chinese forces and begin fighting them and seizing Chinese territory.<sup>3</sup>

This committee will convene members of the Japanese Cabinet as well as other prominent politicians in the House of Representatives, noblemen in the House of Peers and Privy Council, senior civil servants, heads of prominent corporations, and Army & Navy commanders in late September 1931 to discuss and take action on the unfolding invasion of Manchuria. Delegates will grapple with the implications that the independent action of the Kwantung Army

<sup>1</sup> Ian Nish, "An Overview of Relations between China and Japan, 1895-1945," *The China Quarterly*, no. 124 (1965): 615.

<sup>2</sup> Mike Klein, "Manchoukuo: Come for the Prosperity, Stay for the Harmony: Worlds Revealed," The Library of Congress, June 25, 2021, <https://blogs.loc.gov/maps/2021/06/manchoukuo-come-for-the-prosperity-stay-for-the-harmony/>.

<sup>3</sup> Robert H Ferrell, "The Mukden Incident: September 18-19, 1931," *The Journal of Modern History* 27, no. 1 (1955): 66-67.

will have on Japanese politics and government, as well as managing Japan's relations with China and the international community writ-large in the wake of the active campaign to seize what the world considers sovereign Chinese territory.

## Fukoku Kyōhei

As it prosecuted the invasion of Manchuria, Japan was, in many respects, a vastly politically different nation from what it had been just a few years prior. This follows a trend: in over half a century, the Land of the Rising Sun underwent not just dramatic political change, but societal, political, and technological upheaval as well, beginning with the *Meiji Ishin*, commonly known as the “Meiji Restoration.”

In 1868, the *Meiji Ishin* began when forces of the Satsuma and Chōshū provinces in southwestern Japan staged a coup against the Edo *Bakufu* (shogunate) that had led the country since 1603.<sup>4</sup> The shōguns had pursued a policy of strict isolationism that largely secluded Japan from the outside world—a policy that had abjectly failed with the forceful intrusion of Western nations in the 1850s and the imposition of unequal treaties granting foreigners extensive rights within the country. Deploring this state of affairs, leaders from Satsuma and Chōshū extinguished the *Bakufu* in 1869, proclaimed the restoration of the rightful authority of the Meiji Emperor, and proceeded to rule in his name.<sup>5</sup>

The new government instituted a programme of sweeping political, military, societal, and technological reform and modernisation. From the newly-rechristened capital of Tōkyō, formerly the *Bakufu* capital of Edo, the leaders who ruled in the Meiji Emperor’s name began by

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History since the Meiji Renovation: 1868-2000*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Britannica, Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Meiji Restoration," Encyclopedia Britannica, February 26, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Meiji-Restoration>.

abolishing the traditional feudal system, dismantling the feudal class system that chiefly privileged the *samurai* warrior class, laying the foundations for a modern national military, establishing a centralized Western-style education system, and introducing modern infrastructure and technology.<sup>6</sup> This set of leaders, called the *Genrō* (elder statesmen) or the “Meiji oligarchs,” intended to strengthen Japan and the absolute authority of the Emperor. They did so by implementing revolutionary reforms in pursuit of *fukoku kyōhei*—enrich the country, strengthen the military.<sup>7</sup>

Increasing societal desire for broader popular participation in politics and a constitution prompted the *Genrō* Itō Hirobumi to devise such a governing document for Japan. The constitution that Itō drew up never explicitly enshrined the *Genrō* as a government institution, but the institutions and military services that were codified—bar the popularly-elected lower house of the legislature—would all be led by the *Genrō*. This allowed the leaders of the Restoration to continue guiding Japan along a single, unified path and lessened the discord that would develop between their new branches of government.<sup>8</sup> As for the Emperor, Itō especially absorbed the influence of his German advisors and took inspiration for the Japanese constitution from that of the German Empire, with its concentration of power in the monarchy.<sup>9</sup> The Emperor would ratify the resulting Meiji Constitution in 1889, a document presented as a gracious bestowal by the monarch upon his subjects.<sup>10</sup> The constitution enshrined the Emperor’s sacredness and inviolability and his positions as head of state and supreme commander of the armed forces.<sup>11</sup> Due to his being sacred and inviolable, however, the Emperor was seen as above

<sup>6</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History* 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> Danny Orbach, *Curse on This Country: The Rebellious Army of Imperial Japan* (Cornell University Press, 2017), 4.

<sup>8</sup> R.P.G. Steven, “Hybrid Constitutionalism in Prewar Japan,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 3, no. 1 (1977): 118.

<sup>9</sup> Steven, “Hybrid Constitutionalism,” 118.

<sup>10</sup> Britannica, “Meiji Restoration.”

<sup>11</sup> Ch. 1, *Constitution of the Empire of Japan*, trans. Ito Miyoji, National Diet Library, 2003, accessed March 1, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c02.html>.

the vulgar fray of politics and statecraft. This severely constrained his ability to actually intervene in day-to-day governance, reducing the sovereign of Japan to a figurehead who would almost never exercise his theoretically supreme powers.<sup>12</sup> Real executive power instead lay with the Ministers of State that the Emperor appointed on the advice of the *Genrō*, and who made up the Cabinet. Legislative power rested with the Imperial Diet—with its lower, democratic House of Representatives and upper, aristocratic House of Peers—and a supervisory role lay with the Privy Council.<sup>13</sup> The *Genrō* found a comfortable position effectively choosing the Cabinet at their whim. The elder statesmen almost always chose one among their ranks to serve as Prime Minister, the head of the Cabinet, and they kept the Cabinet as a whole sufficiently separate from the unruly, democratically-elected Diet to maintain their unified approach to steering the ship of state.<sup>14</sup> Their control of most important state institutions and military services also served to smooth over internal conflict and coordinate the government as they pleased. While this kept policymaking safely in their hands, the *Genrō* were not a timeless institution, but mere mortals—agents of an early 20th century revolution in Japan who nevertheless could not govern forever. As their grip on power slackened, the institutions and political parties they had created would fill the vacuum, creating immense friction and intragovernmental dispute as they went.<sup>15</sup>

## Ryū to Hi: The Dragon and the Sun

In the years and decades leading up to 1931, the policy of the newly-modernized Imperial Japan towards China ranged from spells of amicable cooperation to military intervention and outright war.

<sup>12</sup> Steven, “Hybrid Constitutionalism” 128.

<sup>13</sup> Ch. 3-4, *Constitution of the Empire of Japan*, trans. Ito Miyoji.

<sup>14</sup> Steven, “Hybrid Constitutionalism,” 114-15.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 118.

The First Sino-Japanese War, fought from 1894 to 1895, led to Qing China's swift humiliation by a capable, modernized, Japanese Army and navy. In the ensuing Treaty of Shimonoseki, Japan extracted from China heavy indemnities and the prizes of Taiwan and the Liaodong Peninsula, a key strategic position in the south of Manchuria that bordered Korea, over which Japan had also gained suzerainty.<sup>16</sup> Japan, however, could not bask in its victory for long, as it soon faced the “three-power intervention” of Germany, France, and Russia, forcing it to restore the Liaodong Peninsula to China.<sup>17</sup> Although Japan’s fortunes in Manchuria had just been reversed, the paramount strategic value of the Liaodong Peninsula and the continuing machinations of Western countries in China ensured enduring Japanese interest and action in the area for decades to come.

After Japan and the European powers put down the 1900 Boxer Rebellion that had threatened the foreign legations in Beijing, the Russian contingent of the international taskforce moved to occupy Manchuria and bring it under St. Petersburg’s exclusive sphere of influence, drawing the ire of its recent international partners.<sup>18</sup> Japan in particular coveted Russia’s influence in Manchuria and was gravely afraid of the threat that a significant Russian troop presence posed to Tōkyō’s defense of its Korean satellite. In 1903, the Cabinet nominally pronounced the defense objective as its most crucial foreign policy priority—a priority tested by Russian incursions from the north.<sup>19</sup> After attempted, unproductive negotiations with Russia that same year, the Japanese government concluded that Russian forces had to be ousted from Manchuria to remove their overriding threat to vital Japanese interests.<sup>20</sup> The following year, in 1904, battle was joined in Manchuria and on nearby seas in the Russo-Japanese War, which

<sup>16</sup> Ian Nish, “An Overview of Relations between China and Japan, 1895-1945,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 124 (1965): 601.

<sup>17</sup> Nish, “Overview of Relations,” 601.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 602.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

Japan won.<sup>21</sup> The 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth ended the conflict, forcing St. Petersburg to cede to the Japan the southern half of Sakhalin island, its lease on the Liaodong Peninsula (including control of the important industrial and maritime centers of Port Arthur and Dalian), and ownership of the rail network extending from Port Arthur to Changchun—the foundations of the South Manchuria Railway.<sup>22</sup>

Before the Russo-Japanese War, the Cabinet strongly desired Chinese neutrality in its conflict with Russia as, despite Beijing's shared interest in expelling Russian interlopers from its soil, it viewed Chinese military participation as too detrimental to merit courting.<sup>23</sup> Whether it played an active role or not, Japan expected China's gratitude for purging Russian influence from its territory, which Tōkyō believed it had managed to secure through the December 1905 Treaty of Peking, in which China—nervously eyeing the formidable Japanese force that loomed near Beijing due to the Russian war—gave its blessing for Japan's gains at Portsmouth and promised not to build competing railways in Manchuria.<sup>24</sup> However, the railway non-competition protocol in particular would lead to two decades of dispute between Tōkyō and Beijing. Japan would jealously guard its rail monopoly, a centerpiece of its Manchurian holdings, while China never saw the protocol as a long-term commitment and attempted multiple railway construction projects in Manchuria for the next few years. The Japanese naturally protested these projects, and they proceeded to reconstruct the formerly-Russian lines whose rights they now held and expand the railway as well—a notion that China was determined to resist.<sup>25</sup> The Andong-Shenyang line, a rail link between Japanese-controlled Korea and Shenyang (Mukden), that Japan viewed as of paramount importance, became especially fraught with diplomatic contention and ultimately led

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 603.

<sup>22</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History* 89.

<sup>23</sup> Nish, "An Overview of Relations" 603.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 604.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

to a Japanese ultimatum that threatened to rebuild the railway with or without Beijing's consent. China relented, and the South Manchuria Railway Company continued to sink its tracks deeper into Chinese soil.<sup>26</sup>

When the 1911 Chinese Revolution erupted against the Qing, Japanese foreign policy experienced significant dissonance between the actions of Japanese agents in China—an indicator of future relations with China. Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs professed a policy of non-intervention, holding a moderate stance that emphasized the legitimacy of the Qing government and expressed hope for their gradual transformation into a constitutional monarchy.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, and despite the Foreign Ministry's insistence that Japan had no official contacts with the revolutionaries, Japanese military and business elements in China secretly lent them support through their business dealings.<sup>28</sup> When, in 1913, relations soured between the preeminent revolutionary, Sun Yat-Sen, and then-Chinese President Yuan Shikai, and conflict broke out, elements of the Japanese Army and Navy directly aided the anti-Yuan forces—much to the Tōkyō government's chagrin.<sup>29</sup> It is important here to note the unusual goodwill that Japan enjoyed among Chinese reformers, revolutionaries, and military officers in this period.<sup>30</sup> High-level Japanese officials had graciously welcomed prominent Chinese reformers fleeing the aborted Hundred Days of Reform in 1900, and many of the Chinese officers owed their training and strong sense of discipline and patriotism to Japanese instructors and Japanese military academies.<sup>31</sup> Of course, this admiration was substantially tinged with apprehension regarding Japan's exploitation of their country, but the example of the Meiji Restoration nevertheless

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 605.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 606.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 605.

inspired Chinese leaders to strengthen and modernize their own country.<sup>32</sup> This dovetailed with Japanese officers' sense of pan-Asianism and helps explain the support they attempted to provide to their Chinese revolutionary counterparts.

World War I brought Japan onto the side of the Allies, allowing it to swiftly seize the German-leased Chinese port of Qingdao in 1914.<sup>33</sup> The Japanese capture of the port city alienated China, and relations would plunge even further with the presentation of the Twenty-One Demands the following year.<sup>34</sup> The Demands were an ambitious wishlist of Japan's foreign policy goals in China, touchpaper for heated controversy in Japan and abroad, and a shot across the bow for Beijing.<sup>35</sup> Once again, with Japanese troops looming near Beijing, the Chinese government had little choice but to acquiesce to the multifaceted ultimatum.<sup>36</sup> In a series of treaties, China recognized the extension of Japan's leases on Liaodong—which lasted only until 1923 upon awarding at the Treaty of Portsmouth—and the South Manchuria Railway until 1997. China also dramatically expanded Japanese nationals' rights to travel, do business, and reside in the country, even allowing them to lease Chinese land for commercial purposes.<sup>37</sup> Though these rights were severely constrained in reality, and despite Japan's promise to eventually return Qingdao to China, the agreements resulting from the Demands engendered widespread fury in China and provoked demonstrations and anti-Japanese boycotts.<sup>38</sup> Boycotts in particular would become a significant and frequently-recurring expression of Chinese displeasure towards Japan, aimed as they were at Japan's ever-growing economic interests and the two countries' rapidly expanding trade relationship. By the 1910s, the Japanese sphere of influence in Manchuria and

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 607.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History* 117.

<sup>36</sup> Nish, "An Overview of Relations" 607.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 608

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

its interests throughout China made Japan one of, if not the, greatest exporters to China. China, in turn, was one of Japan's biggest customers, with trade volumes outstripping even the internal trade with Japanese-controlled Taiwan and Korea.<sup>39</sup> By the 1920s, the Japanese economy was utterly dependent on trading with China.<sup>40</sup> The recession following the 1927 banking crisis and the overarching need to amass gold and strengthen the yen in order for the Hamaguchi Cabinet to restore the gold standard in 1930 have only massively compounded this dependence.<sup>41</sup>

## Nanjaku Gaikō to Rikugun no Rōnin

The political fallout of the Twenty-One Demands in Japan caused the 2nd Ōkuma Cabinet to collapse.<sup>42</sup> The Seiyūkai-supported Cabinet helmed by former Army Minister Terauchi Masatake quickly reversed course on China policy, promising to not interfere in Chinese affairs and to respect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.<sup>43</sup> Relations, however, would find little improvement as the May Fourth Movement in China saw anti-Japanese sentiment rise to the fore among Chinese nationalists and anti-Japanese boycotts proliferate, while the Treaty of Versailles awarded Qingdao to Japan.<sup>44</sup> It would take British and American mediation on the sidelines of the 1922 Washington Naval Treaty to finally secure Japan's return of Qingdao to China, allowing relations to warm.<sup>45</sup>

Around this time, the foreign powers with interests in China, including Japan, came together to sign the Nine-Power Treaty. The Treaty intended to uphold the Open-Door principles of equal competition and access to China, abjuring separate spheres of influence and hoping to

<sup>39</sup> Nish, "Overview of Relations," 604.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 612.

<sup>41</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 149-150.

<sup>42</sup> Nish, "An Overview of Relations" 609.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 610.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

placate Chinese nationalism.<sup>46</sup> This naturally sat uneasily with the Japanese concentration of influence in Manchuria, and though successive Cabinets in the 1920s would reasonably abide by the treaty, save for in Manchuria itself, Tōkyō always suspected that it was designed to Britain and America's advantage above all, and diplomat Shigemitsu Mamoru's complaint that the agreement unnecessarily constrained Japanese action rang true among the nation's officialdom.<sup>47</sup>

Nevertheless, Tōkyō's foreign policy continued to relax in this time, embodied by the arrival of Shidehara Kijūrō as Foreign Minister in 1924. During his tenure under the Kenseikai and Minseitō Cabinets of the 1920s, Shidehara steadfastly adhered to his overarching principle of "co-existence and co-prosperity" (*Kyōson kyōei shugi*) with China, mostly eschewing gunboat diplomacy in favor of non-intervention and a prioritization of peaceful economic relations.<sup>48</sup> Shidehara and the Cabinets of Katō Kōmei, Hamaguchi, and Wakatsuki took significant flack for this from Seiyūkai critics in the Diet, earning the career diplomat's foreign policy the epithet of "weak-kneed diplomacy" (*Nanjaku gaikō*).<sup>49</sup> This criticism stemmed from the many times that Shidehara refused to support the deployment of Japanese troops in 1925 to safeguard Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin and in 1927 to protect Japanese concessions in Hankou and Shanghai from the military encroachment of Chiang Kai-Shek's Kuomintang (KMT) as they fought their way through China in the Northern Expedition.<sup>50</sup> Despite the anxiety incurred throughout the Japanese political and military establishment as a result of the KMT's nationalism and the anti-foreign outpourings they encouraged, Shidehara saw Chiang's government as Japan's best bet for a stable, friendly Chinese partner with which he could negotiate greater

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 611-12.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Daniel Ramsdell, "The Nakamura Incident and the Japanese Foreign Office," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 25, no. 1 (1965): 51.

economic access for Japanese enterprise.<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately for the Foreign Minister, the KMT would embark on a new diplomatic strategy at the end of 1920s: adamantly demand the full renegotiation of tariffs, extraterritoriality, and other privileges in China granted to foreign powers by previous treaties, accompanied by yet more anti-Japanese boycotts and demonstrations. All of this especially hurt Japan, which as such a huge trading partner had the most to lose by conceding to China. Although he successfully concluded a commercial treaty with Nanjing in 1929, Shidehara would score no more achievements for *Kyōson kyōei* from that point on.<sup>52</sup>

In contrast to Shidehara's friendly, non-interventionist approach towards the KMT in China as a whole, a more assertive course of action predominated in Manchuria. This came down to the cornucopia of privileges and interests which Japan had accumulated in the region, from the South Manchuria Railway and the territory it held along its lines to the 1,300-square kilometer Kwantung Province—the territory Japan leased in the Liaodong Peninsula.<sup>53</sup> Japan also maintained an extensive network of consulates throughout the region's cities, complete with their own police forces, from which Foreign Ministry diplomats served to uphold the special extraterritorial privileges gained through the Twenty-One Demands.<sup>54</sup> Finally, Japan supported Zhang Zuolin's "Mukden Clique," a group of Chinese officers and bureaucrats in the Manchurian city who aspired to rule in Beijing.<sup>55</sup> After Zhang did take Beijing, Tōkyō militarily intervened in 1925, despite Shidehara's non-interventionism, to protect Japanese interests from a revolt in Manchuria against the warlord's rule.<sup>56</sup>

When General Tanaka Giichi assumed the premiership after Wakatsuki's 1927 resignation, he desired a decisive break with Shidehara's weak-kneed diplomacy and recast

<sup>51</sup> Ramsdell, "Nakamura Incident," 51.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Nish, "Overview of Relations" 611.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

China policy to be bolder and more militaristic.<sup>57</sup> The new Prime Minister sent a 2,000-strong expeditionary force to Shandong in May 1927 and another force of 25,000 soldiers in April the following year to thwart the KMT's advance on Manchuria in the Second Northern Expedition.<sup>58</sup> Tanaka had not, however, ordered said force to engage in battle with Chinese troops and take over the city of Jinan, which they did under an insubordinate commander who wished to take matters into his own hands.<sup>59</sup> Anti-Japanese boycotts in China, already in force, intensified, and appeals by both Chiang and Zhang to the League of Nations for redress went nowhere.<sup>60</sup> This episode of independent military action undid Tanaka's goals, and he shifted to coaxing Zhang to withdraw from Beijing entirely.<sup>61</sup> This Zhang did in June 1928, and on the South Manchuria Railway train back to Mukden, a bomb brought down the bridge that his train was crossing and killed him.<sup>62</sup> This was a plot by mid-ranking officers in the Kwantung Army who hoped to use Zhang's death as a pretext for the wholesale conquest of Manchuria.<sup>63</sup> The Kwantung Army did not pounce on the opportunity this time, however, and the truth of the matter spread rapidly among the Japanese political, diplomatic, and military elite.<sup>64</sup>

## Recent Context: The Huanggutun Incident

When word reached Tanaka of the Army's complicity in the bombing, he was enraged. Prince Saionji, the last surviving *Genrō*, pressed him to punish the perpetrators severely in order to definitively restore Army discipline, and Tanaka himself knew that, otherwise, the incident

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 613.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 614.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Orbach, *Curse on This Country*), 181.

<sup>63</sup> Nish, "An Overview of Relations," 614.

<sup>64</sup> Orbach, *Curse on This Country*, 181-83.

would tarnish the honor of the Army and the international reputation of Japan as a whole.<sup>65</sup> In an official audience with the new Shōwa Emperor himself (Hirohito), the Prime Minister proposed that the officers responsible would be court-martialed as punishment. In response, the Emperor gave him his express order to do so.<sup>66</sup>

This, however, was not in the cards. Tanaka soon ran into determined opposition and a widespread effort to block a court-martial from the Army and from his own Cabinet. The Seiyūkai leaders, who supported Tanaka's premiership, refused to sanction the punishment for fear of damaging Japan's international image and giving the Chinese a legitimate reason to demand the withdrawal of Japanese troops from their country.<sup>67</sup> Despite being Tanaka's close friend and protégé, the Army Minister, who had the authority to prosecute the officers, refused out of a desire to protect the Army's reputation, a cause to which the Army establishment and nationalist officers alike rallied.<sup>68</sup> Cabinet ultimately decided to deny any wrongdoing in Zhang's death, spurning the wishes of its Prime Minister.<sup>69</sup> Defeated and unable to carry out the Emperor's orders, Tanaka relayed the news to the monarch, who icily rebuked him for his failure. The Prime Minister was reduced to tears, and he resigned soon after.<sup>70</sup>

The turmoil over the assassination of Zhang Zuolin and Tanaka's attempt to punish the junior officers responsible was symptomatic of wider developments in the Army. The military, subordinate only to the Emperor himself, was already accustomed to making strategic decisions independently of the civilian government.<sup>71</sup> Insubordination was theoretically punished severely in the armed forces, yet this was in practice superseded by sympathy for the nationalism that

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Orbach, *Curse on This Country*, 183-84.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 186.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 189.

drove junior officers to such wayward schemes.<sup>72</sup> These motives were rooted in disillusionment with Shidehara's non-interventionist foreign policy, the military budget cuts pursued by Minseitō Cabinets throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s, and the government's failed efforts to undo the effects of the Great Depression through fiscal austerity.<sup>73</sup> In the face of what the officers saw as egregious mismanagement and wrongdoing at the center of Japanese power, the Army had to take drastic action. The officers came to desire the end of the liberal political and business establishment in Tōkyō and assert Japanese control in Manchuria, ushering in a "Shōwa Restoration" that would make the military and its traditional values of sacrifice and duty to the Emperor above all preeminent in Japan.<sup>74</sup> On the Manchurian end, two colonels who joined the Kwantung Army's general staff in 1928, Ishiwara Kanji and Itagaki Seishirō, would soon make their own clandestine bid to conquer Manchuria for the glory of the Emperor.<sup>75</sup>

## Issue: The Second Train to Mukden

The first indications to Tōkyō that something was once more brewing in Manchuria came in early September, 1931. A cable from Hayashi Kyūjirō, the Japanese Consul-General in Mukden, to Foreign Minister Shidehara warned of some big incident coming by way of the Kwantung Army.<sup>76</sup> The Emperor himself had heard rumors, and he instructed the Army and Navy Ministers to ensure military discipline.<sup>77</sup> This, combined with Shidehara's forceful complaint to Army Minister Lieutenant General Minami Jirō, led the latter to send a messenger

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 194-95.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 195-96.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 191.

<sup>76</sup> Robert H Ferrell, "The Mukden Incident: September 18-19, 1931," *The Journal of Modern History* 27, no. 1 (1955): 69-70.

<sup>77</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 156.

to Kwantung Army Headquarters and end the plot “at all costs.”<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately, said messenger, Major General Tatekawa Yoshitsugu, elected to stay in a restaurant and watch a geisha show on the night of September 18—the night that a fateful explosion occurred along a section of the South Manchuria Railway near Mukden.<sup>79</sup> The next day, Consul-General Hayashi informed Shidehara of the situation and assessed that the Army had likely masterminded the explosion.<sup>80</sup> An advisor of Manchurian leader Zhang Xueliang—Zhang Zuolin’s son—made multiple attempts to offer nonresistance and peaceful negotiations on his behalf in light of the suspicious explosion, which Hayashi relayed to an unreceptive Kwantung Army.<sup>81</sup> Soon enough, the Kwantung Army blamed Chinese soldiers for the explosion, and it rapidly initiated sweeping offensive operations in Mukden and other settlements along the South Manchuria Railway.<sup>82</sup>

## Scenario: Tōhō Kaigi

Prime Minister Baron Wakatsuki Reijirō, taking unusual inspiration from General Tanaka, convenes a summit of prominent political, military, business, and diplomatic leaders to discuss and decide the direction of Japanese policy towards China and Manchuria in light of the Kwantung Army’s recent invasion of the latter.<sup>83</sup> Ever the hopeful consensus-builder, Baron Wakatsuki hopes that this broad swath of Japanese leaders will create a lasting resolution that salvages Shidehara’s diplomacy and puts an end to military insubordination.

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<sup>78</sup> Ferrell, “The Mukden Incident,” 70.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 66-67

<sup>83</sup> Nish, “Overview of Relations” 613.

## A Cabinet Dumbstruck

The outbreak of hostilities in Manchuria catches the Prime Minister, his Cabinet, and the Minseitō by almost complete surprise. The current Cabinet helmed by Baron Wakatsuki Reijirō is dominated by the Rikken Minseitō (Constitutional People's Government Party), a liberal political party that formed in 1927 from its predecessor, the Kenseikai, and advocates for the primacy of the Diet and the will of the people in government.<sup>84</sup> Under the previous Prime Minister, Hamaguchi Osachi, the Minseitō overcame concerted opposition in the Navy to ratify the London Naval Treaty, which clamped down on the force's expansion, plus budgetary cuts and constraints for the armed forces as a whole.<sup>85</sup> Minseitō Cabinets have also steadfastly returned Baron Shidehara Kijūrō to the post of Foreign Minister, allowing his style of diplomacy to predominate. As defenders of representative government and peaceful diplomacy in China, the Minseitō are horrified by and staunchly opposed to the Kwantung Army's aggression and insubordination, though they will be daunted by both the Army's intransigence and independence and the popular outpouring of nationalist support for the invasion that will come.<sup>86</sup>

## A Chance for the Opposition

The Rikken Seiyūkai (Constitutional Association of Political Friends) are a nationalist and conservative party deeply skeptical of participatory politics who favor massive government-directed spending on infrastructure and the armed forces.<sup>87</sup> The Seiyūkai have long

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<sup>84</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 145.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 150-52.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 156-57.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 130-31.

criticized their liberal opponents, and Foreign Minister Shidehara in particular, for their unassertive, conciliatory approach to China.<sup>88</sup> Their support underpinned General Tanaka's Cabinet and his aggressive Chinese interventions. During the political fracas in 1928 surrounding Zhang Zuolin's assassination, Seiyūkai leaders decisively turned against him and moved to conceal the truth of the Army's preeminent role in the rogue conspiracy.<sup>89</sup> With widespread popular support for the invasion of Manchuria likely, and these past actions in mind, the party is, at least, much more naturally suited to supporting the invasion of Manchuria than the Minseitō.

## An Army Emboldened

The Army in 1931 is infested with ultranationalist cliques disillusioned with the civilian political establishment and has a long history of rogue action and jingoistic meddling in China, most recently resulting in the assassination of Zhang Zuolin. Though senior Army leaders in Tōkyō are not directly responsible for nor have approved the skulduggery of the Kwantung Army's junior officers, and made an attempt to carry out the Emperor's direct orders to end their intrigues, sympathetic nationalist officers who were aware of the Mukden plot appear to have successfully interdicted these efforts.<sup>90</sup> Even if they are not fellow travelers, senior officers also tend to acquiesce to the flagrant disobedience of their subordinates when their actions are framed as serving the Emperor's will and benefitting the Empire.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, at all levels, Army officers tend to close ranks to obfuscate their comrades' wrongdoing if it risks embarrassment to the Army as a whole; thus, they could preserve the wider institution's reputation and their own

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 142.

<sup>89</sup> Orbach, *Curse on This Country*, 186.

<sup>90</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 156.

<sup>91</sup> Orbach, *Curse on This Country*, 3-4.

freedom of action amid the constant jockeying for power between government institutions.<sup>92</sup> The Army will thus likely band together against outside scrutiny as they have before and support, politically and physically, an invasion that aligns with their nationalist and militarist ideals.<sup>93</sup>

## A Navy Split

The invasion of Manchuria is a product of the Army, and yet the core issues and sentiments that animate the nationalist officers spearheading the offensive find similarly fertile ground among their maritime counterparts; equally present, though, are the old guard still tied to and respectful of high-level government institutions. Nationalist admirals bent on expanding the Navy despise the 1927 London Naval Treaty, while the Treaty Faction admirals who helped negotiate the agreement and shepherded it to ratification fought their pro-expansion counterparts to make it law.<sup>94</sup> Sympathies among naval officers will likely align with or against the Kwantung Army along these lines.

## A Genrō, Hands Tied?

The *Genrō*, singular, remains an influential institution unto himself. Prince Saionji Kinmochi's powerful role in advising the Emperor and nominating His Majesty's Prime Ministerial appointments is without parallel.<sup>95</sup> Prince Saionji is of a parliamentary inclination, having largely chosen to nurture and maintain party-dominated Cabinets throughout the Taishō Democracy period from the 1910s-1920s to the present day.<sup>96</sup> He abhorred the Army indiscipline

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 184.

<sup>93</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 156-57.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Steven, "Hybrid Constitutionalism," 115.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 112-13.

shown during Zhang Zuolin's assassination and was the primary influence on Tanaka's hardball stance towards the Army culprits.<sup>97</sup> Prince Saionji's ability to influence the Emperor to act can be crucial in overcoming the Army's independence, but he must act carefully so as not to dangerously politicize the monarchy and tarnish imperial prestige.<sup>98</sup>

## A Diplomatic Upheaval

With the Kwantung Army's invasion, the Foreign Ministry is seeing its leader's prevailing diplomatic priorities in China unravel before its eyes. Due to the chaotic, short-lived nature of Japanese cabinets, it is Japan's diplomatic establishment that has helmed official decision making towards China and in Manchuria, exemplified by the longtime pursuit of Foreign Minister Shidehara's "coexistence and co-prosperity" policy.<sup>99</sup> The Foreign Ministry has no intention of seeing yet another rupture caused by competing institutions undo its work promoting goodwill and peaceful economic ties in China. Its representatives will work closely with the sitting cabinet to oppose the escalation of the invasion and rescue as many of their existing foreign policy objectives as possible.<sup>100</sup>

## A Bottom Line Benefited

If there is one institution at the heart of Japan's presence in Manchuria, then it is the South Manchuria Railway Company. The firm, intimately aligned with the government's interests in the region, has long ceased to merely own and operate the rail network that Japan

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<sup>97</sup> Orbach, *Curse on This Country*, 183.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 187.

<sup>99</sup> Steven, "Hybrid Constitutionalism," 110.

<sup>100</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 157.

won from Russia in 1905. By 1930, it is the engine that powers nearly every aspect of the Manchurian economy, running everything from the coal mines where 100,000 Chinese forced laborers have died to the train engines that run on the products of their work. The company sees itself as the agent of Japanese-led modernization and prosperity in Manchuria, and it is all too happy to seize the opportunity that the Kwantung Army has given it to further extend its freedom to do business and achieve more such “progress” in the region.<sup>101</sup>

## Questions to Consider

1. How should the government deal with an increasingly aloof and independent military?
2. How involved should the military be in Japanese politics and foreign policy?
3. What foreign policy outcomes should Japan pursue with regards to China in the wake of the invasion?
  - a. What kind of presence does Japan want to have in Manchuria? In China as a whole?
4. How has the fundamental structure of the Japanese government affected its ability to control foreign and defense policy?
5. How will the national budget be used to influence foreign policy?

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<sup>101</sup> Mike Klein, “Manchoukuo: Come for the Prosperity, Stay for the Harmony: Worlds Revealed,” The Library of Congress, June 25, 2021, <https://blogs.loc.gov/maps/2021/06/manchoukuo-come-for-the-prosperity-stay-for-the-harmony/>.

## Positions

### Cabinet/Rikken Minseitō-aligned

- Baron Shidehara Kijūrō, Minister of Foreign Affairs:
  - A longtime Foreign Minister under several Minseitō cabinets, Baron Shidehara is the architect of Japan's current "co-existence and co-prosperity" policy towards China, eschewing military force and firmly emphasizing peaceful, non-interventionist diplomacy with a focus on promoting economic ties.<sup>102</sup> The Foreign Minister abhors the militarism and insubordination of the Kwantung Army, having seen similar actions frustrate peaceful, amicable relations with China for years.<sup>103</sup> He will thus give his best efforts to prevent the worsening of the current situation in Manchuria.<sup>104</sup>
- Baron Wakatsuki Reijirō, the Prime Minister:
  - A former Finance Ministry bureaucrat and current member of the House of Peers, the Prime Minister has a strong sense of public service and is dedicated to building consensus across party boundaries and between government institutions like the Diet and the military, though this often puts him at odds with his party's goals for the sake of government unity.<sup>105</sup> The PM will generally uphold liberal Minseitō stances and foreign policy and is for now united with his Cabinet in opposition to the Kwantung Army's actions, but he hopes to preserve the government's stability above all else.

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<sup>102</sup> Nish, "Overview of Relations" 611-612.

<sup>103</sup> Ryuji Hattori, "The London Naval Conference and the Manchurian Incident." In *Japan at War and Peace: Shidehara Kijūrō and the Making of Modern Diplomacy* (ANU Press, 2021), 174.

<sup>104</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 157.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 142.

- Adachi Kenzō, Minister of Home Affairs:

- The Home Minister heads his own faction in the Minseitō that is bitter towards Barons Shidehara and Wakatsuki over how they denied him the opportunity to lead the party and become Prime Minister.<sup>106</sup> Adachi nominally supports but in reality dislikes the economic and foreign policy that the Cabinet has thus far pursued, and he is open to jettisoning these principles and defying his party and Prime Minister should the opportunity present itself; he is kept in line by his party loyalty and perceived isolation.<sup>107</sup> As a nationalist who was himself involved in plots to engineer imperial expansion abroad, he is naturally supportive of the Kwantung Army's current plans.<sup>108</sup>

- Inoue Junnosuke, Minister of Finance:

- The current Minister of Finance is a Minseitō stalwart who has been Finance Minister since Hamaguchi Osachi came to power in July 1929.<sup>109</sup> He thus oversaw the tough implementation of the Hamaguchi and Wakatsuki Cabinets' staunch fiscal conservatism that, among other things, tightened the military budget. His position helming this key, controversial plank of the Minseitō platform, plus his approval of Wakatsuki's takeover of the premiership, demonstrates his loyalty to his party and the policies which it carries out, including that of his colleague, Foreign Minister Shidehara.<sup>110</sup>

- Hara Shūjirō, Minister of Colonial Affairs:

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 152-53.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 158-59.

<sup>108</sup> E. Herbert Norman, "The Genyosha: A Study in the Origins of Japanese Imperialism." Pacific Affairs 17, no. 3 (1944): 276.

<sup>109</sup> Hattori, "London Naval Conference," 173.

<sup>110</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 149-52.

- The current Minister of Colonial Affairs is a veteran Minseitō member of the House of Representatives, having been constantly re-elected since 1912. He has also served as a director of general affairs for the Minseitō and the Kenseikai before assuming his current Cabinet post.<sup>111</sup> He is thus a leading party figure loyal to its ideals and platform, espousing the peaceful foreign policy of Foreign Minister Shidehara and naturally opposing the Manchurian invasion.
- Koizumi Matajirō, Minister of Communications:
  - The current Minister of Communications is a veteran of the House of Representatives, has held multiple senior party positions in the Minseitō and its predecessors. He previously participated in the Movement of Universal Suffrage and the second Movement to Protect the Constitution.<sup>112</sup> Koizumi's enduring prominence in liberal politics makes him a supporter of its foreign policy objectives and an opponent of the Manchurian invasion.
- Saitō Takao:
  - A respected Minseitō member of the House of Representatives, Saitō Takao is a gifted orator, an ardent defender of the Meiji Constitution, and an outspoken critic of military overreach at home and abroad.<sup>113</sup> He is a uniquely incorruptible politician who abstains from buying votes and prefers to stand by his ideals.<sup>114</sup> He steadfastly supports the Minseitō, Shidehara's diplomacy, and Wakatsuki's democratic policies, and will stridently assert his beliefs in the arena of debate.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>111</sup> “Hara Shūjirō,” Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/500/>.

<sup>112</sup> “Koizumi Matajirō,” Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/483/>.

<sup>113</sup> Earl H. Kinmonth, “The Mouse That Roared: Saitō Takao, Conservative Critic of Japan’s ‘Holy War’ in China,” Journal of Japanese Studies 25, no. 2 (1999): 332-33.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, 333.

<sup>115</sup> Lawrence Fouraker, “Saitō Takao and Parliamentary Politics in 1930s Japan,” Sino-Japanese Studies 12, no. 2: 4.

- Machida Chūji, Minister of Agriculture

- The current Minister of Agriculture is a veteran member of the House of Representatives, having represented the Minseitō and its liberal predecessors since 1912. As a senior party figure with a background in banking and journalism, Machida is firmly committed to the constitutional order and the Minseitō's liberal stances.<sup>116</sup>

### Rikken Seiyūkai (the Opposition)

- Inukai Tsuyoshi, Seiyūkai President:

- The current president of the Seiyūkai, Inukai is an outspoken critic of impulsive militarism. He possesses Confucian and idealistic views which define his crusade against “party evils,” although his government is governed by considerations of economic gain and power.<sup>117</sup> He supports Japanese intervention in Manchuria despite his harsh critiques of militarism, demonstrating his nationalist views.

- Takahashi Korekiyō:

- A former Prime Minister, Takahashi also served as Minister of Finance where he implemented his “Takahashi Finance” policy that sought to abandon the gold standard and expand monetary and fiscal policy. Despite this, he notably wishes to reign in military expenditures, putting him at odds with the Army and making him unlikely to do them favors in the current crisis, beyond being responsive to the popular nationalist reaction.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> “Machida Chūji,” Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/394/>.

<sup>117</sup> Najita, Inukai Tsuyoshi: Some Dilemmas in Party Development in Pre-World War II Japan, 494-498; Pearson, Between Patriotism and Terrorism: The Policing of Nationalist Movements in 1930s Japan, 292-300.

<sup>118</sup> “Takahashi Korekiyō,” Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/122/>.

- Nakahashi Tokugorō:

- Nakahashi is a Seiyūkai member of the House of Representatives and has served in Cabinet before. He previously campaigned to reform the education system, as well as having taken steps to improve the economy. He helped bring down the Takahashi Cabinet and founded the Seiyu Hontō, but returned to the Seiyūkai a year later.<sup>119</sup> He maintains a fairly neutral stance, but supports domestic policy under the Seiyūkai.

- Tokonami Takejirō:

- A former Minister of Home Affairs, he is an influential leader in the Seiyūkai.<sup>120</sup> He formed the Seiyu Hontō which merged with the Kenseikai to form the Minseitō, though he later left the new party and rejoined the Seiyūkai.<sup>121</sup> His position as a senior figure of the opposition who became dissatisfied enough with the Minseitō to leave it makes him a critic of the Wakatsuki Cabinet and thus its peaceful foreign policy. He will likely accede to the popularity of the Manchurian invasion and support it.

- Suzuki Kisaburō, former Home Minister:

- A former Minister of Home Affairs and Justice, he was active in the National Foundation Society and tried to eliminate foreign ideas. He abused his position as Home Minister to interfere with the General Election of 1928 and suppress the Minseitō. He was forced to resign after this scandal, but he is still heavily involved in Seiyūkai politics.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> “Nakahashi Tokugorō,” Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/570/>.

<sup>120</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 134.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 145-47.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

- Nakajima Chikuhei:

- Nakajima is the founder of the Nakajima Aircraft Company and a member of the House of Representatives for the Seiyūkai. Nakajima's firm is a major aircraft producer and military contractor, giving its owner a prominent place in military industry.<sup>123</sup> This makes Nakajima a natural ally of militarists and expansionists who need his services, thus making Nakajima a good backer for the Kwantung Army.

## The Navy

- Baron Abo Kiyokazu, Minister of the Navy:

- The current Navy Minister is a close ally of Admiral Katō, who staunchly opposes the naval limitations of the Washington and London Naval Treaties.<sup>124</sup> He thus shares his colleague's aggressive, militarist stances and supports the Manchurian invasion.

- Admiral Count Yamamoto Gonnohyōe:

- A former Prime Minister and Navy Minister, Count Yamamoto has emerged after the end of his last premiership to weigh in on militarism and military affairs in the wake of the Manchurian invasion. His 1913 government demanded railway rights in Manchuria, but he is firmly identified with the constitutional establishment and wishes to curb military expansionism and insubordination.<sup>125</sup>

- Baron Suzuki Kantarō, Grand Chamberlain:

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<sup>123</sup> “中島知久平をめぐる逸話(1),” The Classic Airplane Museum, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ne.jp/asahi/airplane/museum/nakajima/chikuhei/chikuhei1.html>.

<sup>124</sup> Sadao Asada, “The Revolt against the Washington Treaty: The Imperial Japanese Navy and Naval Limitation, 1921-1927,” Naval War College Review 46, no. 3 (1993): 91.

<sup>125</sup> Britannica, T, Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Count Yamamoto Gonnohyōe," Encyclopedia Britannica, December 4, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Count-Yamamoto-Gonnohyoe>.

- The current Grand Chamberlain and Privy Councillor had an illustrious, decades-long career as an admiral, attaining several of the Navy's highest posts.<sup>126</sup>
- Despite his now-civilian position, Baron Suzuki wields considerable influence in his former service, which he crucially used to suppress Navy militarism and secure Japan's ratification of the London Naval Treaty.<sup>127</sup> He does not align with the Minseitō or Seiyūkai, prioritizing the interests of his soldiers. However, the Seiyūkai have accused him of hindering diplomatic relations during the London Naval Conference.

- Admiral Takarabe Takeshi:

- Admiral Takarabe held several senior positions and was Navy Minister for several Minseitō Cabinets.<sup>128</sup> As the chief Japanese naval delegate at the London Naval Conference, he supported the eventual London Naval Treaty's limitations on naval expansion.<sup>129</sup> His opposition to expansion and respect for the outcomes of international negotiation pits him against the Manchurian invasion.

- Admiral Katō Kanji:

- Admiral Katō was a Fleet Faction admiral who greatly disdained the naval limitations treaties and unsuccessfully tried to scupper the ratification of the Treaty of London.<sup>130</sup> He is thus a strong militarist and will back the Manchurian invasion.

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<sup>126</sup> “Suzuki Kantarō,” Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/113/>.

<sup>127</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 151.

<sup>128</sup> “Takarabe Takeshi,” Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/593/>.

<sup>129</sup> Sims, *Japanese Political History*, 151.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

## The Army

- Lieutenant General Minami Jirō, Minister of the Army:
  - The current Minister of the Army was appointed by the Wakatsuki Cabinet, and under the Emperor's orders, and pressure from Shidehara, he dispatched an officer to restrain the burgeoning militarism in Manchuria.<sup>131</sup> He sides with the Minseitō but must balance them with his loyalty and duties to the Army.<sup>132</sup>
- General Kanaya Hanzō, Chief of the Army General Staff:
  - The current Chief of the Army General Staff, he served in the Russo-Japanese War and as an instructor at a military academy. In addition, he served in the German and Austrian embassies, attempting to garner support for Japanese imperialism. Currently, he does not have any political affiliations and does his duty for the Army.<sup>133</sup>
- General Baron Mutō Nobuyoshi, Inspector General of Military Education:
  - Currently serving as the powerful Inspector General of Military Education, Baron Mutō also previously served as a military attaché in the Russo-Japanese War and as commanding officer of the Kwantung Army.<sup>134</sup> His previous attachments to the Kwantung Army make him a supporter of their efforts in Manchuria.
- General Araki Sadao:
  - General Araki is an ultranationalist Army officer. He has vocally advocated for an extreme interpretation of the right of supreme prerogative that would free Army

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid, 156.

<sup>132</sup> Hattori, "London Naval Conference," 204.

<sup>133</sup> "金谷範三," Wikipedia, February 17, 2024,

<https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E9%87%91%E8%B0%B7%E7%AF%84%E4%B8%89>.

<sup>134</sup> Steen Ammentorp, "Biography of Field Marshal Nobuyoshi Mutō," The Generals of World War II, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://generals.dk/general/Mut%C5%8D/Nobuyoshi/Japan.html>.

officers' strategic decisions from all civilian oversight.<sup>135</sup> He energetically resisted the attempt to investigate and punish Zhang Zuolin's assassins, partaking in the expansionist spirit of the Kwantung Army that he will enthusiastically support the current invasion of Manchuria.<sup>136</sup>

## The Genrō

- Prince Saionji Kinmochi:

- Prince Saionji is the last surviving elder statesman, or *Genrō*, who wields the power of forming Cabinets and suggesting to the Emperor who should become Prime Minister. He has long favored political leaders who can build consensus and command support from various government institutions, ensuring the stability of the liberal constitutional order.<sup>137</sup> He wishes to preserve that order and quash the indiscipline that has led the Kwantung Army to its current actions, but he is also a conciliatory man who works through negotiation and wishes to uphold government unity.<sup>138</sup>

## The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Shigemitsu Mamoru, Acting Minister to China:

- The current Japanese Minister to China is a career diplomat who, as the invasion of Manchuria unfolded, was leading the implementation of Shidehara's China policy in the field.<sup>139</sup> He was deep in negotiations with the Nationalist Chinese government and pushed even further than Baron Shidehara for cooperation and

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<sup>135</sup> Orbach, *Curse on This Country*, 189.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, 184.

<sup>137</sup> Steven, "Hybrid Constitutionalism," 124.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 130

<sup>139</sup> Hattori, "London Naval Conference," 177.

partnership between China and Japan.<sup>140</sup> He naturally opposes the Manchurian invasion.

- Hayashi Kyūjirō, Consul-General in Mukden:

- Consul-General Hayashi is a professional diplomat specializing in China, where he has spent the vast majority of his decades-long career.<sup>141</sup> He espouses the view that control of Japanese foreign policy ought to rest primarily with the Foreign Ministry, viewing with dismay the fracturing of Japanese policy to China caused by the competing interests of the Army and the South Manchuria Railway.<sup>142</sup> Hayashi ardently and vocally disapproves of the current invasion and the military's spillover into foreign policy, hoping that Foreign Minister Shidehara and the Cabinet will decisively end the Kwantung Army's insubordination.<sup>143</sup>

## Business

- Count Uchida Kōsai, President of the South Manchuria Railway Co.:

- The President of the South Manchuria Railway Company has been a longtime professional diplomat in the Foreign Ministry, serving as Foreign Minister for several Cabinets.<sup>144</sup> He maintained relations between Western nations, but prioritized the security of Japanese imperial interests in Manchuria. He views militarism as a mandatory way to protect the empire, which he finances and facilitates through his company.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 203-204.

<sup>141</sup> Ken'ichi Goto, "Japan's Southern Policy in the Interwar Period and Hayashi Kyūjirō," Waseda University Repository, December 2006, 3.

<sup>142</sup> Goto, "Japan's Southern Policy," 4.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, 7-8.

<sup>144</sup> "Uchida Kosai," Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/503/>.

<sup>145</sup> Rustin B. Gates, "Pan-Asianism in Prewar Japanese Foreign Affairs: The Curious Case of Uchida Yasuya," The Journal of Japanese Studies 37, no. 1 (2011): 2-9.

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